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THE
SECOND BOOK
OF
KINGS

BY THE

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London:

GEORGE GILL & SONS, LD.

13, WARWICK LANE, E.C.

P R E F A C E .

THE Second Book of Kings is one of a series of manuals on the books of the Old Testament which are primarily intended for the use of Students preparing for the Local Examinations of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

The Introduction treats fully of the several subjects with which the Student should be acquainted, comprising full Geographical and Biographical Notes, description of the Temple, Chronology, Genealogical Tables, description of Jerusalem, and other important historical references to the ancient monarchies of the Eastern world, with other essential details, which are clearly set forth in the Table of Contents.

The chief alterations of the Revised Version are pointed out in footnotes, the Student being referred to the Revised Version.

In the Appendix will be found (1) a Commentary upon the most important differences between the Authorized and Revised Versions, the alterations being pointed out and explanations given of the reasons for the change; (2) a Glossary of words and phrases, thus avoiding constant reference to the Text and Notes.

The general arrangement of the series will, it is believed, be found helpful to Teachers and Students. Each manual is illustrated with the necessary Maps.

Each volume is complete in itself, requiring from the Student no reference to Atlas, Bible Dictionary, or other aids.

Mileham.

F. M.

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TITLE.

The Second Book of Kings, commonly called the **Fourth Book of Kings**.

To understand the double title we must consider the two Books of Samuel along with the two Books of Kings.

In the Hebrew MSS. we find two books, not four, viz., I. and II. Samuel as one book, and I. and II. Kings as one book. And these books are under different names.

The writers of the Septuagint divided these books, and regarded them as four books on the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Thus in the Septuagint I. and II. Samuel, I. and II. Kings become the First and Second, Third and Fourth Book of Kings respectively. The Vulgate follows the same division.

The Authorized Version follows the Septuagint in dividing the books, but maintains the Hebrew names of Samuel and Kings.

Thus we get an explanation of the double title.

Second Book of Kings = the second portion of the Hebrew writing, styled in their MSS. the Book of Kings.

Fourth Book of Kings = the fourth portion of the four divisions into which the writers of the Septuagint divided the Hebrew Books of Samuel and Kings.

Commonly called. When the Authorized Version was drawn up, the Vulgate titles for the Books were the common names for them. "Sometimes called" would now be a more appropriate phrase.

THE AUTHOR.

Jeremiah, according to Jewish tradition. But this view is contested.

Arguments against.

- (1) The closing events recorded occurred at Babylon—Jeremiah was in Egypt.
- (2) The differences between 2 Kings xxv. and Jeremiah lii. suggest two separate writers.

Arguments for.

- (1) The similarity of language in Kings and in the Book of Jeremiah.
- (2) The historical matter common to both books is treated in the same manner.
- (3) The omission of the name of Jeremiah in Kings, natural on the part of the writer if he were Jeremiah, but strange on the part of any other historian, who would not be likely to overlook the important part played by Jeremiah in the great political controversies of the later kings.

DESIGN OF THE AUTHOR.

The author's design is to present a history of the Kings of Israel and Judah, but from a **religious** rather than a **civil** point of view.

The Books of Kings are a continuation of the Books of Samuel and

record the fulfilment of the promises made to David and his house (2 Sam. vii. 12-16).

The leading points of these promises are—

- (1) That Jehovah would establish David's kingdom after him.
- (2) That David's successor should build a house for the Lord.
- (3) A threat of chastisement if iniquity should be committed.
- (4) That mercy should not altogether depart from the house of David as it had from that of Saul, but that David's throne should be established for ever.

The motto of Kings, therefore, is "**God in History**," and with this object before him the author either omits or mentions slightly all events that are not connected with the religious life of the nation.

The writer aims at presenting pictures of **great epochs** rather than giving a record of successive events.

The introduction of the **Stories of Elijah and Elisha** is specially illustrative of the object of the writer. He is telling the story of the great religious crisis of the Nation's history, the struggle against the great Baal apostasy. The two prophets who are prominent in opposition to the Baal worship are Elijah and Elisha—the latter anointing Jehu, whose accession brought about the extirpation of the worship of Baal in both Israel and Judah.

The object of the writer is, indeed, to present—

Not a record of events—but the lessons of history.

Not the political and social conditions of the nation—but the phases of good and evil in the nation's history.

Not the acts, the government and legislation of kings—but the hand of God, guiding the kingdoms of the world, rewarding the righteous, and punishing the wrong-doer.

DATE.

B.C. 561 is the Earliest possible Date.

The last event recorded in Kings is the release of Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach the successor of Nebuchadnezzar (xxv. 27-30).

This event occurred B.C. 561.

B.C. 536 is the Latest possible Date.

There is no mention of the return from captivity. As the writer records the favour shown to Jehoiachin he would certainly have alluded to the restoration of the Jews had the event occurred before he wrote the book.

The return from captivity took place B.C. 536.

Consequently we may conclude that, if the latter part of 2 Kings xxv. be a portion of the original work, the book must have been written between B.C. 561 and B.C. 536.

The language is the language of the captivity, later than Isaiah and others, and earlier than Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah and later writers.

Hence, an early date has been suggested, viz. B.C. 560, whilst some portions of the book are even earlier, viz. B.C. 580.

SOURCES OF THE NARRATIVE.

The Book is undoubtedly a compilation.

The compiler mentions three sources *at least*, from which his compilation was derived.

1. *The Book of the Acts of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 41) – the authority for Solomon's reign.
 2. *The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah, referred to *sixteen* times.
- *The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel, referred to *seventeen* times.

Turning to the Books of Chronicles we find that other sources of information were available. Thus for the different reigns we get the following:—

- Solomon.* (a) The book of Nathan the prophet.
(b) The prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite.
(c) The visions of Iddo the Seer (2 Chron. ix. 29).
- Rehoboam.* (a) The book of Shemaiah the Prophet.
(b) The book of Iddo the Seer, concerning genealogies (2 Chron. xii. 15).
- Aoijah.* The story of the Prophet Iddo (2 Chron. xiii. 22).
- Jehoshaphat.* The Book of Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. xx. 34).
- Uzziah.* "The rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the Prophet, the son of Amoz, write" (2 Chron. xxvi. 22).
- Hezekiah.* "The vision of Isaiah the Prophet, the son of Amoz" (2 Chron. xxxii. 32).
- Manasseh.* "The words of the seers" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 18), or as in the margin "as the history of Hozai."
- Jeroboam II.* "Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet" (xiv. 25).

Noting that these subsidiary records are entirely the work of prophets, we may well assume that the compiler had access to books containing special accounts of the work and miracles of Elijah and Elisha. Only on this supposition can we account for the fulness with which the times of these prophets are described.

The latter part of the First Book of Kings is almost a history of the prophet Elijah.

Six chapters in the Second Book of Kings are devoted to the miracles of Elisha, many of which are of an entirely private character.

SCOPE OF THE NARRATIVE.

From the death of Ahaziah to the mention of the kindness shewn to Jehoiachin by Evil-merodach, a period of about 340 years.

The accession of Ahaziah is given as B.C. 897.

The release of Jehoiachin took place in B.C. 561.

*N.B.—The student must carefully note that these Books of the Chronicles are not the same as those we find in the Bible under the name of the two Books of Chronicles.

They are, in fact, official chronicles of the separate reigns, and may be styled "Public Archives."

THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

The Dynasty of Omri.

This dynasty was founded by Omri, who avenged the murder of Elah, by marching against Zimri and besieging him at Tirzah. He quickly captured the city, and Zimri perished in the flames of the royal palace, to which he had retired, and which he himself set on fire.

Omri was a king of vigour and energy. His name is mentioned on the Moabite stone. Though his dynasty lasted only fifty years, it gave its name to all the subsequent dynasties of Israel in the records of other countries. Israel is termed "*the land of Omri*," and the royal house, "*the house of Omri*" in the Assyrian inscriptions.

The great event of Omri's reign was the building of Samaria, which he made the capital of Israel.

The House of Ahab.

The kings are Ahab, Ahaziah and Joram.

The **ruling spirit** is Jezebel, the inaugurator of Baal worship.

The **characteristic feature** of the period is the persistent denunciation of Baal by the prophets Elijah and Elisha.

The work of Elijah apparently had been a failure. On Horeb he despondently laments, "*I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away*" (1 Kings xix. 10, 14).

In reply, Jehovah reassures the despondent prophet that his work had not been fruitless. "*Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him*" (1 Kings xix. 18).

Jehovah also gives this command to Elijah:—

"*Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria.*"

And Jehu, the son of Nimshi, shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.

And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay" (1 Kings xix. 15, 17).

The meaning of these injunctions is that Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha will be the appointed instruments of Jehovah to destroy the worship of Baal. Elisha, not Elijah, caused Jehu to be anointed by one of the prophets. Hazael was not formally proclaimed king of Syria by either Elijah or Elisha, though his accession was pointed out by Elisha at their interview (viii. 7-18).

Eleven chapters out of twenty-five chapters composing the Second Book of Kings are concerned with the record of the fulfilment of this command and prophecy given to Elijah by Jehovah on Mount Horeb. The period covered is not more than twenty years. At its conclusion the worship of Baal as the national religion is *for ever* abolished in both Israel and Judah. The great space given to this short period is a strong indication of the purpose of the sacred writer. He is describing not the political history of the country, but the extinction of Baal worship—the religious crisis of the land—so he deals with it in detail.

Ahaziah (B.C. 897—896), son of Ahab and Jezebel. A weak and incapable king. His reign was brief, lasting less than two years.

It is marked by disaster and misfortune.

1. He revived the alliance with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, with whom he joined in a maritime enterprise intended to go to Ophir for gold. A storm shattered the ships almost as they left port, and Jehoshaphat refused to renew the enterprise (1 Kings xxii. 43-49).
2. Moab rebelled and became independent of Israel.
3. The king met with an accident, falling down through the lattice of his upper chamber, and receiving injuries which ultimately proved fatal. With this are connected the mission to Ekron to consult Baalzebub on the recovery of the king. Elijah's meeting of the messengers, and his rebuke to Ahaziah, with the subsequent destruction of the captains and their bands sent to arrest the prophet" (i. 2-13).

Ahaziah continued the calf worship of Jeroboam, and the Baal worship introduced by Jezebel, going even further in wickedness by sending to consult Baalzebub. Ahab had paid some respect to the warning of Elijah, but Ahaziah acted as if there were no prophet of Jehovah in Israel.

The miracle of calling down fire from heaven on the captains and their fifties, and the death of Ahaziah from injuries not necessarily fatal in themselves, but declared to be so because of the insult offered to Jehovah, are recorded as being incidents in the contest between Jehovah and idolatry. *In this lies their significance.*

Joram (B.C. 896-883). Son of Ahab and Jezebel. Brother of Ahaziah.

A weak monarch, unstable of principle, clearly under the influence of Jezebel, as evidenced by the denunciation of Jehu (ix. 22).

Less irreligious than Ahab or Ahaziah. He wrought evil, "*but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made*" (iii. 2).

To a certain extent he was under the influence of Elisha, but with no strong religious convictions he was incapable of resisting the strong personality of his mother. Calf worship and Baal worship continued.

He was possessed of considerable military talents, and took advantage of the temporary weakness of Syria to recover Ramoth-gilead, which he held successfully against Syrian attempts to regain it.

Events of the reign.

1. The campaign against Moab, in which he was joined by Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom. The allied forces were saved by the intervention of Elisha from perishing through want of water. Moab was saved from annihilation by the horror that was excited by the act of the King of Moab offering up his son to Moloch on the wall of Kir-haraseth, in full sight of the besieging armies. The retreat marks the lack of national zeal for Jehovah. Under David or Joab Moab would have been severely dealt with as idolaters. Instead, from this time Moab remained independent, and marauding bands from that nation constantly crossed the Jordan on plundering excursions whenever the weakness of Israel or Judah invited such excursions (xiii. 20, xxiv. 2).
2. The war with Syria, marked by the following incidents :—
 - (a) Plundering expeditions or border raids of the Syrians. With one of these is connected the carrying away of an Israelite maid, leading to the cure of Naaman (v.).
 - (b) Expeditions seemingly for the purpose of capturing the person of the king of Israel. These were frustrated by the exposure of the Syrian plans to Joram by Elisha.
 - (c) The expedition to Dothan to capture Elisha. The Syrians were deluded by the prophet and led to Samaria. Elisha prevented Joram from putting them to death, and persuaded the king to treat them hospitably and to send them back to their own country.
 - (d) The great invasion. The siege and relief of Samaria.
 - (e) The capture of Ramoth-gilead by Joram. This is not mentioned directly in Scripture, but it would appear that Joram, in alliance with Ahaziah of Judah, took advantage of the dispersion of the Syrians and recovered Ramoth-gilead.
 - (f) The death of Joram. Joram was wounded whilst conducting the defence of Ramoth-gilead. He retired to Jezreel to recover. During his absence Jehu and the Army revolted, marched to Jezreel, slew the king, and established the dynasty of Jehu (see ix. 14-26).

The House of Jehu.

“The most powerful, the most important, and the longest lived of all the Israelite dynasties” (RAWLINSON). *From B.C. 883 to B.C. 771.* Jehu, Jehohaz, Jehosh, Jeroboam II., Zachariah.

The great work of Jehu was the extinction of Baal worship. For this great deed he was rewarded with the promise that his “*children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel.*”

Joram was slain in the king's garden, laid out by Ahab on the site of Naboth's vineyard. His body was thrown from his chariot on to the ground by the order of Jehu, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah.

Jehu (B.C. 883—856), the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, but generally described as "the son (descendant) of Nimshi."

He had been a member of Ahab's bodyguard, and an attendant upon the king's person, and appears to have formed one of the retinue of Ahab when Elijah uttered the denunciation against him, in the vineyard of Naboth, for the murder of Naboth (ix. 25).

In the reign of Joram he had risen to the post of commander-in-chief of the army.

He was known throughout the whole army and country for the mad impetuosity with which he drove his horses (ix. 20).

Mission. The instrument of Jehovah for the destruction of Baal worship and the extermination of the house of Ahab.

THE REVOLT.

1. Its inception.

(a) **The opportunity.** Joram, wounded in the defence of Ramoth-gilead, had retired to Jezreel "*to be healed of his wounds,*" leaving Jehu and the army at Ramoth-gilead.

(b) **Jehu crowned king.** The measure of the iniquity of the house of Ahab being completed, Elisha sent one of the sons of the prophets to Ramoth-gilead to anoint Jehu as king, thus fulfilling the commission given to Elijah by Jehovah at Horeb (1 Kings xix.).

The manner in which the young prophet executed his mission leaves it doubtful if Jehu had previously contemplated any designs against the king. But it is most probable that he had secretly cherished the design of mounting the throne from the day he heard Elijah utter the doom of the house of Ahab. It is certain that the army was ripe for revolt. It may be that the nation was weary of the tyrannical rule of Jezebel, and that Joram himself was an object of contempt with the army. They may well have regarded his retirement to Jezreel as unmanly, and as an excuse for indulging in ease at the capital, for his wounds do not appear to have incapacitated him for any length of time.

The wild, excited appearance of the messenger, combined with the haste and secrecy with which he executed his commission, had a marked effect upon the other captains. They could not doubt that Jehu had received some message from Jehovah. When Jehu broke his reserve and revealed the secret interview, it was as if a spark had been set to a train long prepared. Jehu was unanimously hailed as king.

2. Its accomplishment.

The extermination of the house of Ahab.

Secrecy was essential to success. Jehu intended to have no long civil war. He meant to surprise Joram at Jezreel. But he can hardly have expected so immediate a success. Joram's rash determination to go out to meet the approaching troops proved his downfall.

The steps of the destruction of the house of Ahab are:—

- (1) The death of Joram, promptly shot down by Jehu (ix. 22-26).
- (2) The death of Ahaziah, king of Judah (ix. 27-29).
- (3) Seizure of Jezreel, and the death of Jezebel, trodden under the feet of the horses as Jehu entered the gateway (ix. 30-37).
- (4) The massacre of Ahab's descendants at Samaria by the elders of that city, in response to Jehu's letter (x. 1-11).
- (5) The murder at Jezreel of all connected with the house of Ahab, including friends, priests and adherents (x. 11).
- (6) The slaughter of forty-two of the royal family of Judah (connected with the house of Ahab by the marriage of Athaliah, his daughter, to Jehoram, king of Judah), at the shearing-house (x. 12-14).
- (7) The final slaughter of every member of the royal house who may have hitherto been overlooked. Jehu saw to this in person (x. 17).

The first part of Jehu's mission was now completed. He had followed out the usual Oriental custom of putting to death all the male members of a reigning house. Eastern usurpers almost invariably adopt this plan in order to prevent any possible chance of the revival of the claims of the deposed dynasty. He now proceeded to remove the worship of Baal.

Extinction of Baal worship.

This is marked by Jehu's characteristic qualities of secrecy, astuteness, thoroughness and unscrupulousness.

Secrecy. He masks his real designs under the pretence of honouring Baal. To Jehonadab only does he communicate his real intentions.

Astuteness. The Baal worshippers imagined they were pleasing the king by coming to the worship.

Thoroughness. His measures led to the massacre of all the worshippers. He finished his work by the destruction of all images of Baal and Ashtoreth, and made the temple of Baal into a draught house, thus permanently polluting its site.

Unscrupulousness. He deceived the Baal worshippers, and did not hesitate to slaughter them all. Probably Jehu was more interested in removing possible supporters of a rival than in restoring the worship of Jehovah. The Baal worshippers were the only party in the nation likely to put forward a rival claimant to the throne. Political expediency rather than religious zeal appears to have been the guiding motive.

Jehu retained the calf worship of Jeroboam.

Wars of Jehu.

Jehu does not seem to have successfully resisted Syria, for Hazael reduced all the country east of Jordan (x. 32-33).

Character of Jehu.

1. *An able, brave soldier.* He rose to be captain of the host, and his impetuous daring in attack was a matter of notoriety throughout the kingdom.
2. *Prompt and energetic,* evidenced by his conduct of the revolt.
3. *Astute.* Note the measures by which he involved the leaders at Samaria in the destruction of the family of Ahab, and his arrangements for the massacre of the worshippers of Baal.
4. *Secretive.* If he had formed the design of one day supplanting the Omri dynasty, he had kept his purpose to himself. He observed the same secrecy in the massacre of the Baal worshippers.
5. *Unscrupulous and cruel.* He ruthlessly swept aside all in his path, and all likely to be a danger in the future.

Dean Stanley thus sums up his character: "Inscrutable secrecy and reserve in carrying out his plans, a union of cold remorseless tenacity with occasional outbursts of furious, wayward, almost fanatical zeal . . . the most unlovely and the most coldly commended of all the heroes of his country" (Lectures II. 286).

Hosea condemns him, "*I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu*" (Hosea i. 4).

Jehoahaz (B.C. 856—B.C. 840), son and successor of Jehu.

He maintained the calf worship at Bethel, and allowed the Asherah, erected in Samaria by Ahab on his marriage with Jezebel (1 Kings xvi. 33), to be once more an object of worship (xiii. 2, 6).

Hazael reduced Israel to a very weak state, destroying its army and sacking its cities till he left Jehoahaz with the scanty force of only fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen (xiii. 7). This is the period of slaughter and devastation foretold by Elisha to Hazael.

"*Their strongholds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men shall thou slay with the sword, and will dash their children, and rip up their women with child*" (viii. 12).

Joash (B.C. 840—B.C. 824), son and successor of Jehoahaz. Third king of the Jehu dynasty.

He maintained the calf worship at Bethel. Apart from this his conduct seems to have been commendable. His reign is marked—

1. By the death of Elisha (for particulars, see xiii. 14-19).

Joash visited the prophet on his death-bed. His interview is important—

- (1) In showing the character of Jehoahaz. His respect for the aged prophet is in marked contrast to the apparent neglect of Elisha by Jehu and Jehoahaz. The king also recognized how great had been the influence of Elisha; he looks upon him as the true defence of Israel: "*the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof.*"
 - (2) In the prediction of the dying prophet that Joash should thrice defeat the Syrians at Aphek. Further successes were denied him only through his want of faith. Had he smitten the ground many times he would have been granted the high honour of completely crushing the Syrians. Such distinction is reserved for his son.
2. **Successes over Syria.** Hazael was dead, and his son Benhadad occupied the throne of Syria.

Joash defeated the Syrians thrice at Aphek, the scene of Ahab's great victory (1 Kings xx. 29), and drove them west of Jordan, and recovered all the cities which Jehoahaz had lost in that district.

3. **Wars with Amaziah, king of Judah** (see Amaziah, p. xx.).

Joash defeated Amaziah at Beth-shemesh, and took him prisoner on the field of battle. He entered Jerusalem, levelled about two hundred yards of the north wall, thus weakening the city against future attacks from the northern kingdom, carried off the treasures of the Temple and of the royal palace, and compelled Amaziah to give hostages as a pledge of future good behaviour towards Israel.

Jeroboam II. (B.C. 824—783), son and successor of Joash.

He maintained the calf worship. His name, the same as that of the founder of the northern kingdom and institutor of the calf worship, is an indication that the Jehu dynasty thoroughly approved of this worship.

He is the greatest of all the kings of Samaria, "the deliverer" foretold in the reign of Jehoahaz (xiii. 5), and recovered for Israel all the territory included in the dominions of Solomon, from Hamath on the north to the Dead Sea on the south (xiv. 25-28).

He appears to have had the support of the prophet Jonah (xiv. 25), who predicted his great successes in prophecies now lost. Jeroboam relying on these promises, waged war with confidence and vigour.

It was a reign of prosperity and peace. The people "*dwell in their tents*" (xiii. 5), *i.e.* enjoyed the peaceable occupation of their lands, free from the incursions of hostile neighbours. This prosperity exhibited itself in magnificent buildings and luxurious living, which destroyed the morals and weakened the physical vigour of the people, thus preparing the nation for its subsequent downfall (see the prophecies of Amos).

Whilst Jeroboam did more than any other king to regain the territory and restore the military prestige of the nation, the national extravagance, depravity and debauchery sapped its vital strength and made it an easy prey to the Assyrian conqueror.

Zachariah (B.C. 772—771), son and successor of Jeroboam II. The fifth and last of the Jehu dynasty.

The fate of Israel was dependent upon two contingencies, viz. :—

- (1) The extirpation of Baal worship.
- (2) The abandonment of calf worship.

The former had been carried out thoroughly, effectually and permanently by Jehu. But no attempt had been made by his dynasty to undo the sin of Jeroboam. The time of probation was over. The deplorable moral state of the nation is depicted by the denunciations of the prophets Amos and Hosea. So the cup of the house of Jehu being full, Jehovah permits the fulfilment of the prophesied conclusion of his dynasty. Six months after his accession Zachariah was publicly murdered by Shallum, who ascended the throne.

The subsequent history of Israelite kings gives a record of brief reigns by successive military usurpers.

Shallum (B.C. 771). The murderer of Zachariah. He reigned one month only. Menahem marched from Tirzah, the old capital, took Samaria, and put the usurper Shallum to death.

Menahem (B.C. 771—760). The son of Gadi (*i.e.* a man of Gilead). According to Josephus he was the "captain of the host," and was with the army at Tirzah when he heard of the death of Zachariah. He marched to Samaria, put the usurper Shallum to death, and ascended the throne.

His reign lasted ten or eleven years, and is marked by two important events :—

- (1) An expedition against Tiphseh, which he captured and treated with barbarous severity (xv. 16).
- (2) The invasion by Pul, king of Assyria, to whom Menahem submitted at once, and thus saved his land and his crown. He was compelled to pay 1,000 talents of silver (£375,000).

We may assume that Menahem acknowledged the suzerainty of Assyria, for it is clear that from this date there are two rival political parties in both Israel and Judah, the one inclined to admit the suzerainty of Assyria, and the other relying upon Egypt as an ally in resisting the great Asiatic monarchy. This will account for the continual change of king in the later days of Israel.

Pekahiah (B.C. 760—759), son of Menahem. He reigned two years only. Pekah, an inferior captain, but probably the leader of the Egyptian party in the state, headed a conspiracy, and slew Pekahiah in the palace at Samaria, along with Argob and Arich and the fifty Gileadites of the king's bodyguard.

Pekah (B.C. 759—739), son of Remaliah, and a captain in the army. Evidently the leader of the party in the state favourable to an Egyptian alliance. He murdered Pekahiah, and usurped the throne.

The power of Assyria was now a menace to all the states of Western Asia from the Euphrates to the Nile. So a coalition of these states was formed to resist the dreaded Assyrians. Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, advanced against Judah, in order to force that kingdom to join the coalition. Ahaz, king of Judah, bought the assistance of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who came against Syria, reduced it to submission, and then invaded the north of Palestine, occupying the territories of the extreme northern tribes and carrying the inhabitants captive to Assyria (xv. 29).

Pekah was murdered by Hoshea, who ascended the throne.

Hoshea (B.C. 739—722), son of Elah. The last Israelite king. He gained the throne by killing Pekahiah. We may assume that he was probably the representative of the Assyrian party in the state, and that his conspiracy met with the approval of the Assyrian king, who accepted him as a vassal king, and ratified his usurpation of the kingdom.

For some years Hoshea paid tribute to Assyria, but with no goodwill, and he quickly seized the opportunity for discontinuing the payment. The death of Tiglath-pileser was followed by revolts in the Assyrian empire, whilst the throne of Egypt was filled by So or Sabaco, a singularly able monarch. Hoshea entered into negotiations with So, and encouraged with the hope of Egyptian succour, refused tribute to Assyria and claimed independence.

Shalmaneser, the successor to Tiglath-pileser, was engaged in war with Tyre, but he at once marched to Samaria, gained possession of the person of the king, captured the cities of Israel, and ultimately laid siege to Samaria (JOSEPHUS).

Samaria fell after a prolonged siege of three years; Egypt, as usual, making no effort to advance to its relief. Sargon, the son of Shalmaneser, was the actual captor of the city.

With the fall of Samaria the northern kingdom ceased to exist (B.C. 721). The population was deported, and the land peopled by colonists from various parts of the Assyrian empire. These colonists became in time the Samaritans of later years (see p. lxxiii.).

THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

Jehoshaphat (B.C. 914-889). Son of Asa.

A good, brave and politic sovereign, worshipping Jehovah. His reign is notable for a change of policy in the relations between Judah and Israel, for Jehoshaphat made alliance with Ahab, King of Israel. We find indications of this alliance in

- (1) The marriage of his son Jehoram to Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab.
- (2) The joint expedition of Ahab and Jehoshaphat to recover Ramoth-Gilead.

- (3) The equipment of the fleet at Ezion-geber in conjunction with Ahaziah, the successor of Ahab.
- (4) The alliance of Jehoshaphat King of Judah, Joram King of Israel, and the King of Edom against Moab.
- (5) The evident friendship between Ahaziah, grandson of Jehoshaphat and Joram the son of Ahab. Ahaziah was at Jezreel with Joram when the latter was slain by Jehu.

Thus the alliance between Israel and Judah lasted through the successive reigns of Jehoshaphat, Jehoram and Ahaziah. For the fatal consequences of this alliance see p. xxxi.

Notice in 2 Kings.

The only mention of Jehoshaphat in this book is the expedition of the three Kings of Judah, Israel and Edom to reduce Moab once more under the rule of the King of Israel (see pp. lxx.-lxxii.)

Elisha declared that it was only the presence of Jehoshaphat that induced him to give assistance to the King of Israel.

Jehoram (B.C. 889-884). Son of Jehoshaphat.

He appears to have been regent for his father, probably at the time of the expedition against Ramoth Gilead, and also to have been joined with his father in the government some years before the death of Jehoshaphat (see p. 135.).

The principal events of his reign are—

1. That, influenced by his wife Athaliah, daughter of Ahab, he allowed Baal worship in Judah (viii. 18).
2. That Edom threw off the yoke of Judah. The Edomite forces surrounded the army of Judah at Zair. Though Jehoram was successful in breaking through the cordon, his army dispersed, and Edom gained its independence. Libnah also revolted at the same time (viii. 20-22).
3. From Chronicles we learn
 - (a) That on his accession Jehoram put to death his six brothers whom Jehoshaphat his father had made rulers over fenced cities of Judah (2 Chron. xxi. 2-4).
 - (b) That Philistines and Arabians made an inroad into Judah, broke into Jerusalem, carried off treasure and the king's wives and sons, leaving only Jehoahaz (Ahaziah) his youngest son.

Jehoram died of an incurable disease of the bowels, which affected him for two years. He was buried in the City of David, but not in the royal sepulchre, and there was no public mourning at his death.

Ahaziah or Jehoahaz (2 Chron. xxi. 17) (B.C. 884-883). Son of Jehoram and Athaliah.

Baal worship was continued. Evidently Athaliah, the queen mother, guided the policy of this short reign.

Ahaziah reigned only one year. He assisted Joram the King of Israel in the war with Syria, in which Israel regained Ramoth Gilead.

He visited Joram at Jezreel; when the latter lay there wounded in the siege of Ramoth Gilead, and thus he met his death in the revolt of Jehu against the house of Ahab (ix. 21-28).

Athaliah (B.C. 883-877). Daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and wife of Jehoram King of Judah. The mother of Ahaziah.

This marriage, disastrous to Judah (see p. xxxi.), was nearly being absolutely fatal to the house of David.

The royal house had been sadly thinned

- (1) By the execution of the sons of Jehoshaphat by Jehoram on his accession (2 Chron. xxi. 2-4).
- (2) By the Philistines and Arabians in their inroad into Judah (2 Chron. xxi. 16-17).
- (3) By the slaughter of forty-two of the princes by Jehu (x. 14).

And now Athaliah boldly destroyed all male members of the royal family left in Jerusalem and usurped the throne. Fortunately Joash the son of Ahaziah, then an infant, was saved by Jehosheba from the massacre (see pp. cix.-cx.).

Athaliah was a bold, bad woman, a true daughter of Jezebel. Her usurpation must have been abhorrent to the nation, but her daring cowed all opposition. She reigned for six years.

Baal worship flourished, and was the national religion. The temple of Baal was continually beautified from the Temple of the Lord (2 Chron. xxiv. 7). But it does not appear that Athaliah persecuted the worshippers of Jehovah.

At the end of six years she fell (see pp. cix. and 44), the last survivor of the house of Omri.

Joash or Jehoash (B.C. 877-838). Son of Ahaziah and Athaliah.

His reign may be divided into three epochs:—

1. Accession and minority.
2. Rule during the lifetime of Jehoiada.
3. Later years after the death of Jehoiada.

First Period (see Jehoiada, p. cix.).

Second Period marked by the restoration of the Temple.

The condition of the Temple was deplorable.

- (a) Breaches had been made in it, *i.e.* the stones had been removed to be used elsewhere.
- (b) Its treasures and vessels had been removed to serve for the worship of Baal.
- (c) Its doorkeepers had been removed and unclean persons (*i.e.* not Levites) had been allowed to enter (2 Chron. xxiii. 19).

Jehoiada re-established the courses of priests and Levites, arranged for the musical services, and placed porters at all the gates (2 Chron. xxiii. 18-19).

This was done immediately after the death of Athaliah.

The work of restoring the building itself was not undertaken till later in the king's reign, when he had passed out of his minority.

At first the Levites were commissioned to collect for the purpose, but conducted the business so badly that the king eventually took the matter in hand himself. The Levites appear to have been unbusiness-like in their methods, but in no way dishonest. The king's plan was simple and effective. The offerings devoted to the Temple repairs were placed in a chest and sufficient was quickly obtained, and the work finished in the twenty-third year of the reign. The overplus was devoted to sacred vessels.

Third Period marked by idolatry and religious persecution (see 2 Chron. xxiv. 15-27).

The long minority of the king had predisposed him to being guided by advisers. On the death of Jehoiada the princes of Judah appear to have flattered the king, and to have gained his consent to the re-introduction of the "Grove worship" and other forms of idolatry.

This relapse was fiercely denounced by the prophets, led by Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, and now the high priest. Zechariah, moved by the Spirit of God, denounced the idolatry from the Temple Court, and was stoned there by the order of the king. Disasters followed. Hazael invaded the south and took Gath, and he then turned towards Jerusalem. The Syrians, though a small band, defeated the large army under Joash, who then bought relief by a sacrifice of the treasures of the Temple and of the Palace.

Joash came to a miserable end. Whilst sick of dire disease, and lying in the fortress of Millo, he was assassinated by some of the officials of his household. He was buried in the city of David, but not in the sepulchre of the kings.

It is expressly mentioned in Chronicles that his death was in retribution for the murder of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada.

Amaziah (B.C. 838-810), son of Joash.

The principal acts of the reign are—

1. **Restoration of authority.** The assassination of Joash evidently left the kingdom in a state of confusion between two parties in the state.

When he was thoroughly established on the throne he executed the murderers of his father, but spared their families.

2. **Reconquest of Edom.** Amaziah thoroughly reorganized the army, and then commenced military operations against Edom, which nation (according to Amos) had caused great damage to Judah by continual incursions.

He also hired a body of Israelite mercenaries for one hundred talents, but sent them back at the bidding of a prophet (2 Chron. xxv. 6-10). These mercenaries, irritated at being sent back, plundered "the cities of Judah" on their route and slew three thousand of Judah.

Amaziah completely defeated the Edomites in a great battle in the valley of Salt, slaying 10,000 of them, and capturing 10,000, whom he put to death by throwing them from the cliffs

on which Petra (Selah) the capital of Edom was situated. The power of Edom was completely broken by this defeat. Chronicles records that Amaziah took back with him some of the gods of the Edomites and worshipped them (2 Chron. xxv. 11-15).

3. **War with Joash King of Israel.** Elated by this victory, and possibly irritated by the conduct of the Israelite mercenaries, Amaziah arrogantly challenged Joash. The King of Israel sent a mocking reply in the parable of the Thistle and the Cedar (xiv. 9-14). Such a reply was calculated to irritate Amaziah the more, and he collected his forces to march against Israel.

Joash appears to have anticipated him, and the two armies met at Beth-shemesh in Judæan territory. Judah was routed and Amaziah taken prisoner.

The victorious Joash entered Jerusalem in triumph, breaking down about 200 yards of the northern wall to admit his conquering troops. Though there was no sack of the city, nor any massacre of its inhabitants, Joash received the treasures of the Palace and the Temple, and carried off with him to Samaria certain hostages for the good behaviour of Judah.

Amaziah reigned fifteen years after his defeat by Joash, but never recovered his prestige with his people. Discontent rankled, and at last broke out in open revolt. Amaziah fled from the capital and took refuge in Lachish. But he appears to have had few supporters, for the conspirators followed him to Lachish and put him to death. They committed no further indignity, but conveyed the body in the royal chariot with honourable state to Jerusalem, and interred it in the royal burying ground.

Azariah, better known as Uzziah (B.C. 810-758).

The account of his reign, as given in 2 Kings, is very meagre. All that we learn from that book is

- (1) That all the people made him king. This implies the unanimous choice of the people, and probably indicates that any design of the conspirators of altering the succession was promptly frustrated by the national feeling in favour of Uzziah.
- (2) That he was smitten with leprosy, and spent the last years of his reign in a separate dwelling, the land being ruled by his son Jotham, acting as regent.

But from Chronicles we learn many details of his reign.

1. He extended the influence of Judah as far as Elath or Eloth on the Red Sea, and thus renewed maritime enterprise in that quarter.
2. He had war with the Philistines and captured Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, his fame and power extending to the entering in of Egypt.
3. He curbed the wandering Arabs of the South, and it is recorded that the Ammonites paid tribute to him. (By Ammonites must be understood the natives east of Jordan).

4. He strengthened the defences of Jerusalem, building towers at the three weakest corners of the walls (see p. 57).
5. He built towns in the wild pasture districts of the south and south-east, as places of refuge against marauding Arabs.
6. He dug wells and promoted husbandry.
7. He organized the military forces, and constructed engines for the walls of Jerusalem.

"His reign was the most prosperous, excepting that of Jehoshaphat, since the days of Solomon" (STANLEY).

"He was equally great in the arts of peace and in those of war" (EWALD).

But he became inflated with pride, and attempted to usurp the priestly office of burning incense in the Holy Place. For this he was struck with a sudden leprosy, immediately visible to all, and passed the rest of his days in a separate house.

Jotham (B.C. 758-742). Son of Uzziah, and acted as regent during the later years of his father's reign (see above).

He was a good king, although he did not put down the high places. "*He built the higher gate of the house of the Lord*" (xiii. 15).

The coalition of Rezin King of Syria and Pekah King of Israel against Assyria was formed in the later years of his reign, and pressure was put upon Jotham to join the confederacy, though no open attack was made upon Judah till the reign of Ahaz.

From Chronicles we learn

- (1) That in addition to building the high gate of the Temple he strengthened the fortifications of Ophel (see p. lxxiii.).
- (2) That he severely defeated the Ammonites, who had refused the tribute paid in the reign of Uzziah. He imposed a tribute of 100 talents of silver, 10,000 measures of wheat, and 10,000 measures of barley for the space of three years, after which the ordinary tribute appears to have been paid (2 Chron. xxvii. 5).

Ahaz (B.C. 742-727), son of Jotham, ascended the throne at the age of twenty years. His reign is notorious in the history of Judah. Ahaz is responsible for the fall of the Southern Kingdom, for:

- (1) He nearly succeeded in the total abolition of the worship of Jehovah.
- (2) He sacrificed the independence of the nation to temporal expediency.

A weak monarch without courage, energy, or piety, he succeeded to the throne at a most critical time. Though his father, Jotham, had been a pious king, he died leaving Ahaz with a most difficult task before him. The whole nation was internally, socially, and morally corrupt (see Isaiah, Chaps. i. iii. v.).

Without, the kingdom was threatened by the coalition of Samaria and Syria. Religious, moral, and social reform was the only cure for the internal evils, trust in Jehovah was the only protection against foreign foe. Ahaz adopted neither the one nor the other.

The invasion by Pekah and Rezin quickly reduced the kingdom to the direst straits. Combining the narratives of Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah, we learn:—

1. That the united forces of Israel and Syria besieged Jerusalem, but were compelled to raise the siege and to conduct the campaign on different lines. They "*went up against Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it*" (Is. vii. 1).
2. Rezin, king of Syria, then proceeded to act on the east, whilst Pekah ravaged the west.

Rezin pushed south as far as Elath, thus overrunning the whole of Southern Judaea.

Pekah ravaged the west, slaying 120,000 men and carrying off 200,000 women and children, but he was compelled to restore these captives through the intervention of the prophet Oded, and the remonstrances of certain captains of Ephraim.

3. The Edomites on the south-east, and the Philistines on the south-west, invaded the land. Edom appears to have made a single raid only, but the Philistines gained permanent possession of the low country of Judah.

Judah was in sore distress. Isaiah promised deliverance, and foretold the fall of Damascus and the end of the kingdom of Israel. But Ahaz lacked faith in Jehovah and sought foreign aid.

He must call upon either Egypt or Assyria to protect him. Egypt was at the time engaged in a contest which resulted in the establishment of an Ethiopian dynasty, so could give no assistance. Assyria was under the rule of an able and warlike monarch Tiglath-pileser. So Ahaz appealed to Assyria, buying relief at the expense of the treasures of the Temple, and of the palace, and with all the wealth at the disposal of the royal house.

In response Tiglath-pileser relieved him of both his enemies. Syria was overwhelmed, Damascus taken, Rezin deposed, and the inhabitants of the country deported.

In Israel the party favourable to Assyria conspired against Pekah. Hoshea, the leader of this party, murdered Pekah and seized the throne as a vassal king of Assyria.

Thus Ahaz and Judah were saved from Syria and Samaria, but at the price of the country's independence. From this time, save for a brief period in the reign of Hezekiah, Judah was practically the vassal of Assyria.

The idolatries of Ahaz.

A visit to Damascus to make submission to Tiglath-pileser had serious results for Judah. Ahaz saw at Damascus an altar of a pattern unknown to the Jews, and determined to adopt it as the model of a new altar to take the place of the great brazen altar of Solomon. Taking his departure from Jehovah's worship as a basis, we can thus summarise the wicked practices of Ahaz.

1. As regards the Temple.

- (a) The new altar made after the pattern of the one at Damascus, replaced the brazen altar of Solomon (xvi. 10, 16).
- (b) The bases were removed from the ten lavers (xvi. 17).
- (c) The great laver, or "molten sea," was taken off its pedestal of the twelve oxen, and put upon a pavement of stone (xvi. 17).
- (d) The brazen canopy was removed from the royal seat within the court of the Temple (xvi. 18).
- (e) The passage by which the kings entered the Temple was also removed. (xvi. 18).
All this was done "for the King of Assyria" (For = because of) (xvi. 18). So we may infer that the new arrangements were made either at the command of the King of Assyria, or carried out by Ahaz in compliment to his suzerain (see p. 115).
- (f) He shut up the great doors of the Temple (2 Chron. xxviii. 24), caused the sacred lamps to be no longer lighted, discontinued the offering of incense and the morning and evening sacrifice (2 Chron. xxix. 7), and left the building to fall into a filthy, dirty state (xxix. 5-11).

2. As regards other gods.

- (a) Ahaz "walked in the way of the kings of Israel, even to the abominations of the heathen" (xvi. 3).
- (b) He restored the worship of Moloch, and even "made his son to pass through the fire" (xvi. 3).
- (c) He "sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree" (xvi. 4).
- (d) He planted altars in the corners of the streets.
- (e) On the Temple roof were erected little altars; apparently erected for the worship of the twelve signs of the Zodiac (xxiii. 5-12).
- (f) The sun, moon, and heavenly bodies were worshipped. In the Temple court were the stalls for the sacred white horses of the chariot of the sun (xxiii. 11).

Ahaz died at the early age of thirty-six. His successor, Hezekiah, regained the independence of Judah, and restored the worship of Jehovah.

Hezekiah (B.C. 727-698). Son of Ahaz, and the most remarkable of the kings of Judah. On his accession Judah seemed to be at the point of dissolution, but to Hezekiah she owed a recovery which lengthened the duration of the kingdom by nearly 150 years.

What Hezekiah did for the kingdom.

"Peace and truth" were the watchwords of his reign (xx. 19.)

He promoted the acts of peace. Agriculture flourished (2 Chron. xxxii. 28-29).

He strengthened the fortifications of Jerusalem, and provided his soldiers with proper arms (2 Chron. xxxii. 5).

He made provision for the water supply of Jerusalem by an aqueduct from without, and by a reservoir hewn out of the solid rock (2 Chron. xxxii. 3-4).

He restored the independence of the country.

He was successful in a war against the Philistines, conquering the land as far as Gaza (xviii. 8).

The army of the Assyrians was destroyed by the angel of the Lord, and no further attack was made on Judah.

The country was wealthy and prosperous, and the king amassed great treasures.

What he did for religion.

He commenced his reign by a thorough religious reformation. This included:—

1. The cleansing and purification of the Temple and restoration of the services, with the removal of the altar and vessels of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxix. 3-19).
2. This purification was followed by a sacrifice upon a large scale (2 Chron. xxix. 20-36).
3. A solemn Passover was kept. This Passover is remarkable from the fact that Hezekiah sent invitations to the Northern tribes to join in it. Many laughed the invitation to scorn, but several from the tribes of Asher, Manasseh, Zebulon, Ephraim, and Issachar joined in the service (2 Chron. xxx. 5-27).
4. He "brake down the images and cut down the groves." Many of his predecessors had done the same, but Hezekiah went further for—
 - (a) He removed the high places, i.e. those devoted to the worship of Jehovah.

It is important to notice this.

- (b) He brake in pieces the brazen serpent of Moses, now an object of superstitious worship (see p. 125).
- (c) He broke down idols in the Northern Kingdom. This appears to have been done in a tumultuous outburst of religious zeal after the great Passover (2 Chron. xxxi. 1).

The reign is marked by three great events.

1. The Assyrian invasions and the destruction of the host of Sennacherib (xviii. and xix.). For particulars see under Sennacherib, p. lxxxi.
2. The illness of Hezekiah and the prolongation of his life by fifteen years. (see xx. 1-11). This illness occurred during the Assyrian invasion, and at a time when Hezekiah had no son.
3. The visit of the Ambassadors of Berodach-baladan, king of Babylon (xx. 12-19). For particulars see under Merodach-baladan (p. lxxxi.).

This visit is remarkable for the prophecy of Isaiah that the destruction of Judah should come from Babylon not Assyria (xx. 16-19). For particulars and fulfilment see p. xlvii.

The later years of the reign were a period of rest and peace. Hezekiah enjoyed great prestige, for "*he was magnified in the sight of all nations*" (2 Chron. xxxii. 23). Professor Rawlinson describes him as "*a statesman, a warrior, a poet, an antiquarian, an engineer, and the leader of a most important religious movement.*"

Great honour was paid to Hezekiah at his death, and he is eulogised in Scripture as having "*trusted in the Lord God of Israel: so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him*" (xviii. 5).

Similar language is applied to Josiah.

Hezekiah is commended for his *trust in God*.

Josiah is commended for strict adherence to the *Law of Moses*, and for his *personal piety*.

Manasseh (B.C. 698-643), son of Hezekiah, ascended the throne at the age of twelve. He came under the influence of that party of the Jewish nobles that favoured the different forms of heathen worship. The forms of worship introduced included:—

1. Restoration of the high places, *i.e.* where a so-called worship of Jehovah took place.
2. The erection of altars for Baal and a grove, *i.e.* the reintroduction of the licentious worship of Baal and Ashtoreth.
3. An Asherah was erected in the Temple, and those who practised the abominable rites of that goddess were assigned dwellings near the Temple.
4. The worship of the heavenly bodies, altars being erected to them in the Temple courts.
5. The reintroduction of the chariots and horses of the Sun.
6. Moloch worship renewed. Manasseh made his own son to pass through fire to Moloch.
7. All forms of enchantments, familiar spirits and witchcraft were encouraged. Manasseh is said to have "*done wickedly above all that the Amorites (i.e. the original inhabitants of Canaan) did*" (xxi. 11).
8. There was a persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah. Manasseh is said to "*have shed innocent blood very much*" (xxi. 16). According to tradition Isaiah was sawn to death in this persecution.

These idolatries brought down a declaration of the inevitable and complete destruction of Judah. The nation was so steeped in idolatry at heart that not even the reforms of Josiah could avail to avert the fate of a people abandoned to idolatry, and given up to luxury and all kinds of vice.

From Chronicles we gather—

- (1) That Manasseh was carried captive to Babylon.

(2) That while there he repented, and was allowed to return to Judah.

(3) That on his return he—

(a) strengthened the fortifications of Jerusalem;

(b) carried out certain religious reforms.

But there was no genuine reformation of the people.

Amon (B.C. 643-641), son of Manasseh.

He had a brief reign of two years, during which he restored all the idolatries of the reign of Manasseh, as we gather from the reforms of Josiah.

He was slain "*in his own house*" by his own servants, who formed a conspiracy against him. We find no reason given for the conspiracy.

Josiah (B.C. 641-610), son of Amon.

He was only eight years of age when he ascended the throne.

From his youth he appears to have been distinguished for his personality and piety (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3).

In the twelfth year of his reign, *i.e.* when he was twenty years of age, he commenced a revival of true religion (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3).

The order of his reforms is—

1. He purged the Temple of all traces of idolatrous worship (xxiii. 4-7).
2. He cleared all idols from Jerusalem, etc. (xxiii. 6).
3. He put down all the high places of Jehovah in the land, and defiled their sites by burning dead men's bones upon them.
4. He defiled the Valley of Topheth, putting an end to the worship of Moloch in that valley. The valley became the place for deposit of the filth of the city (xxiii. 10).
5. He took away the horses of the Sun, and broke up all the altars made by Ahaz and Manasseh (xxiii. 11-12).
6. He removed all high places erected on the Mount of Offence in the days of Solomon, and allowed by subsequent kings of Judah, and defiled the sites with the bones of dead men (xxiii. 13-14).
7. He carried his reforms beyond the boundaries of Judah into Samaria, where
 - (a) He broke down the altar of Jeroboam at Bethel, defiled it by burning dead men's bones upon it, and then stamped it small to powder. In this he fulfilled the prophecy spoken by the Man of Judah in the reign of Jeroboam, and it is specially mentioned that he spared his bones (xxiii. 15-18).
 - (b) He proceeded northwards, even to Naphtali, breaking down the altars "*with mattocks*" (2 Chron. xxxiv. 6).
8. He repaired the Temple thoroughly.

During the removal of the rubbish from the Temple, Hilkiah the priest found the "Book of the Law."

When Josiah heard the denunciations against idolatry read from the book, he was filled with horror, and feared that the evils foretold in the Book might come upon the nation.

The prophetess Huldah was consulted, and declared that the evil should come upon the nation, but that the pious Josiah should be spared the calamity in his day—he should be gathered to his fathers and die in peace.

Josiah made an effort to save the people. He summoned a vast concourse to Jerusalem, had the Law solemnly read to the whole assembly, and renewed the covenant with Jehovah (xxiii. 1-3).

This solemn ceremony was followed by a Passover, described thus: "*There was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet; neither did the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Judah kept*" (2 Chron. xxxv. 18).

There is no account of the rest of the reign save its close and the death of Josiah, which occurred thirteen years after the Passover.

Pharaoh-Necho advanced into Palestine. Assyria had fallen, Nineveh had been taken and destroyed, Babylon had yet not consolidated its power. All Western Asia was in a turmoil. It was Egypt's opportunity, and Necho seized it in order to march through Syria to the Euphrates. For some reason not stated Josiah determined to resist the progress of the Egyptian army, and in spite of the assurance of Necho that he had no quarrel with him, but only with the king of Babylon, Josiah offered battle at Megiddo. The forces of Judah were overwhelmed, Josiah was mortally wounded, and conveyed in a chariot to Jerusalem, where he died. He was buried with great honour and lamentation, Jeremiah mourning his death with a special elegy (2 Chron. xxxv. 25).

Josiah personally was probably the most pious and most blameless of all the kings of Judah.

"He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left" (xxii. 2).

"Like unto him was there no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him" (xxiii. 25).

Josiah is commended for strict adherence to the law of Moses and for personal piety.

Hezekiah is commended for his trust in God.

Jehoahaz or **Shallum** (B.C. 610). Fourth son of Josiah (*see table, p. viii.*).

On the death of Josiah the people elected Jehoahaz king in preference to his older brothers. He reigned only three months, for Pharaoh-Necho, on his return from Carchemish, summoned him to Riblah. There he was cast into chains, and was taken to Egypt, where he died, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah.

"He shall not return thither any more; but he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more" (Jer. xxii. 11-12).

Jehoiakim or **Eliakim** (B.C. 610-599), son of Josiah.

After the deposition of Jehoahaz, Pharaoh-Necho set Eliakim on the throne, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. For four years Jehoiakim was a tributary king to Egypt.

After the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish (B.C. 606) Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, and made Jehoiakim tributary to Babylon. After three years Jehoiakim rebelled. The end of this monarch is uncertain. At first the Chaldeans with Syrians, Moabites and Ammonites, subject nations to Babylon, harassed the country.

It may be that Jehoiakim met his death

- either (1) in an engagement with some of these;
- or (2) at the hands of his own subjects;
- or (3) by order of Nebuchadnezzar.

All that is certain is that he came to some shameful and disgraceful end, and was not buried in Jerusalem, nor with any royal honour, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah:—

“He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem” (Jer. xxiii. 19).

Jehoiachin or **Coniah** (B.C. 599), son of Jehoiakim and Nebushta. He was king for only three months and ten days.

Nebuchadnezzar had advanced against Jerusalem, whereupon Jehoiachin surrendered at discretion. The king, the queen-mother, and all the principal officials, came out of the city and gave themselves up to Nebuchadnezzar, who carried them off to Babylon.

For thirty-six years he remained in prison, wearing prison garments, till restored by Evil-Merodach, who released him from prison, changed his garments, placed him higher than any of the other subject kings, and caused him to sit at his own table.

With Jehoiachin ended the line of David through Solomon. The royal line was preserved through Nathan, and appears again in the person of Zerubbabel, who led the first party of Jews back to Jerusalem (Ezra ii. 1). But no one of David's line again occupied the throne.

The fate of Jehoiachin was in fulfilment of the prophecy of Jeremiah:—

“Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah” (Jer. xxii. 30).

Zedekiah, or **Mattaniah** (B.C. 599-588), son of Josiah, uncle of Jehoiachin.

Nebuchadnezzar appointed Zedekiah king in place of Jehoiachin, and changed his name to Mattaniah. Zedekiah was thus a tributary king to Babylon. The Book of Jeremiah is the best guide for the reign, of which the principal events are:—

1. In the fourth year we find ambassadors at Jerusalem from different nations, with the object of inducing Zedekiah to form a league against the Chaldeans.
2. In the next year Zedekiah pays a visit to Babylon, probably with the object of satisfying Nebuchadnezzar of his loyalty.

3. Three years later Zedekiah revolts, and seeks the assistance of Egypt.
4. In the next year the Babylonian army advances into Judah, and after capturing the Jewish cities, except Lachish and Azekah, lays siege to Jerusalem.
5. The advance of an Egyptian army, under Pharaoh-Hophrah, causes the Chaldeans to raise the siege temporarily.
6. The Egyptian army retreats without battle. The Chaldeans return and resume the siege of Jerusalem.
7. The city falls after a siege of eighteen months. Zedekiah flees from the city, but is followed and captured in the plain of Jericho ere he can cross the Jordan. He is then taken to Riblah for judgment before Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar causes his two sons to be put to death before his eyes, and then puts out the eyes of Zedekiah himself, whom he binds with fetters and carries to Babylon.
8. Nebuzaradan is commissioned by Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the defences of the city and the Temple. The plunder is carried to Babylon, the principal leaders (including Seraiah the high priest) are put to death at Riblah, and only "the poor of the land" are left.

Thus were fulfilled the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel:—

Jeremiah's: "Thou shalt not escape out of his hand, but shalt surely be taken and delivered into his hand; and thine eyes shall behold the eyes of the king of Babylon, and he shall speak with thee mouth to mouth, and thou shalt go to Babylon" (Jer. xxxiv. 3).

Ezekiel's: "I will bring him to Babylon; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there" (Ezekiel xii. 13).

HISTORY OF THOSE NOT CARRIED AWAY TO BABYLON.

Gedaliah made governor of Judah. (Jer. xl.)

Jeremiah elects to stay in Judah with Gedaliah. (xl. 1-6.)

Many of the Jews gather round Gedaliah. (xl. 7-12.)

The conspiracy of Ishmael; the murder of Gedaliah (see p. cviii.). (xl. 13, xli. 10.)

Pursuit of Ishmael by Johanan and the captains. Rescue of the captives. (xli. 11-18.)

At Bethlehem the captains consult Jeremiah as to the advisability of taking refuge in Egypt. (xlii. 1-6.)

The captains reject the advice of Jeremiah, and retire to Egypt. (xliii. 7-12.)

SUBSEQUENT HISTORY.

Evil-Merodach releases Jehoiachin out of prison, and restores him to kingly dignity whilst retaining him at Babylon (xxv. 27-30).

ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

(Some particulars of the two kingdoms.)

Israel. Ten Tribes. **Judah.** Two Tribes.

Israel retains the national name, and embodies the hopes of the prophets. They are the chief supporters of the successive dynasties, thus:—

Shemaiah and *Abijah* support the dynasty of Jeroboam.

The prophet *Jehu*, before denouncing Baasha, proclaims as the word of the Lord, “*I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel*” (1 Kings xvi. 2).

Elisha sent a young prophet to anoint *Jehu* (ix. 1-7). *Elisha* was also the adviser of *Joram*, and was visited by *Joash* on his death-bed.

Israel was the home of the prophetic order. There were schools of the prophets at Ramah, Bethel, Gilgal and Jericho. The prophets are counted by fifties by *Obadiah*.

The Importance of Israel. The glamour of Solomon and the house of David often conveys the false impression that Judah was the more important kingdom. The reverse is the case. Israel was more powerful, more important and more extensive. It not only included Ephraim, but “reached far away north and south, to the distant Naphtali beyond the sources of the Jordan: to the tribes beyond the Jordan; through the whole valley of the Jordan down to its exit into the Dead Sea; to the corner of Dan on the sea coast” (STANLEY).

The military character of Israel. We may note the ability of Jeroboam, the military sagacity of Baasha, whilst Omri and Jehu, both founders of dynasties, were distinguished as “captains of the host” previous to their usurpations. No king of Judah can compare with Jeroboam II., the greatest of Israel’s kings, in military power, wealth, and in extent of dominion.

CONNECTION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JUDAH, AND THEIR WARS.

1. **Jeroboam** (a) Constant border warfare in the time of Rehoboam.
(b) The great defeat of Jeroboam by Abijah.
2. **Baasha**, constant war with Asa. The seizure and fortification of Ramah by Baasha might have been fatal to Judah but for the counter attack by Benhadad on the north of Israel.
3. **Ahab**. The succession of Ahab marked a reversal of policy. For the first and only time we find alliance between Israel and Judah. Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was married to Jehoram the eldest son and successor of Jehoshaphat.

This alliance very nearly proved fatal to Judah.

1. It resulted in temporal disasters.
(a) Jehoshaphat accompanied Ahab to the fatal field of Ramoth Gilead.

- (b) The fleet built at Elath by Jehoshaphat in conjunction with Ahaziah, the successor of Ahab, was destroyed by a storm.
- (c) The expedition of Jehoshaphat with the kings of Israel and Edom narrowly escaped annihilation through want of water. The intervention of Elisha saved the allies.
2. **Religiously.** Athaliah introduced the worship of Baal and Ashtoreth into Judah. Its baneful influence lasted even after the end of the northern kingdom.
 3. **To the Dynasty.** Ahaziah perished in the revolt of Jehu. The greater number of the royal princes of Judah were slaughtered by Jehu. Athaliah put to death the remnant of the house of David at Jerusalem with the exception of the infant Joash, rescued from the massacre by Jehosheba, the wife of Jehoiada the high priest.
 4. Joash king of Israel defeated Amaziah king of Judah. He took Amaziah captive and then entered Jerusalem in triumph (see p. xv.).
 5. Pekah king of Israel, in alliance with Rezin king of Syria, endeavoured to force Judah into the confederacy against Assyria. On the danger to Judah of this invasion (see p. xxiii.).

Idolatry of Israel. The two great idolatries of the northern kingdom were—

1. The calf worship introduced by Jeroboam.
2. The worship of Baal introduced by Ahab.

The worship of Baal as the state religion, fostered by the reigning monarch, lasted through the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah and Jeram. It was practically suppressed by Jehu, and there is no recorded trace of its existence after the reign of his successor, Jehoahaz. The work of Elijah and Elisha against Baal worship met with complete success. We must not look to Baal worship as the cause of Israel's fall. It was fatal to the house of Ahab, but not to the kingdom of Israel. The calf worship was the canker that slowly ate away the religious life and unity of Israel.

The Calf worship.

1. **Its object.** To prevent the people from returning to their allegiance to Rehoboam. Jeroboam feared that if the people resorted regularly to the great festivals at Jerusalem they might be won back to the rule of the kings of Judah.
2. **Its sin (a) A breach of the second commandment.** Jeroboam did not break the first commandment, for he intended Jehovah to be worshipped. "*Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt*" (1 Kings xii. 28).

He thus broke the unity of the national worship and tampered with its spiritual conception.

- (b) **Want of faith.** Ahijah had told Jeroboam that God had said, "*I will be with thee and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee,*" on condition that Jeroboam should serve Him faithfully.

CONNECTION BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JUDAH. XXXiii.

Instead of relying upon this promise, Jeroboam adopted a half-worldly, half-religious policy, thus destroying his own dynasty and ruining his country.

3. **Result.** The enormity of the offence is indicated by the fact that the name of Jeroboam is invariably mentioned as "*Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin,*" or as it should be translated, "*his sin, wherewith he made Israel to sin.*"

And this calf worship was not abandoned by any single king of Israel.

As a consequence, though we do not find mention of such gross idolatries as those which desecrated Judah and Jerusalem, the people not only insensibly fell into the worship of other gods, but they entirely lost the idea of religious unity. The one God, the one priesthood, the one place of sacrifice, completely fell out of the nation's life. Having no religious centre as a focus for their religious life, the Ten Tribes lost their national existence in captivity. After the captivity they never revived as distinct tribes or as a separate nation.

The idolatry of Judah. More gross, more licentious, more abominable, more varied than that of Israel. The picture of the Temple and its courts in the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh has no counterpart in the history of Israel. The purity of the worship of Jehovah, excluding the idea of any other deity, led to this national revulsion. Those who renounced allegiance to Jehovah in Judah did so entirely and without reservation. They had no other choice. Consequently, there was an abandonment to idolatries of the worst kind.

But in contradistinction to Israel there were at least six kings in Judah distinguished for their piety, viz. Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, whilst Joash and Amaziah professed the religion of Jehovah for a considerable period of their reigns. The monarchs notorious for idolatry were Abijah, Joram (who introduced Baal worship), Ahaziah, Athaliah, Ahaz and Manasseh (who, however, repented in the later years of his reign).

Judah was saved by four circumstances.

- (1) The Temple at Jerusalem centralized the worship of Jehovah.
- (2) Pious monarchs invariably succeeded the wicked kings and swept away the idolatrous practices of their predecessors.
- (3) The reigns of the pious kings were long compared with those of the idolatrous kings. The kingdom of Israel lasted 253 years. During this period Judah was ruled for 200 years by monarchs who supported the worship of Jehovah, and only for fifty-three years by kings given to idolatry.
- (4) **No change of dynasty.** *Twenty* kings reigned over Israel, no less than *nine* dynasties. There were *eight* occasions of usurpation when the successful usurper put to death his predecessor. On *three* occasions the whole of the royal family was ruthlessly destroyed. In addition, there were two periods of interregnum, or rather anarchy.

In Judah, on the contrary, only one family—the house of David—save for the brief usurpation of Athaliah, occupied the throne.

Israel lasted 253 years. During that period *twenty* monarchs reigned over Israel, *thirteen* over Judah.

Judah lasted 376 years.

Religious Unity preserved the National Life of Judah. Judah returned from captivity thoroughly purged from idolatry.

The Last Days of Israel.

The reign of Jeroboam II. saw Israel prosperous in material wealth and in extent of territory such as had not been experienced since the days of Solomon.

But, as we gather from the prophecies of Hoshea and Amos, the moral state of the kingdom was deplorable. "The foreign civilization of the House of Omri—the long depravation of the public worship from the time of Jeroboam the First—had produced their natural effect amongst the higher classes of society."

Drunkeness was the prevailing vice, affecting king, princes, ladies, priests and prophets. "*They also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink*" (Isaiah xxviii. 7).

This sin was naturally followed by others—"licentiousness in all its forms; oppression of the poor; self-indulgent luxury; robbery and murder" (STANLEY).

The Last Days of Judah.

The Book of Jeremiah discloses for us distinct classes and distinct parties in the state.

1. **False prophets**, whose opposition was one of the greatest troubles which Jeremiah had to endure.
2. **The Priesthood.** Jehoiada had raised the priesthood to become a power in the state. From his day the high-priest exerted considerable influence. But in the closing period of Judah we find Amos uttering strong denunciations against the sacrificial and ceremonial system which was destroying the true spiritual conception of Jehovah and His worship.
3. **The Nobles or Princes.** We have early indications of the existence of this order, viz. :—
 - (1) In the young men whose advice was followed by Rehoboam in the great schism.
 - (2) In the princes of Judah who seduced Joash to idolatry after the death of Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-18).

In the time of Jeremiah there appear to have been three sections of the Princes, viz. :—

1. **The Party of Heathen Princes, i.e.** those who had always been addicted to idolatrous and licentious practices, and who appear to have dominated the later kings of Judah.

2. The Party of the Princes who supported the Priests.

3. The Friends of Jeremiah. The party on the side of Jehovah.

Moral and Religious State of Judah. This was deplorably bad.

The prophecies of Isaiah show clearly that the reforms of Hezekiah did not touch the heart of the people.

The religious reform of Josiah was effectual in removing the outward signs of idol worship from the land, but there does not appear to have been any decided change of morals. The defeat of Josiah at Megiddo by Pharaoh Necho was overwhelming to the advocates of a Chaldean alliance, and also to the moral reformers.

Jeremiah accuses the people of theft, murder, adultery, false swearing, and the secret worship of Baal (ix. 9).

"Such was the universal dishonesty that no man trusted another, and society was utterly disorganized by the want of mutual faith" (S.C.).

The religious controversies had brought about a state of mortal battle between two fierce parties. The persecution of the prophets by Manasseh had provoked the persecution of the idolatrous priests by Josiah. The mutual distrust, which had already in the time of Hezekiah broken up families and divided the nearest friends, and made a man's worst enemies those of his own household, had now reached the highest degree of intensity. "Every man had to take heed of his neighbour and suspect his brother" (STANLEY).

PROPHETS.

Prophet. It is a common error to associate the name only with one who utters predictions of the future.

The Hebrew word "*nabi*" signifies "one who announces or pours forth" the declarations of God. The Greek word signifies one who speaks for another.

Thus Aaron is appointed as Moses' prophet (Ex. vii. 1). In Ex. iv. 16, Aaron is termed the spokesman of Moses.

The prophets usually prefaced their utterances with "*Thus saith the Lord,*" and their messages are constantly called "*The word of the Lord.*"

They spoke then in the name of the Lord, and their utterances might or might not contain predictions of the future, but foretelling future events was not necessarily the object of their message.

It is also a common error to regard the prophets as isolated individuals, inspired at some crisis in the history of the nation to come forward and declare the word of Jehovah. On the contrary, there was a trained Prophetic Order.

The Prophetic Order. Though there were prophets before the time of Samuel, yet to him belongs the honour of establishing systematic religious training of the prophets. He saw that the priesthood had failed in maintaining the religious instruction of the people, and determined to remedy the evil by a system of trained teachers.

So he gathered the students into bodies known as—

"*The Sons of the Prophets*," i.e. the students under one teacher, the chief or instructor being styled "father." (Compare *Abbot* = father, as head of a monastery.)

"*Schools of the Prophets*," a title which can hardly have been known in Samuel's day. Schools, in the sense of Theological Colleges, belong to a later period, though Samuel appears to have gathered a band of students under his own personal teaching at Ramah. *Naioth* appears to have been the name of the dwelling which formed their common residence, and we find Samuel at the head of the students, directing their religious exercises (1 Sam. xix. 20).

Later we find prophets collected at Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal, where schools or theological colleges appear to have been established (ii. 3-5; iv. 38).

Their Training.

These students were instructed in sacred learning and religious exercises, and were led to cultivate, especially by psalmody and music, the devotional feelings which might fit them when occasion called, to become the messengers of God and teachers of the people.

Some, after their period of training, returned to their own homes and to their ordinary occupations, and thus, as preachers and teachers, became the means of keeping alive the spiritual life of the nation in the villages and remoter districts.

Others were employed in keeping a record of events. To the writings of these prophets we owe the histories of Elijah and Elisha. The writings of Samuel, Nathan, Gad and others are specially mentioned as authorities consulted by the compiler of the Books of Kings.

ELIJAH.

Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead.

The chief events of his life are:

- (1) His sudden appearance and prediction of the drought (1 Kings xvii. 1).
- (2) He takes refuge by the brook Cherith, where he is miraculously fed by ravens (1 Kings xvii. 2-6).
- (3) Later he repairs to Zarephath, where he increases the widow's oil and meal, and resides in her house (1 Kings xvii. 7-16).
- (4) The raising of the widow's son to life (1 Kings xvii. 17-24).
- (5) The prophet meets Obadiah, summons Ahab and Israel to Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 1-20).
- (6) The great trial on Mount Carmel, when Elijah proves the superiority of Jehovah over Baal. Elijah then promises abundance of rain, which falls and ends the famine. The prophet runs before the chariot of Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel (1 Kings xviii. 21-46).
- (7) Jezebel threatens his life, and he flees to Horeb, being miraculously supported for forty days (1 Kings xix. 1-8).

- (8) At Horeb, after a tempest, an earthquake and a fire, Jehovah rebukes him in a still small voice for his abandonment of his work, and commands him to return, and anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, Jehu to be king over Israel, and Elisha to be his own successor (1 Kings xix. 9-21).
- (9) The meeting with Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth, when the king had gone there to take possession of the vineyard. Denunciation of the king, and prediction of the fate of his house (1 Kings xxi. 17-29).
- (10) He meets the messengers of Ahaziah, predicts the death of the king for consulting Baalzebub, and destroys two of the captains of the fifties who were sent to arrest him (i. 3-17).
- (11) He divides the waters of Jordan with his mantle; is carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire, and leaves his mantle and a double portion of his spirit to Elisha (ii. 1-15).

Miracles.

- (1) He multiplies the widow's oil and meal (1 Kings xvii. 14).
- (2) He raises the widow's son to life (1 Kings xvii. 22).
- (3) The miraculous descent of fire on Mount Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 38).
- (4) The burning by fire from heaven of the two captains of fifties and their fifties (i. 10-12).
- (5) He divides the river Jordan with his mantle (ii. 8).

Prophecies. For prophecies and their fulfilment, see p. xlv.

Character. Elijah stands out in Old Testament history as the grandest and most unique of all its figures, except the great law-giver, Moses.

We may note :

- (1) *His loneliness.* He has no settled home. Alone he confronts Ahab; alone on Mount Carmel he boldly challenges the prophets of Baal before king and people, naturally unfriendly to him because of the long drought, which he had predicted. And at Horeb he speaks of himself, "*I only am left.*"
- (2) *His sudden appearances and disappearances.*
 - (a) He appears abruptly in the sacred narrative.
 - (b) Again he appears abruptly to Obadiah and Ahab. The former well knows of the sudden appearances and disappearances of the prophet (1 Kings xviii. 1-16).
 - (c) He appears unexpectedly to Ahab after the murder of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 17-20).
 - (d) He appears suddenly to the messengers of Ahaziah, and departs abruptly as soon as he had delivered his message (i. 3).
 - (e) He quits the world as abruptly and mysteriously as he had appeared (ii. 11).

- (3) *His simplicity of faith.* He follows the guidance of Jehovah implicitly and promptly.

Thus it is by the word of the Lord that—

- (a) He goes to the brook Cherith (1 Kings xvii. 2-5).
 - (b) He goes to Zarephath to the widow woman (1 Kings xvii. 8-10).
 - (c) He appears to Ahab at the conclusion of the drought (1 Kings xviii. 1-2).
 - (d) He goes to meet Ahab at the vineyard of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 17-18).
 - (e) He meets the messengers of Ahaziah sent to consult Baalzebub (i. 3).
 - (f) With Elisha he goes from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, from Jericho to Jordan (ii. 1-6).
 - (g) Throughout his stay at Horeb he continually follows the bidding of Jehovah.
- (4) *His singleness of purpose.* His one aim was the religious revival of the nation.
- (5) *His fearlessness of action.* Three times did he face Ahab.
- (1) When he predicts the drought.
 - (2) When he summons the king and people to Carmel.
 - (3) When he denounces the king for the murder of Naboth.

On all three occasions he boldly and fearlessly faces the monarch.

- (6) *His sternness of spirit.*

This is exhibited in—

- (1) The slaughter of the prophets of Baal.
- (2) The calling down fire from heaven upon the captains and their fifties.

We may note three traits of tenderness—

- (1) His conduct towards the widow of Zarephath when her child died (1 Kings xvii. 19).
- (2) His language to Elisha when the latter, at his call, begged to take leave of his father and mother (1 Kings xix. 20).
- (3) His consideration and tenderness to Elisha when the latter insisted upon accompanying him to the close of his life (ii. 2, 4, 6).

And yet the stern, brave man had his moments of depression, his time of weakness. In his disappointment at the short-lived character of his triumph on Mount Carmel he sank in despair, and fled to Beersheba. We may note that on this occasion there is no mention of "*the word of the Lord.*"

- (7) *His work.* Restoration: The bringing back of a state of things from which Israel had fallen away; not a call to new duties, but a re-awakening of the conscience of the nation.

Elijah left an undying memory behind him. No one of the old prophets is so frequently mentioned.

Instances are:

- (1) Malachi foretells his return. "*Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord*" (Mal. iv. 5).
- (2) The angel Gabriel, in announcing the birth of John the Baptist, pronounced, "*He shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias*" (St. Luke i. 17).
- (3) The Pharisees questioned the Baptist's right to baptize. "*Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?*" (St. John i. 25).
- (4) He appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration (St. Matt. xvii. 3).
- (5) Our Lord speaks of his work. "*Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things*" (St. Matt. xvii. 11), i.e. the work of the Baptist, the Second Elijah, was to be like that of the First Elijah, viz. restoration.
- (6) Men thought our Lord was calling for him upon the Cross. "*This man calleth for Elias*" (St. Matt. xxvii. 47).

Four acts of his life are particularly referred to in the New Testament.

- (1) His sojourn with the widow of Zarephath. "*Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow*" (St. Luke iv. 25-26).
- (2) The calling down fire from heaven upon the captains and their fifties. When the Samaritans in a certain village would not receive our Lord because he was going up to Jerusalem, James and John said, "*Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?*" (St. Luke ix. 54).
- (3) The drought (a) by our Lord at Nazareth (see above).
(b) St. James refers to it as a striking illustration of the power of prayer.
"*Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months*" (St. James v. 17).
- (4) Jehovah's reply to him in his fit of despondency at Horeb.
St. Paul refers to this to give force to his argument that Israel was not wholly cast away. "*But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal*" (Rom. xi. 4).
St. Paul applies it to his own argument. "*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace*" (xi. 5).

On the Jewish belief of the reappearance of Elijah, Dean Stanley writes: "Passover after passover, the Jews of our day place the Paschal cup upon the table and set the door wide open, believing that that is the moment when Elijah will reappear. When goods are found and no owner comes, when difficulties arise and no solution appears, the answer is, 'Put them by till Elijah comes'" ("HISTORY JEWISH CHURCH").

JOHN THE BAPTIST COMPARED WITH ELIJAH.

John the Baptist.

1. **Home.** The Wilderness, whence he suddenly appears.
2. **Clothing.** "Raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins" (St. Matt. iii. 4).
3. **Food.** "*Locusts and wild honey*" (St. Matt. iii. 4).
4. **Preaching.** "*The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins*" (St. Luke iii. 3).
5. **Special Preaching.** Reproved Herod the Tetrarch for his sin in marrying Herodias.
6. **Fate.** His death was due to the vengeance of Herodias.
7. **Despondency.** John in prison doubted if Jesus were really the Messiah, and sent two of his disciples to ask, "*Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*" (St. Matt. xii. 3).
8. **The predecessor of the mild and gentle Jesus.**

Elijah.

- The desert. His appearances thence are sudden and unexpected.
- "An hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins" (2 Kings i. 8).
Of the desert.
- Denounced the sins of Ahab, and the idolatry of the people in worshipping Baal.
- Reproved Ahab for the worship of Baal introduced by Jezebel, and for the murder of Naboth, instigated by Jezebel.
- Jezebel threatened the life of Elijah, who saved himself by flight to Beer-sheba (1 Kings xix. 3).
- Elijah at Beer-sheba despaired. He considered his efforts useless, his work of no avail, and said, "O Lord, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings xix. 4).
- The predecessor of the mild and merciful Elisha.

ELISHA.

Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah.

His call. Elisha was called to the prophetic work by Elijah in obedience to the command of Jehovah given on Mount Horeb.

He must have been quite a young man at the time, and was ploughing with oxen in the field. His family must have been comparatively wealthy, for they had twelve yoke of oxen. Each plough would have two oxen yoked to it. So Elisha would have eleven servants with him.

Elijah left the road, passed over to Elisha and cast his mantle over him. This was a symbolical act, and denoted a call to the prophetic office. Elisha understood the act, and saw in it a call to separate himself from his family, so he ran after Elijah and requested that he might go and bid farewell to his parents. Permission being granted, he sacrificed the two oxen with which he himself had been ploughing, using the wood of the yoke for fuel, and made a sacrificial feast, thus indicating his complete abandonment of his worldly calling to follow Elijah.

From this time Elisha ministered to Elijah, *i.e.* acted as his constant attendant. He is described as having "*poured water on the hands of Elijah*" (iii. 11).

His work. The extinction of the worship of Baal.

Elijah had complained to Jehovah that his own work in the reformation of Israel had been in vain. Jehovah encouraged His despondent servant, and pointed out His true chosen instruments, Jehu, Hazael, and Elisha. Elijah was bidden to anoint these three, and God assured him that the work would be thoroughly and completely accomplished.

Elijah called Elisha only. Jehu was anointed by the command of Elisha, who also predicted to Hazael that he would become king of Syria.

The work of these three in the extinction of Baal worship was as follows:—

Jehu destroyed the house of Ahab and massacred the priests and worshippers of Baal, destroying and polluting the temple of that god.

Hazael was the scourge of Israel during his lifetime, and reduced the kingdom to a very weak state in the reign of Jehoahaz, the successor of Jehu.

Elisha. He died in the reign of Joash, the successor of Jehoahaz.

It is remarkable that the last mention of any trace of the idolatry introduced by Jezebel occurs in connection with Jehoahaz. "*There remained also the grove in Samaria*" (xiii. 6). But after that king's death there is no mention of any worship of Baal or Ashtoreth in the Northern Kingdom. So Elisha completed the work, and the prediction given to Elijah on Horeb was thoroughly fulfilled.

Events of his life. In order of narration. It is evident that these events are not given in any chronological order.

1. Accompanies Elijah in his tour of the prophetic colleges previous to his translation.
2. Goes with Elijah across Jordan, witnesses his translation, and takes up the mantle which had fallen from the prophet. This was a proof that he was designed to succeed Elijah and that Jehovah would be with him.
3. Miraculously crosses Jordan by smiting the water with the mantle of Elijah.
4. Tarries at Jericho after crossing, and objects to the search for Elijah, though ultimately he reluctantly consents to it.
5. Heals the bad spring of water at Jericho.
6. Curses the young men who mocked him at Beth-el. Forty-two of them were torn to pieces by two she bears coming out of the wood.
7. Accompanies (evidently on his own account) the three kings in their expedition against Moab, and foretells the wonderful supply of water.

8. Increases the oil for the widow of one of the prophets.
9. Promises a son to the woman of Shunem, and raises her dead son to life.
10. Cures the deadly pottage at Gilgal.
11. Feeds one hundred men with twenty loaves at Gilgal.
12. Heals the leprosy of Naaman, and strikes Gehazi with leprosy.
13. Makes the sunken axe-head to swim.
14. Miraculously discloses the plans of the King of Syria to the King of Israel.
15. Opens the eyes of his servant to see the host of heaven protecting him. Smites the Syrian band with blindness and leads them to Samaria.
16. Foretells the deliverance of Samaria, and predicts plenty in the city, then suffering from famine during the long siege.
17. Predicts a famine which should last seven years, and advises the woman of Shunem to leave the land for some place where she would be able to sustain herself.
18. Visits Damascus and shows Hazeael that he can read his secret thoughts of ambition.
19. Sends a young man of the prophets to anoint Jehu at Ramoth Gilead.
20. Is visited on his death-bed by Joash king of Israel, and foretells that he will thrice defeat the Syrians.
21. A dead man is raised to life by touching his dead bones when cast into his tomb.

Elisha lived through the reigns of:

Ahab, Ahaziah, Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Joash. A period of not less than sixty-five years.

He was engaged in active prophetic work in the reigns of:

Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz and Joash.

Homes. Elisha appears to have constantly visited the prophetic colleges and to have had a house in Samaria for:

- (a) Naaman came from the King to the house (v. 9).
- (b) He was sitting "in his house" in Samaria when he predicted plenty for the famished city (vi. 32—vii. 1).

And a residence at Carmel for:

The Shunammite woman knew where to find him (iv. 25).

Possibly a house at Dothan for:

The Syrians knew he was at Dothan, where his stay must have been of considerable duration (vi. 14).

The Shunammite woman made a chamber for him on the wall of her house, that he might rest himself as he passed to and fro between Carmel and Samaria.

His miracles.

1. He divides the waters of Jordan.
2. Heals the spring at Jericho.
3. Multiplies the widow's oil.

4. Raises the Shunammite's son to life.
5. Cures the deadly pottage at Gilgal.
6. Feeds one hundred men with twenty loaves at Gilgal.
7. Heals the leprosy of Naaman.
8. Makes the axe-head float.
9. Discloses the secret plans of the king of Syria.
10. Smites the Syrian band with blindness.
11. The dead man raised to life by touching his dead bones.

One act of Elisha's is referred to in the New Testament:

The healing of Naaman's leprosy. Referred to by our Lord in His discourse in the synagogue at Nazareth.

"Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian" (St. Luke iv. 27).

ELIJAH AND ELISHA CONTRASTED.

Elijah.

1. A man of the desert.
2. No settled home. We find him at Chereth, Carmel, Horeb. If he enters a city it is only to utter his message and be gone.
3. Wears a shaggy, hairy mantle, and is known by his long, disordered locks.
4. His work is prophetic. The prophet is everything, and miracles are subordinate.
5. Boldly denounces idolatry, and puts to death the priests of Baal.
6. The rebuker of kings, e.g.
 - (a) Rebukes Ahab's idolatry.
 - (b) Pronounces the doom of the house of Ahab. Elijah dethrones, Elisha crowns.
7. Ahab calls him "enemy."
8. Fierce, energetic, fiery.
9. A solitary figure. Alone.
10. Appearances and disappearances are sudden and unexpected.
11. His work is an apparent failure.
12. He ascends to heaven in a whirlwind of fire, concluding a life of fiery zeal.

Elisha.

1. A civilized man, an inhabiter of cities.
2. Settled home—dwellings at Samaria and Carmel. Constantly visiting and staying at the schools of the prophets. Has a little chamber at the house of the Shunammite woman.
3. Carries a staff. His hair is closely shorn and well trimmed (see p. 6).
4. Miracles are everything, and the prophetic office subordinate.
5. Preaches and teaches in the schools of the Prophets. Wins people by personal influence.
6. The friend of kings, e.g.
 - (a) Consulted on the Moabite Expedition.
 - (b) Discloses to Joram the plans of the king of Syria.
 - (c) Gives Joram advice about Syrian prisoners.
 - (d) Consulted during the siege of Samaria.
 - (e) Causes Jehu to be crowned.
7. Joash calls him "My father."
8. Gentle, simple, sympathetic.
9. Dwells among the people. Social.
10. His dwelling is known. Naaman, the Shunammite, and the king, all know where to find him.
11. Elisha succeeds. Baal worship is eradicated before he dies.
12. He passes peacefully away by the decay of years, after a long life of simple usefulness.

ELISHA AS A TYPE OF CHRIST.

As Elijah is a type of John the Baptist in his character and methods, so Elisha may be considered to be typical of Christ, of whom John the Baptist was the forerunner.

The similarity is twofold.

- 1. Miracles.** They are mainly miracles of mercy, and many of them similar in character to those of our Lord, *e.g.*

Cures leprosy of Naaman	=	The cure of the leper. The healing of the ten lepers.
Increases the widow's oil	}	= { Feeding of the Ten Thousand, and the
Multiplies the loaves		
Raises the Shunammite's son	=	Raising to life of Jairus' Daughter.
		„ Widow's son at Nain.
		„ Lazarus.
His dead bones give life to a dead man	=	The death of Christ gave life to mankind.
Crossing the Jordan	=	Walking on the sea. Stilling the storm.
Causing the axe head to float	=	Turning water into wine (a change of natural law).
Strikes with blindness and removes it	=	Cure of the blind.
- 2. Character and Life.** Elisha represents our Lord more in his life than in his miracles. We may note "his loving, gentle temper and kindness of disposition, ever ready to soothe, heal and to conciliate, which attracted to him women and simple people; made him the universal friend and 'father,' not only consulted by kings and generals, but resorted to by widows and poor prophets in their little troubles and perplexities" (B.D.).

Jonah, the son of Amittai of Gath-hepher, prophesied in the reign of Jeroboam II. According to the narrative in Kings he strengthened the courage of Jeroboam II. by predicting his success in regaining the territory in the extreme north as far as Hamath (xiv. 25).

His mission to Nineveh as related in the book of Jonah is notable:—

- (1) He becomes the sign of our Lord's Resurrection. "*As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*" (St. Matt. xii. 40).
- (2) The repentance of the people of Nineveh will be a condemnation to the Jews of our Lord's time. "*The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: because they repented at the teaching of Jonas; and, behold a greater than Jonas is here*" (St. Matt. xii. 41).
- (3) His preaching to the heathen city of Nineveh and their repentance is symbolical of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles and their reception of it.

Jonah is the first of the new order of prophets. Elijah and Elisha are known by their deeds. Jonah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest of the prophets are known by their writings.

Tradition, for which there is not the slightest warranty, makes Jonah to be

- (1) The son of the widow of Zarephath raised to life by Elijah.
- (2) The servant who accompanied Elijah in his flight as far as Beer-sheba.
- (3) The young man of the prophets who anointed Jehu.

Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prophesied in the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. The following events are connected with the 2nd Book of Kings.

- (1) He was consulted by Hezekiah when Rabshakeh had delivered his blasphemous message and encouraged the king by predicting the fall of Sennacherib.
- (2) He sent a cheering message to Hezekiah when the king had received the insulting and blasphemous letter from Sennacherib, and he predicted the destruction of the Assyrian host.
- (3) Announced to Hezekiah that his sickness was to be fatal, but on the prayer of Hezekiah was bidden by Jehovah to return to the king and to declare that his life should be prolonged for fifteen years, giving as a sign that the shadow should go backward ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz.
- (4) Rebuked Hezekiah for his reception of the Babylonian ambassadors and foretold the captivity into Babylon.

Events in the Second Book of Kings, illustrated by the Book of Isaiah, are

1. His meeting Ahaz at the conduit of the upper pool to encourage him on the occasion of the invasion of the land by Israel and Syria (Isa. vii. 3-16).
2. His influence in the deposition of Shebna from "over the household" (Isa. xxii. 15-21) (see p. cxvi.).

According to tradition Isaiah perished, being sawn asunder, in the religious persecution in Manasseh's reign.

Oded. A prophet mentioned in Chronicles, who protested against the carrying of the captives of Judah (200,000 taken by Pekah and Rezin) as bond servants into Israel (2 Chron. xxviii. 9-11).

Jahaziel (2 Chron. xx. 14) prophesied the miraculous victory of Jehoshaphat over the allied forces of Moab, Ammon and Edom. Amos and Hosea give us pictures of the state of Samaria in the reign of Jeroboam II. (see p. xv.).

Jeremiah records the last days of Jerusalem (see p. 102).

PROPHECIES AND THEIR FULFILMENT.

Elijah (1) The doom of the house of Ahab and the death of Jezebel (1 Kings xxi. 19-24).

Fulfilled by Jehu (ix. and x.).

- (2) The death of Ahaziah from his accident in falling through a lattice (i. 4).

- (8) **The writing of Elijah.** In Chronicles we have recorded a letter written by Elijah to Jehoram king of Judah. Jehoram had succeeded his father Jehoshaphat, and on his accession put his brothers to death. Elijah sent him a letter rebuking him for his idolatry and for his sin in murdering his brothers, at the same time foretelling disasters to his family, and the manner of his death by disease of the bowels (2 Chron. xxi. 12-15).

Fulfilment. The Philistines and Arabs made a raid, plundered the king's palace, carried off all his wives and sons with the exception of Jehoahaz (Ahaziah) his youngest son. Jehoram died of an incurable disease of the bowels (2 Chron. xxi. 18-19).

The letter is noteworthy as fixing the translation of Elijah as having taken place in the reign of Jehoram, not in the reign of Jehoshaphat.

Elisha. (1) The relief of the allied armies of Israel, Judah and Edom when suffering from want of water (iii. 17-20).

(2) The birth of a son to the Shunammite woman (iv. 16).

(3) The relief of Samaria from famine during the siege, and the death of the incredulous lord (vii. 1-2).

Fulfilment. (1) By the panic of the Syrian host causing them to abandon their camp (vii. 6-7).

(2) By the crowd trampling the lord to death in the gateway of Samaria in their eagerness to share in the spoil of the Syrian camp (vii. 17-20).

(4) Prediction of a seven years' famine (viii. 1).

(5) Foretells the death of Ben-hadad and the cruelty of Hazael towards Israel (viii. 10-13).

(6) On his death-bed foretells that Joash will gain three victories over Syria (xiii. 14-19).

Fulfilment. It is recorded that in the reign of Ben-hadad, the successor of Hazael, "*three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel*" (xiii. 25).

Isaiah. In the second Book of Kings we have three remarkable prophecies, the first and second as regards Assyria, and the third as regards Babylon.

1. In the reply sent by him to Hezekiah when the king consulted the prophet on the mission of Rabshakeh.

"Behold, I will send a blast upon him (Sennacherib), and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land" (xix. 7).

2. In the assuring message sent to Hezekiah on the receipt of the insulting and blasphemous letter from Sennacherib (see xix. 20-34).

- Fulfilment.* (1) **The blast.** The destruction of the Assyrian host by the angel of the Lord (xix. 35).
- (2) **The rumour.** The news that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was advancing against him (xix. 9).
- (3) **The return.** Sennacherib withdrew to Nineveh on the destruction of his army (xix. 36).
- (4) **His death.** He was assassinated in the temple of Nineveh by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer (xix. 37).
3. On the occasion of the visit of the ambassadors of Berodach-baladan king of Babylon. "*Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon*" (xx. 17-18).

A wonderful prophecy when we examine the circumstances under which it was spoken. At the time Assyria was the dread and scourge of Judah. The Babylonian ambassadors had visited Jerusalem with the view of negotiating an alliance against Assyria. Berodach-baladan was struggling to hold his own at Babylon against Assyria, and was shortly afterwards expelled from Babylon. Humanly speaking, nothing was more unlikely than the subjugation of Judah by Babylon. But Isaiah, divinely inspired, foresaw the fall of Assyria and the rise of Babylon.

- Fulfilment.* (1) The capture of Jerusalem, and the complete sack of the city and the Temple by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar.
- (2) Jehoiachin and Zedekiah were carried captive to Babylon. In Jehoiachin, the direct succession of David through Solomon ended. [It must be remembered that the promise by Jehovah of David's dynasty was in the person of Solomon and his successors.]
- (3) Jewish princes, e.g. Daniel and his three companions, became state officials in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

Jeremiah. There are many prophecies uttered by Jeremiah in connection with the last kings and the last days of Judah. The principal are:

1. The duration of the Captivity (Jeremiah xxv. 11; xxix. 10).
2. With respect to Jehoahaz or Shallum (xxii. 11), see p. xxviii.
3. Prophecy regarding Jehoiachin (xxii. 26-27), see p. xxix.
4. Prophecy with reference to the death of Jehoiakim (xxii. 19), see p. xxix.
5. Prophecy regarding Zedekiah (xxxiv. 3), see p. xxx.

THE GODS OF THE HEATHEN.

Each nation had its own particular god, who took the nation under his protection. Even the Israelites regarded Jehovah as the god of their nation exclusively.

We have an instance of this feeling in the action of Naaman's taking two mules' burden of earth to Damascus. His idea was that by so doing he would be able to worship the Jehovah of Israel on Israelite soil.

Gods mentioned in Kings are

- (1) **Baal**, the god of the Zidonians (1 Kings xvi. 31-32; 2 Kings x. 18-28).
 - (2) **Ashtoreth**, the goddess of the Zidonians (1 Kings xi. 5; 2 Kings xxiii. 13).
 - (3) **Milcom, Molech or Moloch**, the abomination of Ammon (1 Kings xi. 5, 7, 33; 2 Kings xvi. 3; 2 Kings xxiii. 10).
 - (4) **Chemosh**, the abomination of Moab (1 Kings xi. 7; 2 Kings xxiii. 13).
 - (5) **Baal-zebub**, the god of Ekron (i. 2).
 - (6) **Rimmon**, the god of Syria (v. 18).
 - (7) **Adrammelech** } gods of the Sepharvites (xvii. 31).
 - (8) **Anammelech** }
 - (9) **Succoth-benoth**, a Babylonian god (xvii. 30).
 - (10) **Nergal**, the god of the men of Outh (xvii. 30).
 - (11) **Ashima**, the god of the men of Hamath (xvii. 30).
 - (12) **Nibhaz** } gods of the Avites (xvii. 31).
 - (13) **Tartak** }
 - (14) **Nisroch** (xix. 37).
- (1) **Baal**. The word *Baal* signifies "lord," "owner of the land," and we find the word *Baalim* used to describe the many gods of the Canaanites (Judges ii. 11), also *Baal-peor* (Numb. xxv.), *Baal-zebub* (i. 2, 3).

But the *Baal* of Kings is the Phœnician *Baal* variously represented as the Sun, or as the planet Jupiter. He was identified by the Greeks with Hercules.

Baal was the supreme male deity of the Phœnicians, and represented the active originative power in nature.

The worship of Baal was introduced into Israel by Jezebel. Ahab "reared an altar for Baal in the house of Baal" (1 Kings xvi. 32). In this house was an image of Baal. Jehu destroyed the image of Baal, and broke down the house of Baal (x. 26, 27). He also slaughtered all the priests and worshippers of Baal. His reform was not so much religious as political, for he maintained the calf-worship of Jeroboam. Probably he thought that the Baal priesthood, fostered by the dynasty of Ahab, might prove dangerous to him.

The worship of Baal was introduced into Judah by Athaliah. It was put down by Jehoiada, but appears to have revived, as both Hezekiah and Josiah "broke down the images and cut down the groves" (xviii. 4).

Jehovah pointed out to Elijah at Horeb the three chosen agents for destruction of the worship of Baal, viz. Jehu, Hazael and Elisha, in the order mentioned.

The history bears out the commission to the minutest details, for

- (1) Jehu destroyed the whole dynasty of Ahab, and massacred the worshippers of Baal.
- (2) Hazael was the scourge of Israel during his lifetime. He was successful against Jehu, whilst Israel, in the reign of Jehoahaz, the successor of Jehu, was reduced to a very low ebb, the army consisting of fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen only.
- (3) Elisha. It is to be noted that in the reign of Jehoahaz there is mention of "a grove" at Samaria. So Jehu had not removed everything connected with the idolatrous worship introduced by Jezebel. But Joash, the successor of Jehoahaz, showed affection for Elisha; and it is clear that he regarded the prophet as the chief support of Israel. And as there is no mention of Baal or Ashtoreth worship in any form in Israel after the reign of Jehoahaz, it is clear that the influence of Elisha finished the work for which Jehu, Hazael and himself had been nominated by God to Elijah.
- (2) **Ashtoreth or Astarte.** The supreme female deity of the Phœnicians, and representing the receptive and productive power in nature. Ashtoreth has been identified with the moon, but the generally received opinion is that she is represented by the planet Venus, the Greek *Astarte*. Her worship was always connected with the Asherah (p. 119), and was of a most licentious and impure character.
- (3) **Milcom, Molech or Moloch,** the god of Ammon, was a fire-god to whom human sacrifices were offered. The Israelites passed their children through fire to Moloch. The sacrifices were offered in the valley of Hinnom or Tophet. The statue is said to have been of brass, with hands and arms so arranged that the victim slid from them into the fire.

The worship of Moloch was at its height in the reigns of Ahaz and Manasseh.

Josiah defiled Topheth and put an end to the worship of Molech (xxiii. 10).

- (4) **Chemosh,** the sun or fire-god, and also the war-god of the Moabites, who are called "the people of Chemosh." Human sacrifices were offered to this deity. The king of Moab sacrificed his son to Moloch (iii. 26, 27), and the Moabite stone refers to those slain in battle as "*an offering to Chemosh.*"

Carchemish, on the Euphrates = the fort of Chemosh.

1.

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

- (5)
- Baal-zebul**
- , the god of Ekron.
- Baal-zebul*
- = lord of flies.

There are two suggestions as to the name :

- (a) As controller of flies, *i.e.* able to avert their annoyance. Flies are often a serious plague in a hot country.
- (b) A fly idol, *i.e.* God represented as a fly. Flies are governed in their coming and going by the conditions of the weather. Hence they appeared to be endowed with power of foretelling the weather, so a god in the form of a fly or gnat was worshipped as possessing this special power of prophecy.

This god must not be confounded with the Beelzebub of the New Testament. Beel-zebul or Beel-zebul (the latter being the true spelling) = either "the lord or prince of the air," from *zebul*, a habitation, or "the lord of the dung hill," from *zebel*, dung or filth. It is used in the former sense in the New Testament to represent Satan, the chief of evil spirits.

- (6)
- Rimmon**
- , mentioned as a god only in v. 18.

Benhadad, a king of Syria, was the son of Tab-rimon = Rimmon is good (1 Kings xv. 18).

Hadad-rimmon is the name of a place near Magiddo (Zech. xii. 11).

From the latter passage it has been suggested that Rimmon is the same as Hadad, the sun-god of the Syrians.

Naaman begs Elisha to excuse him when he entered the house of Rimmon with his master, the king of Samaria (v. 18).

- (7) **Adrammelech.** } Sun or fire gods of the people of Sepharvaim (city
(8) **Annammelech.** } of the sun). The worship of these gods was somewhat akin to that of Moloch. It is supposed that Adrammelech represented the male power of the sun, and Annammelech the female power.
- (9) **Succoth-benoth.** Probably the same as Zirbanit, a Babylonian goddess, regarded as the wife of the god Merodach. After Bel and Beltis, Merodach and Zerbanit were the favourite gods of Babylon.
- (10) **Nergal**, the "great man," or "great hero," was the great Babylonian god of war and hunting. His symbol is a "Man-Lion." Assyrian inscriptions connect Nergal with Cutha, thus confirming the Scripture statement which makes Nergal the tutelary god of the men of Cuth (xvii. 30).
- (11) **Ashima**, the god of the men of Hamath, has been variously identified with the Mendesian god of the Egyptians, the Pan of the Greeks, or with Esmun, one of the great gods of the Phœnicians, a deity combining the natures of Pan, the god of shepherds, and Æsculapius, the god of medicine.
- (12) **Nibhaz** = the barker, and so this god is said to be symbolized by a dog, or a dog-headed man. It was one of the tutelary deities of the Avites.
- (13) **Tartak.** One of the gods of the Avites. According to the Rabbis it was worshipped under the form of an ass.

- (14) **Nisroch.** Sennacherib is said to have been murdered by his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch, his god (xix. 37). Nisroch may be the Assyrian deity depicted as an eagle-headed human figure on the Assyrian monuments. It is always represented as contending with and conquering the lion or the bull (B. D.).

THE TEMPLE.

The Temple was a reproduction of the old Tabernacle of the Wilderness, but built of stone, and its dimensions everywhere were double those of the Tabernacle.

It was surrounded by two courts of different levels, the inner one being the higher. These courts were open to the sky and quadrangular, each being enclosed by a wall.

THE COURTS.

1. **The Outer Court or Great Court**, entered by doors overlaid with brass. The people were admitted to this Court.
2. **The Inner Court**, known also as **The Court of the Priests**, or **The Court before the Temple**.

In the Inner Court were—

- (1) **The Molten Sea**, standing "*on the right side of the house eastward, over against the south*" (1 Kings vii. 39).
- (2) **The Ten Lavers.**
- (3) **The Ten Bases of brass.**
- (4) **The Great Brazen Altar**, or **Altar of Burnt Offering.**

The priests and Levites were allowed to enter this Court.

In this Court was the Temple proper.

The expression "*house of the Lord*" often includes the Temple building and the Courts surrounding it.

THE TEMPLE (see Plan).

The Temple Building consisted of **The Porch, The Holy Place, The Oracle**, or **The Holy of Holies**, and, including the Porch, its length was 70 cubits (105 feet).

- I. **The Porch** was at the east end, and measured 10 cubits (15 feet) from east to west, 20 cubits (30 feet) from north to south, and was 120 cubits (180 feet) high, rising high above the rest of the building.
- II. **The Holy Place**—40 cubits (60 feet) long, 20 cubits (30 feet) wide, and 30 cubits (45 feet) high, being double the dimensions of the corresponding section of the Tabernacle.

The Holy Place contained :—

- (1) The **Altar of Incense**, placed in front of the door of the Holy of Holies.
- (2) **Ten Tables of Shew Bread**, five on the north side and five on the south side.
- (3) **The Golden Candlesticks**, five on the north side and five on the south side.

III **The Oracle, or Holy of Holies**, formed a perfect cube, 20 cubits each way, being double the dimensions of the corresponding portion of the Tabernacle.

The Holy of Holies contained :—

- (1) The Ark.
- (2) The Cherubim.

IV. **The Chambers.** Round the outside of the house ran the three galleries, divided into chambers. These galleries were one above the other on three stories, each five cubits high. The lower story was five cubits broad, the middle six cubits broad, and the upper seven cubits broad, the wall of the Temple diminishing in thickness to form ledges or rests to receive the floor beams. This device was adopted to preserve the sanctity of the Temple, and at the same time to allow of the attachment of chambers.

The Accessories of the Temple.

1. **The Molten Sea or Brazen Laver.** Circular, 30 cubits (45 feet) in circumference, 10 cubits (15 feet) in diameter, and 5 cubits ($7\frac{1}{2}$ feet) deep, and the brass was a hand breadth ($3\frac{1}{2}$ inches) thick.

It stood on twelve brazen oxen, three of which faced to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east.

It contained 2,000 baths, about 8,000 gallons (Rabbinical measure). This laver was used for the ablution of the priests.

2. **The Ten Lavers of Brass**, each 4 cubits (6 feet) in height, length and breadth, and containing 40 baths, about 160 gallons.

These lavers were used for washing "*such things as they offered for the burnt offering*" (2 Chron. iv. 6).

3. **The Ten Bases of Brass** were stands for the ten lavers. They were each 4 cubits (6 feet) square and 3 cubits ($4\frac{1}{2}$ feet) high, and were each mounted on four brazen wheels, so that they could be moved about the court.

The Great Brazen Altar. 20 cubits (30 feet) long, 20 cubits (30 feet) broad, and 10 cubits (15 feet) high. The priests ascended by steps to perform the sacrifices.

It stood before the porch.

The Pillars, Jachin and Boaz. Two hollow pillars of brass, *Jachin* (= *he shall establish*) on the right hand of the porch, and *Boaz* (= *it is strength*) on the left.

Each pillar was 18 cubits (27 feet) high, and 12 cubits (18 feet) in circumference, with chapiters.

The Altar of Incense, which stood in the Holy Place, immediately in front of the door of the Holy of Holies.

The Tables of Shew Bread, placed in the Holy Place, five on the north side and five on the south.

The Golden Candlesticks, placed in the Holy Place, five on the north side and five on the south.

The Ark (the original ark of the Tabernacle). An oblong chest of Shittim (*acacia*) wood, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubits (3 ft. 9 in.) long by $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits (2 ft. 3 in.) broad and high. It was overlaid within and without with gold, and on the upperside or lid. It was fitted with rings, one at each of the four corners, through which were passed staves by which it was carried.

The Ark contained originally :

- (1) The Two Tables of Stone.
- (2) The Pot of Manna.
- (3) Aaron's Rod which budded.

When it was placed in the Temple it contained the Two Tables of Stone only.

Two Cherubims, in imitation of the Cherubim of the Tabernacle. They were 10 cubits (15 feet) high, and each had two wings 5 cubits ($7\frac{1}{2}$ feet) long, outstretched, so that one wing of each Cherub met above the Ark, and the other touched the wall. The Ark occupied the vacant space in the centre of the wall beneath the outspread wings.

Various utensils.

(1) Of Gold.

- Bowls*, probably vessels to contain the oil for the candlesticks.
- R. V. cups*.
- Spoons*, or incense cups.
- Firepans*, for the altar of incense.
- Basins*, to receive the water of sprinkling, and the blood of the sacrifices.
- Snuffers*, for trimming the lamps of the candlesticks.

(2) Of Brass.

- Shovels*, to remove the ashes.
- Basins*, to receive the blood of the victims.
- Pots*, or cauldrons, for the boiling of the peace offerings.
- Flesh hooks*, by means of which the flesh was removed from the cauldron or pot.

These vessels were carried away to Babylon on successive occasions.

1. By Nebuchadnezzar when he received the submission of Jehoiachin. He carried off the golden vessels and placed them in the house of his god at Babylon (xxiv. 13).

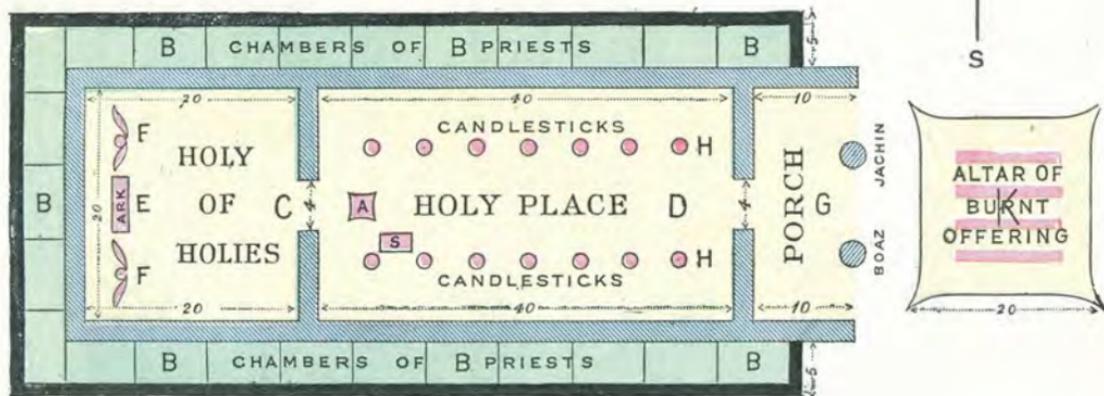
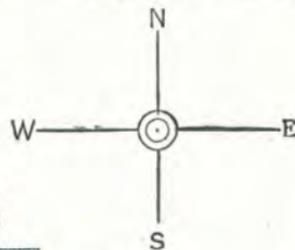
By Nebuzaradan, who is said to have taken (xxv. 13-17).

- (a) The great pillars Jachin and Boaz.

PLAN OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE

20 Cubits to 1 Inch

Scale $\frac{1}{360}$

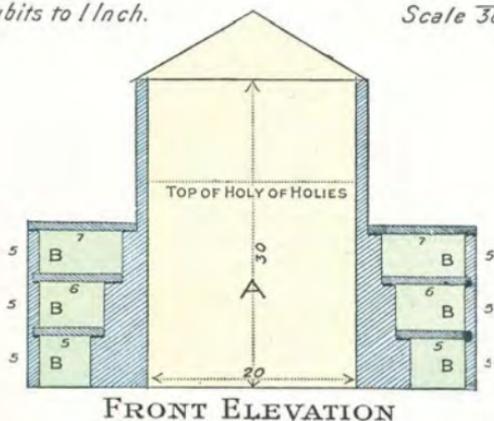


- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| <i>B</i> Chambers of Priests | <i>F</i> Cherubs |
| <i>C</i> Holy of Holies | <i>G</i> Porch |
| <i>D</i> Holy Place | <i>K</i> Altar of B ^t Offering |
| <i>E</i> Ark | <i>H</i> Candlesticks |
| <i>A</i> Altar of Incense | <i>S</i> Table of Shewbread |

TEMPLE OF SOLOMON.

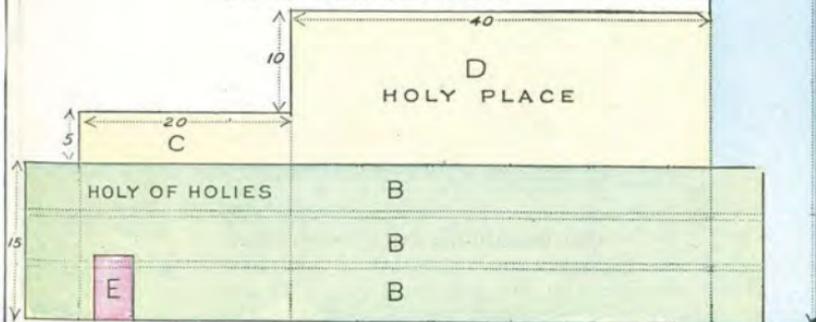
20 Cubits to 1 Inch.

Scale $\frac{1}{360}$



- A Interior of Temple.
- B Chambers of Priests.
- C Holy of Holies.
- D Holy Place.
- E Ark.
- F Porch, 120 Cubits high.

SIDE ELEVATION.



- (b) **The great molten sea.**
These being too heavy to be removed whole were broken up into convenient pieces.
- (c) The pots, the shovels, the snuffers and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass.
- (d) The firepans and the bowls and such things as were of gold and silver.
On the release from captivity some of these vessels were restored to the Jews by Cyrus, and taken back to Jerusalem (Ezra I. 7-11).

The Three Temples.

They all stood on Mount Moriah, on the spot which David had purchased from Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. xxiv. 24), the summit of the hill being levelled to make a space sufficiently large on which to erect the building.

- I. The First or **Solomon's Temple**, erected by King Solomon, B.C. 1005.

This Temple was entirely destroyed in the reign of Zedekiah by Nebuzaradan, acting under the orders of Nebuchadnezzar, B.C. 588.

It stood for a period of 417 years.

- II. The Second **Temple built by Zerubbabel** on the return from captivity. It was several times plundered, but the chief desecration was that committed by Antiochus Epiphanes, who plundered it, and then profaned it by setting up the idol of Jupiter near the altar, B.C. 170. The sacrifices were discontinued for three years, and were restored by Judas Maccabæus.

- III. The Third or **Herod's Temple**. This was a rebuilding and rebeautifying of the Temple of Zerubbabel. Though the main building was completed in nine years, subsequently other works were undertaken, and the courts were enlarged, so that the whole period was forty-six years.

The Temple of Solomon had five things which were lacking in the Temple of Zerubbabel.

- (1) The Ark and the Mercy Seat.
- (2) The Sheehinah or visible token of the Divine presence.
- (3) The Holy Fire of the Altar.
- (4) The Urim and Thummim.
- (5) The spirit of Prophecy.

Haggai declared that "*the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former*" (Hag. ii. 9).

This was fulfilled by the presence of our Lord in the Temple of Herod, which was an enlargement of that of Zerubbabel.

B.C. THE HISTORY OF THE TEMPLE.

1005. Erected by Solomon.
972. It was plundered by Shishak, King of Egypt, thirty-three years after its dedication (1 Kings xiv. 25-26).
— It was the scene of the Coronation of Joash in the revolt against Athaliah (xi. 4-16).
856. Repaired by King Joash under the guidance of Jehoiada (xii. 11).
— Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, was stoned to death in the Temple court by the order of Joash (2 Chron. xxiv. 16-21).
— King Azariah (Uzziah) attempted to offer incense in the Temple (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21).
— Jotham built "*the higher gate of the house of the Lord*" (xv. 35).
— Ahaz placed an altar in the Temple after the pattern of one he had seen at Damascus.
740. Ahaz plundered the Temple to bribe Tiglath-pileser to attack the kings of Syria and Israel (xvi. 7-18).
726. Hezekiah repaired the Temple (xviii. 4).
713. Hezekiah was forced to take its treasures to pay tribute to Sennacherib (xviii. 13-16).
698. The Temple was polluted by Manasseh, who set up altars and idols in its courts (xxi. 3-4).
624. Josiah repaired the Temple and restored its worship (xxii. 3-6).
606. It was plundered by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Jehoiakin (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7).
598. It was again plundered by Nebuchadnezzar in the reign of Jehoiachin (2 Chron. xxxvi. 10).
588. Nebuzaradan was commanded by Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the Temple entirely (xxv. 8-17).

NOTE.—The Ark entirely disappeared with the destruction of the Temple.

The King's Palace, which probably included all the buildings erected by Solomon, was built upon Ophel, the southern continuation of the Temple Mount. As it stood upon a lower elevation than the Temple, Solomon built for his private use, a staircase ascending from the Palace to the Temple Court,—"*his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord*" (1 Kings x. 5).

Reference is made to this ascent in the mention of "*the King's entry without*" (2 Kings xvi. 18).

THE LAND OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

Palestine is but a small country, not much larger than Wales, and at no time in its history of any great population. But it has played the greatest part in the moral and religious progress of nations of any country in the world.

Its position on the east coast of the Mediterranean caused it to be the highway between Asia and Africa, seeing that the deserts on the east of Palestine between that country and the Euphrates barred the march of any considerable army.

In the Second Book of Kings the great empires of Assyria and Babylon and in later history Persia and Macedonia successively overran Western Asia, and then in turn advanced to the conquest of Egypt. Syria and Palestine lay directly in the route of the invading armies. The configuration of the Land will explain how Palestine thus became the battlefield between the Masters of Western Asia and the Kings of Egypt (see p. lxxiv.).

Extent. About 140 miles in length, forty in average breadth, and in area about the size of Wales.

Boundaries. The land of Canaan proper, *i.e.* the territory west of the Jordan, is hemmed in on all sides;—

West. By the Mediterranean Sea.

East. By the gorge of the Jordan.

North. By the ranges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and the ravine of the Leontes.

South. By the deserts to the north of the Sinaitic Peninsula.

And even if we include the Trans-Jordanic territory, we find a similar barrier to the east in the Arabian Desert.

A glance at the map (p. lix.) shows a peculiar system of strips running almost parallel to each other from north to south. Thus, working eastward from the Mediterranean, we notice—

1. A maritime plain.
2. A tract of lowland country.
3. A central tract of hill country.
4. A deep river valley. (The gorge of the Jordan, or *Arabah*).
5. A further mountain range. (The mountains of Gilead).

1. **The Maritime Plain** is broadest in the south, and narrows towards the north, till it is suddenly interrupted by the ridge of Carmel, which strikes out from the central mass in a north-easterly direction, rises considerably above the general level, and terminates in a bold promontory at the very edge of the Mediterranean.

On the northern side of Carmel the plain stretches right across the country from the Mediterranean to the valley of the Jordan, forming the famous plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel, the battleground of Palestine.

2. **The Lowlands.** Bordering the central hills is a belt of lowland deep below the level of the hills, which rise abruptly, forming a formidable barrier. This tract divides the central hills from the maritime plain. The only means of communication from the lowlands to the highlands



PALESTINE, PHYSICAL.

is up the beds of the torrents which discharge the rainfall of the hill country. The southern half of the lowlands south of Mount Carmel is the Plain of the Philistines, or the *Shephelah*. The northern part is the Plain of Sharon, famous for its fertility.

3. **The Central Range**, or the Highland. This is a mass of limestone forming what may be considered one range. In the north it is crossed by the Plain of Esdraelon. In the south it sinks gradually into the *Negeb*, the dry land. The southern portion was known as the hill country of Judah, the central as Mount Ephraim, and the portion north of the Plain of Esdraelon as Mount Naphtali. The average elevation above sea level is about 2,500 feet.
4. **The Valley of the Jordan, The Arabah**. An extraordinary depression considerably below the sea level, lying between the central range and the mountains of Gilead (the eastern range), and consisting of two parts, viz. the Upper Jordan from Mount Hermon to the Sea of Galilee, and the Lower Jordan from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea.
5. **The Eastern Range**, or the Mountains of Gilead, stretching from Mount Hermon to the south of the Dead Sea.

The Negeb—the south country. A tract of hill country, situated south of Hebron, and lying between the hills of Judah and the desert. Being near the desert and removed from the drainage of the hill country this district was drier and less productive than the north. (The name "*Negeb*" signifies dry land).

[“Almost sudden was the transition to the upland wilderness, the ‘Negeb,’ or south country, a series of rolling hills, clad with scanty herbage here and there, especially on their northern faces” (TRISTRAM).]

The student should carefully observe that “south” very often means the Negeb—the south land. The revisers invariably distinguish the Negeb by printing “south” with a capital S.

The Wilderness of Judah represents the portion of the Arabah within the territory of Judah. It is bounded by the hill country on the west and by the Dead Sea on the east.

The configuration of the land is of importance.

1. In explaining the Philistine campaigns, and in accounting for the fact, that though the Israelites were often oppressed and made tributaries they were never totally subdued by the Philistines.
2. In explaining the history of Israel under the later kings. The road by which the great empires—Assyria and Babylon in Asia, and Egypt in Africa—could approach each other lay up through the maritime plain of Palestine and onward through the plain of Lebanon to the Euphrates. An Egyptian or Assyrian army marching along the plain would have the abrupt mountain ranges of Judah and Ephraim on its flank. On the western side the steep declivities and the rugged ascents up the torrent ravines rendered attack most difficult, whilst at the same time the advancing armies could not venture to leave the formidable hillmen of Judah as a menace to their communications. Thus it was essential for Egypt or Assyria to become master of Judah ere venturing to pass further north or south respectively.

How far the extreme difficulty of the western passes affected the military aspect of the invasion of Judah can be gathered from the following facts in history:—

1. Nebuzar-adan led the captive Jews northward from Jerusalem by way of Jericho.
2. Pompey attacked Jerusalem from Damascus by way of Jericho.
3. Vespasian led his troops from the plain of Lebanon eastwards, and advanced against Jerusalem through Jericho.

JERUSALEM OR JEBUS.

EARLY HISTORY.

1. Adoni-zedec King of Jerusalem, headed the great confederacy of southern kings, and was defeated by Joshua at the battle of Beth-horon (Josh. x.).
2. At the death of Joshua, Judah and Simeon defeated Adoni-bezek, King of Jerusalem, and later took Jerusalem (Judges i. 5-8).

This must refer to the capture of the lower city only, for the citadel appears to have held out.

3. Subsequently Benjamin advanced against the citadel, but could not take it (Judges i. 21).

It is clear that the Jebusites were not deprived of their possession of the citadel till its capture by David (2 Sam. v. 6-9).

At times, indeed, the Jebusites had full control over the whole city (Judges xix. 10-12).

CAPTURE OF THE CITY.

David fixed upon Jerusalem as the future capital. It commanded the high road from south to north, and thus as long as it was a Jebusite city it severed Judah from the northern tribes. A united Israel was impossible so long as their territory was thus cut in two by a belt of hostile country.

David would appear to have taken advantage of the great gathering assembled at Hebron to make him king, and thus to have attacked Jerusalem immediately after he had been chosen king of the whole nation.

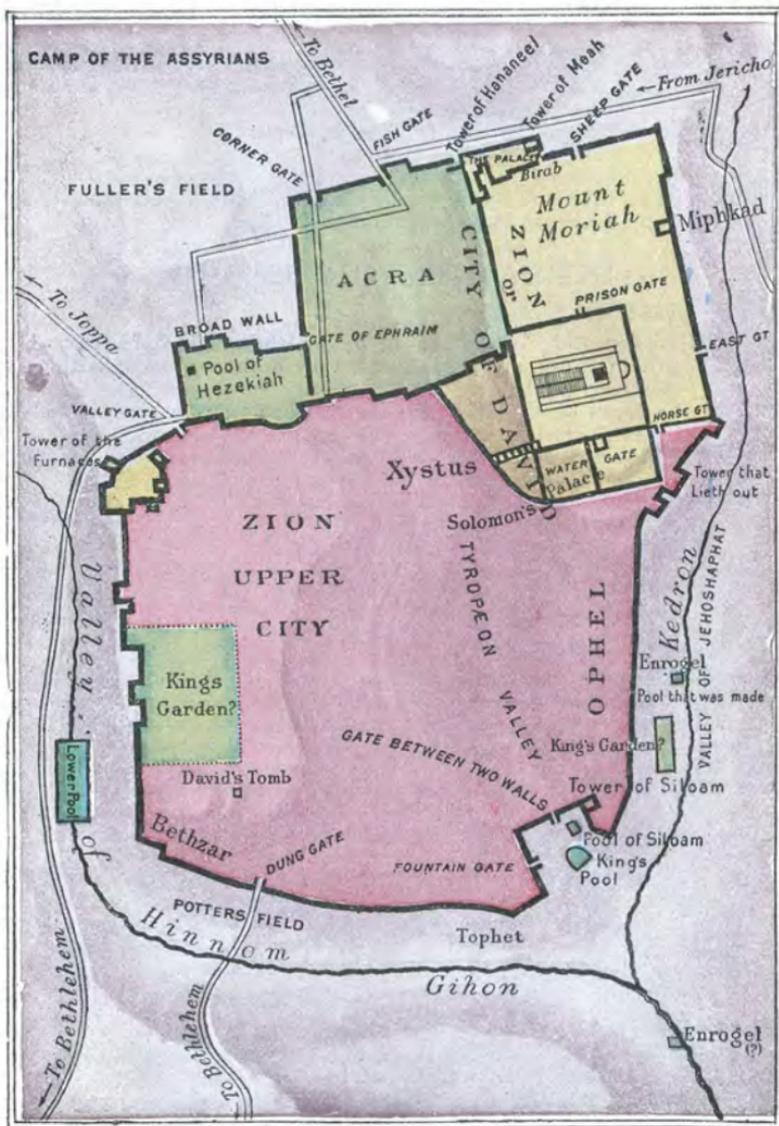
Such was the strength of the position that the Jebusites met David with taunts and jeers, boasting that a garrison of blind and lame would be sufficient to defend the fortress. David met this taunt by offering the post of commander-in-chief to the soldier who should first scale the cliff and mount the walls. Joab won the coveted post by climbing up the steep cliff by "the gutter" or watercourse.

TOPOGRAPHY.

Jerusalem was built upon a broad elevated promontory within the fork of the two valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom.

The valley of Jehoshaphat runs along the eastern side of the city, and joins the valley of Hinnom at the south-east corner.

The river or brook Kidron flows through this valley, and is joined by the Gihon a little distance above En-rogel. The east side of the valley is formed by the Mount of Olives and the Mount of Offence.



PLAN OF JERUSALEM TO ILLUSTRATE THE
SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

The valley of Hinnom runs along the west and south sides of the city, and joins the valley of Jehoshaphat at the south-east corner.

The brook Gihon flows through this valley and joins the Kidron a little distance above En-rogel.

Thus the city was a natural fortress protected by deep ravines on three sides. The north-west corner was the most vulnerable part of the city. Against this corner the Babylonians made their main attack in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

The city itself was divided into two portions or separate hills divided by the Tyropæon valley, which was subsequently filled up in the time of the Maccabees.

We find four distinct divisions of the city—

I. **The Upper City**, long identified with Zion, built on the western spur, and separated by walls from the other hill.

This hill was 103 feet higher than Moriah.

II. **The City of David** (the true Zion), called Acra by Josephus, occupying the north-west portion of the second hill.

III. **Moriah**, on which was built the Temple, occupying the eastern portion of this hill.

The city of David was higher than the Temple; its summit was lowered by the Maccabees, in order that it might not overlook the Temple-Mount. The material thus obtained was thrown into the Tyropæon valley, and the hill is now 100 feet lower than the Temple-Mount.

IV. **Ophel**, the southern continuance of the Temple hill, a long narrowish promontory separating the Tyropæon valley from the valley of Jehoshaphat, and sloping off on its southern side into the valley of Hinnom. On the eastern side is the "Fount of the Virgin," and at its foot the lower outlet of the same spring—the Pool of Siloam.

Ophel appears to have been assigned to the Levites for their residence.

Other spots of interest are:—

1. **Millo** or **The Millo**, for in the original we find the word with the definite article. It is also alluded to as "The house of Millo."

Its exact site has not been determined, but it was evidently a part of the fortifications of the old Jebusite city taken by David (2 Sam. v. 6-9). Wherever the word occurs it is in connection with the walls or fortifications of Jerusalem. Its repair was one of the great works upon which Solomon employed his levy of forced labour (1 Kings ix. 15-24; xi. 27). Hezekiah also "*repaired Millo in the city of David*" (2 Chron. xxxii. 5) in preparation to meet the Assyrians.

In the Septuagint it is generally rendered ἡ ἄκρα = the citadel, and the same word is used for the fortress on Mount Zion occupied by the party of Antiochus in the Syrian wars.

As the word signifies "piling or heaping up," it has been suggested that the Millo was a raised work defending that part of the city of David where the hill of Zion slopes down into the Tyropæon valley, or that it was a defence against attacks from the north.

2. **Mount of Offence or Corruption**, the southern summit of the Mount of Olives, the range of hills on the east of Jerusalem, separated from the city by the valley of Jehoshaphat. Solomon built high places "*on the hill that is before Jerusalem*" (1 Kings xi. 7). This can be only the Mount of Olives, and tradition places the high places erected for the idol worship by Solomon as being upon the southern summit, which thus gained the name of Mount of Offence.
3. **Topheth or Tophet**, the place "*in the valley of the children of Hinnom*" (xxiii. 10), where sacrifices were offered to Molech.
Topheth was defiled by Josiah, and the valley was used thereafter as the place for the deposit of the refuse and filth of the city.
4. **Gates.** Gates mentioned in 2 Kings are:—

(a) **The gate of Ephraim**, known also as the gate of Benjamin. It was situated in the western wall of the Acra, and from it went the road to Ephraim through Benjamin, hence the name.

Joash, king of Israel, broke down about 200 yards of the city wall, from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate (see Map) (xiv. 13), thus leaving the city defenceless against an attack from the north. The wall was repaired by Azariah (Uzziah).

Jeremiah, during the temporary abandonment of the siege of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, was arrested by Irijah at the gate of Ephraim (or Benjamin), when on his way to Anathoth to obtain his share in the produce of the priest's lands at that place. He was accused of attempting to desert to the Chaldeans, and was cast into prison (Jer. xxxvii. 11-15).

(b) **Corner gate.** The gate at the extreme north-west corner of Jerusalem. Hence the name (see gate of Ephraim).

(c) **Gate between two walls.** This gate must have been situated in the south-east of the city, for the Chaldeans entered through the north wall. Probably the south-east part had not been invested. Apparently the gate opened from the king's garden near the pool of Siloam, in the lower part of the Tyropæon valley, and led over the Mount of Olives to the plain of Jericho. Zedekiah left the city by this gate (xxv. 4).

- (d) The gate of Sur (called in Chronicles "the gate of the foundation"). One of the gates mentioned as being guarded by Jehoiada in the revolt against Athaliah. It must have been a gate of the palace, or a gate of the Temple (xi. 6).
- (e) The gate of the guard (called in Chronicles "the higher gate"). One of the gates of the palace or Temple guarded by Jehoiada in the revolt against Athaliah (xi. 6).
- (f) The gate of Joshua, the governor of the city. Josiah broke down the high places that were in the entering of this gate, and also at the entering in of this "gate of the city." The gate of Joshua was probably some inner gate of the citadel where the governor of the city would naturally reside (xxiii. 8).
- (g) The "gate of the city" is supposed to be the Valley Gate, modern "Jaffa-gate," through which the Joppa (Jaffa) road entered Jerusalem. This, as the gate through which the main traffic would pass, may well have come to be regarded as the "gate of the city" (xxiii. 8).
5. **The King's Garden.** According to Nehemiah (iii. 15), the king's garden was at the pool of Siloam. It was near the entrance of the Tyropæon valley, and so, close to the junction of the Hinnom and Jehoshaphat valleys. By some the garden is placed in the Zion, the upper city, near the tomb of David. It is possible there may have been more than one garden.
6. **The garden of Uzza.** The spot in which Manasseh, king of Judah, and his son and successor, Amon, were buried. It was the garden attached to Manasseh's own palace (xxi. 18-26). Its actual locality cannot be determined.
7. **The conduit of the Upper Pool.** This is mentioned in xviii. 17 as being the spot where Rabshakeh and his fellow legates held their conference with Eliakim, Shebna and Joab. "*They came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field.*" Isaiah met Ahaz at the same spot, and warned him of the danger impending over Judah from the Assyrians, whom he intended to call to his aid against Rezin and Pekah (Is. vii. 3). We find that Hezekiah improved the water supply of the city. He "*made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city*" (xx. 20). The work is thus described in Chronicles: "*Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David*" (2 Chron. xxxii. 30). The Gihon has two pools, the first about 700 yards to the west-north-west of the Valley gate, called the Upper Pool, and the second in the Valley of Hinnom, to the west of the city, called the Lower Pool.

Hezekiah stopped the flow of the water from the upper to the lower pool, and conducted it downwards, *i.e.* underground, towards the west, into the city of David, *i.e.* he made an underground aqueduct from the Upper Pool into the city itself. His object was to retain this water for the use of the city in the event of a siege, and to keep it from the besiegers. This water was probably collected in the pool which Hezekiah had made (xx. 20) (see Map, p. lxii.).

8. **The Fuller's Field.** Outside the walls, and near the conduit of the Upper Pool of the Gihon. The fuller's occupation would require a good supply of water (see Conduit of the Upper Pool above).
9. **The Camp of the Assyrians.** The locality to the north-west of the city, lying to the west of the Bethel road, received this name from the fact that there the Assyrians, and subsequently the Babylonians, had their camp when besieging Jerusalem. They attacked the north-west corner of the city walls, the only side on which Jerusalem was not protected by deep ravines.

NATIONS AND TRIBES.

Ammonites. Mentioned in 2 Kings as joining with the Chaldeans, Syrians and Moabites in sending marauding bands into Judah, and harassing that country previous to the great invasion by Nebuchadnezzar (xxiv. 2).

From Chronicles we learn:—

- (1) That they joined with Moab and Edom against Jehoshaphat, when they suffered so signal a defeat that three days were occupied in collecting the spoil (2 Chron. xx. 25).
- (2) Jotham prevailed against them, and made them pay tribute (2 Chron. xxvii. 5).

Later on we find them occupying the cities of Gad (on the east side of Jordan), from which the Israelites had been removed by Tiglath-pileser (Jer. xlix. 1-6).

The Ammonites were the descendants of Ben-Ammi, the son of the younger daughter of Lot (Gen. xix. 38). Moab was the son of the elder daughter. In Scripture the two nations are always closely connected, and it would appear that whilst the Moabites represented the settled and civilized section of the descendants of Lot, the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion of his posterity.

Religion. Their god was Moloch or Milcom (see p. xlix.).

The Ammonites were specially detested by the Israelites—

(a) Because they refused assistance to the Israelites on their approach to Canaan (Deut. xxiii. 4).

(b) Because they hired Balaam to curse Israel (Deut. xxiii. 3-4).

These reasons are recapitulated in Neh. xiii. 1-2.

History.

1. They oppressed the district of Gilead, on the east of Jordan, and were defeated by Jephthah (Judges xi.).

2. Saul rescued the men of Jabesh-Gilead from Nahash, king of Ammon, and completely defeated the Ammonites (1 Sam. xi.).
3. The war with Ammon, arising out of the insults offered to David's ambassadors by Hanun, king of Ammon, was the principal war in David's reign. It is famous for the siege and capture of Rabbah, and the death of Uriah (2 Sam. x., xii.).
4. For mention in 2 Kings, see above.
5. In the days of Nehemiah we may note :—
 - (a) That they were the bitter enemies of the Jews, and, led by Tobiah the Ammonite, constantly opposed Nehemiah (Neh. iv.).
 - (b) That the passage from Deuteronomy xxiii. 3-6 was read, in which it was "*written that the Ammonite and Moabite should not come into the congregation of God for ever.*"

Amorites. = the mountaineers. The Amorite is given as the fourth son of Canaan (Gen. x. 16).

They are contrasted with the Canaanites (the Lowlanders).

Thus the Canaanites and the Amorites formed the two great sections of the inhabitants of Canaan at the time of the conquest under Joshua.

They occupied the barren heights west of the Dead Sea, but at the time of the conquest of the land they had crossed the Jordan, for we find Sihon in possession of the country lying between the Arnon and the Jabbok.

The Israelites under Moses vanquished Sihon, and occupied his land east of Jordan. The Amorites, on the west, were dispossessed of their land by Joshua in his southern campaign.

Notice in 2 Kings.

Manasseh is said to have "*done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him*" (xxi. 11).

The Amorites are here put for the inhabitants of Canaan generally, though strictly speaking they were only that section of the natives who dwelt in the hill districts.

The passage means that Manasseh's wickedness surpassed even that of the original inhabitants, who for their gross iniquity were condemned to destruction by Jehovah, who commanded Joshua and the Israelites to destroy them utterly.

Chaldeans. Chaldea is properly only the most southern portion of Babylonia, and comprises the vast alluvial plain of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

The Chaldeans (until the time of the captivity) were the inhabitants of the country which has Babylon for its capital, and which is itself termed Shinar (xxiv. 2).

In the Book of Daniel the name is applied to the learned class in Babylon, viz. the priests, magicians and astronomers.

Edomites are the descendants of Esau, the eldest son of Jacob. Edom = red, and was the name given to Esau from the red colour of the pottage for which he sold his birthright (Gen. xxv. 29-34).

Edom, known also as Mount Seir, and later as Idumæa, lay to the east of the Valley of the Jordan, extending southward to Elath. Bozrah, near the northern boundary, was the ancient capital, but later Selah seems to have been the great stronghold. Elath and Ezion-geber were the seaports (see pp. xciii., xciv.).

Whilst Edom is a wholly mountainous country, wild, rugged and almost inaccessible, the deep glens and flat terraces on the mountain sides are covered with rich soil, productive of luxuriant vegetation.

The "brook Zered" seems to have been the eastern boundary separating Edom from Moab (Deut. ii. 13).

Previous Notices.

1. When Israel marched to the conquest of Canaan, the Edomites refused to allow them to pass through their land (Num. xx. 14-21).
2. Edom is mentioned among the conquests of Saul, but no particulars are given (1 Sam. xiv. 47).
3. In the reign of David, Abishai overcame the Edomites in the "Valley of Salt," and Joab followed up the victory by destroying all the male population (2 Sam. viii. 13-14; 1 Kings xi. 15-16).
4. Hadad escaped from the massacre, and took refuge in Egypt. On the death of Joab he returned to Edom, and endeavoured to rouse the Edomites against Solomon. Failing in the attempt, he made his way to the north, where he founded a kingdom in Syria, and became a persistent opponent of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 14-22).

At the division of the kingdom, Edom appears to have been subject to Judah.

Notices in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

1. Edom joined with Israel and Judah in the expedition against Moab (iii. 9).
2. The Edomites joined with Ammon and Moab in revolt against Jehoshaphat, but were miraculously destroyed in the Valley of Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 22-26).
3. Edom revolted against Jehoram, the successor of Jehoshaphat, and regained their independence (2 Chron. xxi. 8-10), see p. xviii.
4. Amaziah completely crushed them, and captured Selah (xiv. 7), see p. xx.
5. Rezin, king of Syria, in his campaign against Judah in alliance with Pekah, king of Israel, overran Edom, and made himself master of Elath. His object was to deprive Judah of this port on the Red Sea (xvi. 6).
6. The Edomites assisted Nebuchadnezzar in his campaign against Jerusalem, and at the capture of the city appear to have received the whole south between Judah and Philistia, *i.e.* the modern Idumæa.

They appear to have acted with great cruelty to the inhabitants of Judah in this war, and in consequence are the subjects of severe denunciations by the later prophets (Ps. cxxxvii. 7-9; Jer. xlix. 17-22; Ezek. xxv. 13-14).

Hittites, descended from Cheth or Heth, the second son of Canaan.

They are mentioned among the seven nations whose land was promised to Abraham and his descendants (Gen. xv. 20).

They consisted of two sections, northern and southern.

The southern Hittites held the country immediately round Kirjath-arba or Hebron.

Abraham brought the cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite (Gen. xxiii. 17-20; xxv. 9).

Two persons of this nation are mentioned as belonging to the body-guard of David, viz. :—Ahimelech the Hittite, invited by David to go with him secretly to the camp of Saul at night (1 Sam. xxvi. 6).

Uriah the Hittite, the husband of Bath-sheba (1 Kings xi. 3).

The northern Hittites were a powerful people in Northern Syria, and in the earliest times were formidable opponents of Egypt. They occupied the valley of the Orontes, and their chief cities were Kadesh on the Orontes, near Emesa, and Carchemish on the Euphrates. The latter appears to have been the capital of one section under a number of petty kings, whilst the former was the capital of a confederacy of twelve kings.

These northern Hittites, or rather the southern section of them, appear to have joined Jabin in the confederation of kings routed by Joshua at Merom (Josh. xi. 1-5).

Solomon is recorded as having brought horses out of Egypt for the kings of the Hittites (1 Kings x. 28-29).

In the time of Benhadad and Hazael they were a powerful people, especially strong in chariots, and generally sided with Syria against Assyria.

It was this southern section of the northern Hittites whom the Syrians, besieging Samaria, imagined that Joram, king of Israel, had hired against them (vii. 6).

Kenites, a branch of the family of Midian. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a Kenite. The relationship of Moses to Jethro established a friendship between Israel and the Kenites.

They appear to have accompanied the Israelites in their wanderings in the wilderness. Fond of nomadic life, the Kenites did not settle in towns, for at the conquest of the land we find them leaving the plains of Jericho for "*the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad*" (Judges i. 16).

One of the chiefs or sheiks, Heber went north, and in the time of Barak had "*pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaïm, which is by Kedesh*" (Judges iv. 11). His wife Jael was the slayer of Sisera.

Rechab, the founder of the family or sect of the Rechabites, is said to have been of the Kenites (1 Chron. ii. 55).

Moabites, the descendants of Moab, the son of Lot's elder daughter. Ammon was the son of the younger daughter. In Scripture history the two nations are closely connected. Moab appears to have represented the settled and civilized section of Lot's descendants, whilst the Ammonites formed the Bedouin or predatory portion.

The territory of Moab proper is definitely defined. It lay to the east of the Dead Sea, having the river Arnon as the northern boundary,

and was separated from Edom by the "brook Zered." This district is described as the country of Moab (Ruth i. 1-2). Before the invasion of the Amorites, Moab extended northwards along the Jordan to the hills of Gilead.

The character of the country makes it admirably adapted for the pasturing of large flocks. So we find the Moabites a pastoral people rich in flocks of sheep. In the days of Ahab they paid an annual tribute to the king of Israel of the fleeces of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams (iii. 4).

Early History.

1. At the time of the conquest of the land the Amorites had dispossessed the Moabites of the land north of the Arnon.
2. The Moabites refused the Israelites a passage through their land.
3. Balak, king of Moab, hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. xxii.-xxiv.).
4. Eglon, king of Moab, seized Jericho and oppressed Israel for eighteen years. Ehud relieved Israel from this oppression (Judges iii. 12-30).
5. Moab is mentioned among the conquests of Saul, but no particulars are given (1 Sam. xiv. 47).
6. Ruth the Moabitess was the ancestress of David (Ruth iv. 21-22).
7. David entrusted his parents to the care of the King of Moab, when he was compelled to become a fugitive to escape from Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 3-4).
8. David conquered Moab and dealt with the Moabites with great cruelty. It is conjectured that the king of Moab killed David's parents, and that David exacted this dreadful penalty in revenge for the breach of trust (2 Samuel viii. 2).

Notices in 2 Kings and in 2 Chronicles.

At the division of the kingdom, Moab appears to have been subject to Israel, not to Judah, and to have paid the enormous tribute of the fleeces of 100,000 lambs and 100,000 rams annually.

The defeat and death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead was a great blow to the military strength and prestige of Israel. Ahaziah the successor of Ahab was a weak incapable monarch, and was incapacitated by his accident in falling through the lattice. So Mesha, King of Moab, seized the opportunity to repudiate the tribute and to assert the independence of his country.

Joram of Israel, the successor of Ahaziah, determined to make an effort to recover the lost supremacy of Israel over Moab. He first secured the aid of Judah at this time allied by the marriage of the eldest son of King Jehoshaphat to Athaliah the daughter of Ahab and sister of Joram. Then he secured the co-operation of Edom. This latter alliance enabled the three kings to advance against Moab from the south in preference to attempting the passage of the Arnon from the north.

The allied armies made a circuitous march lasting seven days, and appear to have been accompanied by Elisha, who followed the expedition on his own initiative. The route lay through the dry waterless wilderness of Edom, and the three kings appear to have expected to

find water at the deep wady or torrent bed which separates Edom from Moab. They found the Moabite army drawn up to meet them on the opposite side of the torrent bed. The bed, however, was dry, and as there were no wells in the neighbourhood, whilst the line of retreat was through the arid district traversed in the advance, it seemed as if the whole of the allied forces must perish of thirst.

In this extremity Jehoshaphat bethought himself of inquiring if there was not a prophet of Jehovah in the camp. The three kings were directed to Elisha. At first the prophet gave a rough reply, bidding Joram to "*get him to the prophets of his father and to the prophets of his mother*" (iii. 13), but afterwards relented, impressed by the presence of Jehoshaphat, the pious King of Judah. Commanding music to be played, the prophet became inspired and promised relief and victory.

1. The kings were commanded to dig trenches in the torrent bed.
2. They were promised that the valley should be filled with water though they should "*see no wind nor rain.*"
3. They were assured of victory and were commanded to devastate the country completely.

Everything happened as Elisha had foretold for

- (a) Some sudden storm at a distance, unnoticed both by the allies and the Moabites, brought a rush of water down the torrent bed, and filled the trenches, the overflow passing quickly away as if no rain had fallen. Thus the army was supplied with water.
- (b) In the morning the Moabites saw the water standing in the trenches of a red colour. This would be due to the red soil of Edom washed down in the rush of the water, and the tinge of colour would be heightened by the rays of the morning sun falling upon the surface of the water.

The Moabites imagined the water was blood. They conjectured that a quarrel had broken out in the camp of the allies, *i.e.* that the mutual jealousies of Israel, Judah and Edom had caused a burst of fanatical rage and led the soldiers of the three nations to slay one another. Such an occurrence had recently happened within their own experience.*

Thus deceived and eager to spoil the enemies' camp the Moabites rushed across the ravine in a confused mass in no order and little dreaming of meeting with any resistance. The three kings met them at the entrenchments of the camp, and routed the assailants, inflicting a severe defeat.

- (c) Crossing the ravine, they followed up the victory and marched through Moab, devastating and destroying as they went in the following manner:—

(a) They levelled all the villages to the ground.

* In the expedition of Moab, Edom and Ammon against Jehoshaphat, the prophet Jahaziel announced that there would be no need to engage the enemy, they had only to "*stand still and see the salvation of God*" (2 Chron. xx. 17). So when Jehoshaphat came in sight of the enemy's encampment he found the ground covered with corpses. A panic had seized the army of the allies. Moab and Ammon in an impulse of frenzy had attacked the Edomites, then, when Edom was destroyed, Moab and Ammon had turned upon each other in mutual slaughter. It took the army of Jehoshaphat three days to collect the spoil (2 Chron. xx. 14-26).

- (b) They spoil the good pasture land by scattering stones all over it.
 (c) They cut down all the good trees, *i.e.* the fruit trees.
 (d) They filled up the wells of water.

Kir-haraseth alone held out. It was situated on a lofty peak surrounded by hills higher than the town, and separated from them on all sides by a deep narrow ravine. The three kings were thus enabled to completely invest the place whilst the slingers swept the walls with their missiles.

The King of Moab made a desperate sally to break through the encircling cordon at the quarter held by the King of Edom. Failing in the attempt he offered his first-born son upon the wall of the fort as a propitiatory sacrifice to his god Chemosh, in the hope that by some means the god would interpose to save the town. The three kings, horror-struck by the deed, withdrew their forces and returned to their several countries.

4. They joined with Ammon and Edom against Jehoshaphat, when they were miraculously destroyed in the valley of Berachah (2 Chron. xx. 25), see foot note, p. lxxi.
5. In the reign of Jehoiakim the Moabites acted in concert with the armies of Nebuchadnezzar in harassing Judah (2 Kings xxiv. 2).
6. Four or five years later, in the reign of Zedekiah, an alliance was made, or at least negotiated between Judah, Edom, Moab, Ammon and Tyre, to form a confederation against Babylon (Jer. xxvii. 3).

After the return from the captivity, Sanballat the Horonite, a Moabite, was a persistent adversary to Nehemiah.

The Philistines. A nation said to have come from Caphtor (Amos ix. 7), and to have destroyed the Avims (Deut. ii. 23).

Their name, "the strangers," points to their having been settlers from some foreign country.

Modern research identifies Caphtor with the island of Crete.

The strength and importance of the nation were such that they have given their name to the land of Canaan. Palestine = the land of the Philistines.

Their country. Their land consisted of the southern portion of the Shephelah (see pp. lxviii., lxix.), stretching from Ekron in the north to the river of Egypt (the *El-Arish*) in the south.

Their chief towns were Gath, Gaza, Ekron, Askelon and Ashdod.

The history of the struggle between the Israelites and the Philistines for the supremacy of Canaan belongs to the times of the later Judges, and of Samuel, Saul and David.

Notices in 2 Kings.

1. Ahaziah sent messengers to the god Baal-zebub at Ekron to inquire if he should recover from his injuries (i. 2).
2. Hazael King of Syria captured Gath in the reign of Jehoash, king of Judah (xii. 17).
3. The Shunammite woman took refuge in the land of the Philistines during the famine (viii. 2).

4. Hezekiah smote the Philistines as far as Gaza, the most southerly town. Hence he appears to have overrun the whole land (xviii. 8).

From Chronicles we learn that Uzziah made war against them, and captured Gath and Ashdod (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), but they again recovered their independence in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18).

The chief interest in Philistia during the later kings lies in the fact of that land being on the high road from Assyria to Egypt. Hence the campaigns of Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar in the Shephelah in order to secure the Philistine towns. When they had gained these they were secure against Egypt and were free to prosecute the siege of Jerusalem.

The Philistines appear as the enemies of Israel in the days of the Maccabees, and did not lose their nationality till the time of the Roman conquest, when Syria became a Roman province.

THE SAMARITANS.

Their Origin. Settlers brought from the countries east of the Euphrates to colonize the Kingdom of Israel depopulated by the deportation of the Israelites.

There appear to have been three separate colonizations.

First, by Shalmanezar, or Sargon, after the capture of Samaria.

"The King of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Outhah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel" (xvii. 24).

Second, by Esarhaddon, as stated by the Samaritans themselves, *"we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon, king of Assur, which brought us up hither"* (Ezra iv. 2).

Third, by Asnapper or Osnapper, *"The rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnapper brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria, and the rest that are on this side the river"* (Ezra iv. 10).

Asnapper is generally identified with Assur-bani-pul (see p. lxxxii.).

The following nations are mentioned in Ezra iv. 9: *"The Dinaites, the Apharsathchites, the Tarpelites, the Apharsites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Susanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites."*

As all the Israelites could not possibly have been deported, intermarriages would take place, and so the Samaritans of Ezra's time were a mixed race.

Their Religious Worship. The strangers from Babylon, Outhah and elsewhere, were, of course, idolaters, and worshipped their respective idols according to the place whence they came. God's displeasure was manifested against them, and He sent *"lions among them which slew some of them"* (xvii. 25).

When they appealed to the King of Assyria he despatched one of the captive priests to teach them how they should serve the Lord (xvii. 27). The colonists, however, set up their own gods and intermingled the worship of them with that of Jehovah. *"They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence"* (xvii. 33).

Origin of the feud between the Samaritans and the Jews.

When the Jews commenced to rebuild the Temple, the Samaritans came to Zerubbabel and asked to be allowed to join in the work on the ground that they had worshipped the God of the Jews from the time they had entered the land. Their request was refused with the curt declaration, "*Ye have nothing to do with us*" (Ezra iv. 3). From this time the Samaritans were bitter opponents of the Jews.

They were particularly keen in harassing Nehemiah in his work of restoring the walls of the city, and their active opposition ceased only with the decree of Darius, enforcing the penalty of death on any one interfering with the Jews, in the work of rebuilding the walls.

Their hatred of the Jews was increased by the action of Nehemiah in expelling from Jerusalem, Manasseh, the grandson of Eliashib, the High Priest, for marrying the daughter of Sanballat. Manasseh took refuge with the Samaritans, and obtained permission from Darius Nothus to build a temple on Mount Gerizim. He was the first high-priest of this temple, for which the Samaritans claimed precedence before the Temple of Jerusalem, on the ground that Gerizim was the proper place for sacrifice, because Joshua had built an altar there.

From this time Samaria was the resort of all malcontent Jews, and the enmity between the two people became greater than ever, being intensified by the controversy between them as to which was the true temple.

Gradually the Samaritans abandoned idolatry and claimed to partake of Jewish blood, as instanced by the remark of the woman of Samaria to our Lord, "*Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well*" (St. John iv. 12).

THE GREAT EMPIRES.

The narrative of the Second Book of Kings is descriptive of the foreign relations of the Israelites with the three great Empires of Assyria, Babylon and Egypt, and with the Kingdom of Syria.

At first the contest was with Syria, and in this war it was the northern kingdom that was, by its geographical position, brought in contact with Syria. David had extended his dominions in the far north, and in the reign of Solomon, Israel was the ruling power as far as the Euphrates. The accession of Rehoboam, accompanied by the secession of the Ten Tribes, divided the nation and weakened its strength. In the reign of Omri, Syria was the powerful and incessant opponent of Israel.

Assyria appears on the scene in the reign of Ahaz, and then the wave of Assyrian and Babylonian conquest spreads southward, overwhelming Syria, Israel, Judah, and Egypt in turn. The conquest is intermittent, depending upon the political state of Mesopotamia, and at one time Egypt pressed forward as far north as Carchemish, on the Euphrates.

The key to the history of the land during the later kings will be found in the struggle between the two great Empires of Assyria (followed by Babylon) and Egypt for supremacy in Asia.

Palestine was the debatable ground since the great caravan route from Babylonia to Egypt passed through Palestine along the maritime plain of the west (see map, p. lix.).

Babylon could not attack Egypt unless Palestine were first occupied, or at least its throne held by a king favourable to Babylonia.

So both in the northern and southern kingdoms, statesmen were divided into two parties, the one favouring submission to Assyria and Babylon, the other relying upon Egypt for assistance in repelling the Northern invasions. This factor will explain the rapid changes in the monarchy during the last days of Israel. At one time the Assyrian party would hold the upperhand; then an insurrection would be fomented by those favourable to Egypt, the king would be murdered, and an Egyptian partisan would mount the throne to meet his death later when the Assyrian faction became the stronger.

In Judah the case was worse. After the fall of Israel, Judah was not sufficiently strong in herself to resist either Babylon or Egypt, and so was compelled to side with either one or the other, in fact to choose between vassalage either to Babylon or to Egypt.

Jeremiah persistently advocated submission to Babylon, foreseeing the ultimate triumph of that country. But such a course was contrary to the policy hitherto adopted by the Kings of Judah, who were inclined to lean more upon the power of Egypt, the older monarchy and one nearer to their country. It was difficult to persuade the kings and the people to abandon an alliance with an old and powerful kingdom close to their borders for one with a kingdom of recent growth and far distant from Jewish territory.

To follow the order of events four great circumstances must be kept in mind:—

1. The restoration of Egypt into a first-rate power by Psammetichus.
2. The crushing defeat sustained by Josiah at Megiddo.
3. The transference of power from Nineveh to Babylon. The fall of Nineveh was sudden, complete, and decisive.
4. The defeat of Pharaoh-Necho by Nebuchadnezzar, at Carchemish, four years after the battle of Megiddo.

The course of events :

Judah first became tributary to Assyria when Ahaz solicited the aid of Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, against his formidable foes, Pekah, King of Israel, and Rezin, King of Syria.

That intervention brought about the destruction of the kingdoms of Syria and Israel, and the reduction of Judah to a state of vassalage to Assyria.

In the reign of Hezekiah, the disaster that befel the army of Sennacherib had far-reaching effects. The Assyrian king was compelled to return from Palestine, and his assassination by his sons was in consequence of his ill-success in his campaign against Judah.

During the reigns of Esar-haddon and Assur-bani-pul, Judah was still tributary to Assyria, and Esar-haddon took Manasseh captive to Babylon, but the whole of the far east was in a ferment, symbolized by Jeremiah under the image of a "seething caldron." Media gained its independence. A horde of Scythians overran Western Asia. Babylon was so much disaffected that Esar-haddon was forced to take up his residence at Babylon

instead of Nineveh. During the turmoil in Mesopotamia, Egypt became once more a united kingdom, and, first under Psammetichus and then under Pharaoh-Necho, became again a first-rate power.

The alliance of Media under Cyaxares, with Babylon under Nabopolassar, brought about the fall of Nineveh.

At this crisis, Pharaoh-Necho determined to make an effort to establish Egyptian supremacy in Western Asia. He was successful, defeating first Josiah at Megiddo, and then the Chaldeans at Carchemish.

The terrible disaster of Megiddo, where Josiah, siding with Assyria, had been slain and the power of Judah broken, must have had a potent effect in causing Jewish statesmen to regard Assyria and Babylon as comparatively unable to cope with Egypt. They did not foresee the military genius of Nebuchadnezzar. This Prince was now associated with his father in the kingdom, and at once gave proof of his military abilities. Babylon as an empire is emphatically the work of one man. Till Nebuchadnezzar came on the scene, it would appear to Jewish statesmen that Nineveh had fallen and that Babylon was an inferior state. But no sooner was Nebuchadnezzar placed in power than he advanced against the Egyptians at Carchemish and defeated them. But even then there was little to foreshadow the coming might of the Babylonian empire. After his victory Nebuchadnezzar heard of his father's death and hurried home to make his crown safe. It was not till four years later that he advanced again into Palestine. There is little wonder that Jehoiakim and the later kings inclined to the Egyptian alliance in preference to submission to Babylon.

SYRIA.

Capital, Damascus. The kings of Syria appear to have been :—

1. **Hadadezer**, conquered by David (2 Sam. viii. 3).
2. **Rezon**, a guerilla chief and usurper, who established himself in Damascus in the reign of Solomon (1 Kings xi. 23-25). He is considered to be the same person as Hezion (1 Kings xv. 18), the father of Tabrimon and grandfather of Ben-hadad I.
3. **Tabrimon** (= good to Rimmon), father of Ben-hadad I. (1 Kings xv. 18).
4. **Ben-hadad I.**, first in league with Baasha, who was thus enabled to make successful war against Asa, king of Judah. Ben-hadad was bribed by Asa to break his league with Baasha, and to attack Israel from the north. He captured many towns in the north as far south as Naphtali, and continued successful war against Israel in the days of Omri, compelling that king to make "streets" in Samaria for Syrian residents (1 Kings xx. 34).
5. **Ben-hadad II.** His power and the extent of his rule are indicated by the fact that thirty-two vassal kings accompanied him in his expedition against Ahab.

Three contests with Israel are recorded in his reign—

- (1) The siege of Samaria, and the defeat of the Syrians brought about by the onset of the young men of the Princes of the Provinces (1 Kings xx. 1-21).

- (2) The battle at Aphek, where the Syrians were utterly routed. The life of Ben-hadad was spared through the foolish leniency of Ahab (1 Kings xx. 22-43).
- (3) The expedition of Ahab and Jehoshaphat to recover Ramoth-Gilead. In the battle that ensued Ahab was slain (1 Kings xxii. 1-40).

In the 2nd Book of Kings we find the following events in the reign of Ben-hadad II. :—

- (1) The cure of Naaman by Elisha (v. 1-19).
- (2) The incident of the band of Syrians sent to capture Elisha at Dothan (vi. 13-23).
- (3) The siege of Samaria, when the city was sorely distressed by famine. Samaria was relieved by the flight of the Syrians, who were seized with a panic (vi. 24—vii.).
- (4) The recapture of Ramoth-Gilead by Israel.

Soon afterwards Ben-hadad fell sick, and sent Hazael to inquire of Elisha if he should recover from his sickness. On the day after Hazael's return, Ben-hadad was murdered by Hazael, who usurped the throne (viii. 7-15).

6. **Hazael**, a bold and enterprising monarch, who ascended the throne by the murder of Ben-hadad II. The significance of his reign lies in the circumstance that he was designated, by Jehovah to Elijah at Horeb, as the destined scourge of Israel (see p. xli.).

He is contemporary with the later years of Joram, the whole of Jehu's reign, and the reign of Jehu's successor, Jehoahaz.

Note that the commission given to Elijah at Horeb has particular reference to Baal worship. Jehu, Hazael and Elisha are mentioned in that order as God's instruments for the extirpation of the worship of Baal, and so Hazael's warfare with Israel must be regarded as being a fulfilment of God's purposes in this respect (see p. 48).

His movements against Israel include—

- (1) Hostilities against Ramoth-Gilead. The revolt of Jehu occurred at this period.
- (2) The reduction of the east of Jordan, a war conducted with great barbarity, and occurring in the reign of Jehu.
- (3) Oppression of Israel in the reign of Jehoahaz.
- (4) An expedition south as far as Gath (xii. 17). He proceeded to attack Jerusalem, but was bribed by Joash, king of Judah, to retire (xii. 18).

Assyrian inscriptions show that during the reign of Hazael Assyria on the east was engaged in war with the confederated nations of Syria, Tyre and Hittites on the west.

7. **Ben-hadad III.**, the successor of Hazael, was thrice defeated by Joash, king of Israel, as foretold by Elisha on his deathbed. Jeroboam II., the successor of Joash, recovered the territory, once under the dominion of Solomon, as far north as Hamath.

8. **Rezin**, contemporary with Pekah in Israel, and with Jotham and Ahaz in Judah.

For the first time since the reign of Baasha, Syria and Israel are in alliance. The object was to form a confederation to resist Assyria. Attempts were made to force Jotham to join the alliance, and in the reign of Ahaz, Pekah and Rezin advanced against Judah to compel the adherence of Judah by force. The combined army laid siege to Jerusalem, but could not take it, though Rezin pressed as far south as Elath on the gulf of Akabah (xv. 37, and xvi. 5-6).

Ahaz bought the assistance of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, at the price of treasure and the independence of Judah. The Assyrians advanced against Syria. Rezin was defeated and slain, and with him the Syrian kingdom ended (xvi. 7-9).

KINGS OF EGYPT.

So, king of Egypt in the reign of Hoshea. Hoshea was tributary to Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, but sought alliance with So, king of Egypt. Relying on assistance from Egypt, Hoshea repudiated Assyrian suzerainty. The Assyrians came up against Israel, seized and imprisoned Hoshea, captured Samaria, and put an end to the kingdom of Israel (xvii. 3-6).

So is identified as Sabaco, who, at the head of black warriors from Ethiopia (the modern Soudan), conquered Egypt, and founded what is known as the Ethiopian dynasty.

Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, *i.e.* of the Ethiopian dynasty in Egypt. He was the third and last king of that dynasty.

He entered into alliance with Hezekiah, and his advance to meet Sennacherib is alluded to in xix. 9.

After his defeat by Assur-bani-pul, Egypt was divided into twelve petty principalities. This measure was taken by Assur-bani-pul in order to reduce Egypt to a state of helplessness, so that the country could not offer any effectual resistance to Assyria.

Psammetichus I. put an end to this sub-division of the country, and Egypt once more became a powerful state. Meanwhile Assyria was gradually growing weaker, partly through the Scythian invasion and partly through the growing power of Media and Babylon.

Pharaoh-Necho, alarmed at the growing power of the Chaldeans, led an army to the Euphrates. He was met on his route by Josiah, king of Judah, at Megiddo. The Egyptians won a complete victory, and Josiah fell in the battle. Pharaoh, continuing his march, met and defeated the Chaldeans at Carchemish. On his return he summoned Jehoahaz to Riblah, put him in chains, and carried him away captive to Egypt, whence he did not return.

Necho then made Eliakim or Jehoiakim king, as vassal to Egypt.

The Egyptian army held Carchemish for four years, when Nebuchadnezzar completely defeated them at that place. This battle led to the loss by Egypt of all her Asiatic conquests.

Psammetichus II. There is no event of importance in his reign, and he is not mentioned in Scripture.

Pharaoh-Hophra (Apries), king of Egypt in the reign of Zedekiah.

Zedekiah was bound by an oath of fidelity to Nebuchadnezzar, who had placed him upon the throne, but in violation of this oath he sought an alliance with Egypt against the Chaldeans, who at that time were besieging Jerusalem. Hophra sent an army to the relief of the beleaguered city, whereupon the Chaldeans raised the siege, and marched to meet the Egyptians. The Egyptian forces either were defeated or else they retired without risking battle. Jerusalem was reinvaded, and shortly afterwards captured.

The subsequent history of Egypt may be summed up briefly. Nebuchadnezzar conquered the country and annexed it to the Babylonian Empire. The country was subsequently conquered by the Persian king Cambyses, son of Cyrus, and again by Xerxes, since which time it has always been governed by strangers, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Ezekiel, "*there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt*" (Ezekiel xxx. 13).

KINGS OF ASSYRIA.

Pul invaded Israel in the reign of Menahem, who gave him a thousand talents of silver, and became tributary to Assyria (xv. 19).

This invasion was probably invoked by the conquest of Tiphshah (Thapsacus) by Menahem. The Assyrian monarch would naturally resent such an invasion of what he would regard as his own territory.

The mention of Pul marks the record of a series of Assyrian invasions, culminating, as far as the northern kingdom is concerned, in the capture of Samaria and the extinction of Israel as a kingdom, and as regards the southern kingdom in the destruction of the host of Sennacherib.

It is doubtful if there was a monarch of the name of Pul in Assyrian proper. We know that for some forty or fifty years previous to the reign of Tiglath-pileser the empire of Nineveh was in a state of weakness. This will account for the success of Jeroboam II. in regaining Hamath. It is possible that some second monarchy may have been established on the Euphrates, and that this kingdom was recognized in Syria and Israel as Assyria. Pul may have been one of its kings.

The only other tenable supposition is that Pul is identical with Tiglath-pileser. He cannot have been one of that king's generals, for the Scripture narrative is always careful to distinguish between a monarch and one of his subordinates.

Tiglath-pileser. From the Assyrian records we learn that he was an energetic and powerful prince who raised Assyria from the depression into which it had sunk, and restored it to its former proud and great position. The inscriptions record his wars with Merodach-baladan at Babylon, with Menahem and with Rezin, in addition to



MAP OF THE CAPTIVITIES.

other wars. He was a great builder. He is the first Assyrian monarch mentioned in Scripture certainly identified with Assyrian monuments.

Ahaz, king of Judah, applied to Tiglath-pileser for assistance against Pekah, king of Israel and Rezin, king of Syria (xvi. 7). As the object of the Israel-Syrian invasion of Judah was to compel Judah to join the confederacy against Assyrian supremacy, Tiglath-pileser at once responded to the appeal. He marched against Rezin and put an end to the Syrian kingdom. Israel was saved for a time by the usurpation of Hoshea, who evidently represented himself as favouring Assyria.

In the reign of Pekah, Tiglath-pileser carried off the tribes east of Jordan, and the population of the extreme north of Palestine (xv. 29).

First Deportation of Israel and Commencement of the Captivity of Israel. B.C. 739.

Shalmaneser. The Assyrian records of his period were mutilated by his successors, so that we can gather little of his reign from them.

Shalmaneser invaded Israel twice in the reign of Hoshea. On the first occasion he seized the person of Hoshea, bound him and put him in prison. The second invasion comprised the occupation of the whole land,* the capture of Samaria after a siege of three years and the deportation of the population.

The Second Deportation of Israel. B.C. 721.

It may be that Shalmaneser commenced the siege and that Sargon completed it.

Sargon, father of Sennacherib, mentioned once only in Scripture (Isaiah xx. 1), where he is said to have sent Tartan against Ashdod.

According to Assyrian inscriptions he is the king who captured Samaria in the first year of his reign.

Sennacherib invaded Judah in the reign of Hezekiah.

If we follow the Scripture narrative we must assign the order of events as follows:—

The real object of Sennacherib's march was to gain possession of Egypt. In order to attain this purpose he must gain possession of the Philistine towns, and also be assured of the friendliness of Judah, if indeed he must not have possession of Jerusalem.

The invasion occurred in the latter part of Hezekiah's reign. In his earlier years that monarch had refused tribute to Assyria and had made himself master of Philistia. Thus Sennacherib carried on a double campaign. First he seized Ekron† which opened the way to Jerusalem. He besieged that city, and at the same time advanced

* According to Assyrian inscriptions Sargon, not Shalmaneser, captured Samaria in the first year of his reign. Note that this is not at variance with the Scripture narrative where we get a double mention of the capture of Samaria.

1. "In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria" (xvii. 6).

2. "Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, came up against Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it" (xviii. 9-10).

† Assyrian inscriptions record a great defeat of Egyptians and Ethiopians near Ekron.

further south into Philistia. Hezekiah, alarmed at the danger, submitted and sent tribute to Sennacherib, who was with the main army at Lachish.

But the Assyrian king, though not having time to devote to the siege of Jerusalem [Samaria had held out three years], decided that it would be well to have Jerusalem actually in his hands and so sent Tartan, Rabsaris and Rabshakeh to induce the people of Jerusalem to surrender the city. The policy was the right course from a military view. The towns of Philistia could be taken by open assault, but Jerusalem was likely to resist for some considerable time. With the Philistine towns in his possession, Sennacherib could hold Egypt in check and proceed to deal with Jerusalem. If, however, he could induce that city to open its gates without a siege his course would be clear and easy.

Rabshakeh and his companions failed in their mission, and returned to give their report to Sennacherib, whom they found at Libnah, having raised the siege of Lachish.

Tirhakah appears to have marched to relieve Judah, so Sennacherib was compelled to concentrate his forces to meet the Egyptian army. He contented himself with sending a letter to Hezekiah pointing out the fruitlessness of his action. He, Sennacherib, would deal with Tirhakah and then return to inflict punishment upon Jerusalem and its king.

The destruction of his host completely changed the plans of the Assyrian king. Too weak now to contend with Egypt, he returned to Nineveh, where he was murdered by his sons. Evidently the ill success of Sennacherib had weakened his authority and rendered his assassination possible.

Esar-haddon. The successor of Sennacherib (xix. 37).

He sent additional colonists to Samaria (Ezra iv. 2).

In his reign Manasseh, son of Hezekiah, was taken prisoner and carried captive to Babylon, though afterwards released and restored to the throne as vassal king to Assyria.

Esar-haddon was the only King of Assyria who actually reigned at Babylon. The Bible represents Manasseh as carried to Babylon not to Nineveh. This is an undesigned coincidence confirming the truth of the Scripture narrative.

Assur-bani-pul. One of the most powerful of Assyrian monarchs. He expelled Tirhakah from Ethiopia, and reduced Egypt to a state of complete helplessness by dividing the kingdom into twelve petty principalities.

He conquered Elam, and transplanted the Elamites into the empty cities of Samaria (Ezra iv. 9-10), from which circumstance it is generally received that he is the king referred to as "*the great and noble Asnapper.*"

Saracus, a weak ruler, in whose reign Nabopolassar, instead of holding Babylon for Assyria, allied himself with Cyaxares, king of Media. The allied kings captured Nineveh, burnt the city, and put an end to the Assyrian empire.

KINGS OF BABYLON.

Merodach-baladan (Is. xxxix. 1), wrongly styled Berodach-baladan (2 Kings xx. 12). From Assyrian inscriptions it would appear that Merodach-baladan was the head of the popular party at Babylon which endeavoured to maintain the independence of their country against Assyria. He had two periods of independent rule at Babylon. First he held the throne for twelve years in the reign of Sargon, when the latter defeated him and took him prisoner. In the early years of Sennacherib's reign he was in power for six months, till Sennacherib expelled him.

The embassy to Hezekiah must have taken place in his first reign. The ostensible object of the mission was to inquire into the extraordinary phenomenon connected with the recovery of Hezekiah, but the real purpose was to ascertain the power of Hezekiah as an ally against Assyria (see p. 84).

Nabopolassar, the viceroy of Babylon. When Cyaxares, king of Media, invaded Assyria, Nabopolassar instead of holding Babylon for Assyria, joined forces with Cyaxares and advanced with him against Nineveh. Nineveh was captured and burnt, and thus the Assyrian Empire came to an end.

Nebuchadnezzar, son of Nabopolassar, the real founder of the Babylonian empire. He had first to deal with Egypt. Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt, had taken advantage of the confusion in Mesopotamia to advance as far as the Euphrates, establishing himself at Carchemish.

Nebuchadnezzar, as commander of his father's army, marched to Carchemish and defeated the Egyptians. This battle was decisive and proved the foundation of Babylonian supremacy, although Nebuchadnezzar did not immediately follow up the victory, for the death of his father caused his own immediate return to Babylon to secure his throne.

Four years later he returned to carry out operations which resulted in the fall of Tyre, the capture of Jerusalem and the subjugation of Egypt. Riblah was the headquarters of the Babylonian king, and his operations against Judah may be divided into four sections.

1. He invaded Judah, captured Jerusalem, placed the King Jehoiakim, the nominee of Egypt, in fetters, plundered the Temple, and carried off to Babylon some of the sacred vessels and many of the Hebrew nobles, including Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah (Dan. i. 6).

First Deportation of Judah. B.C. 606. From this date is reckoned the Seventy Years' Captivity foretold by Jeremiah.

2. Jerusalem was again besieged in the reign of Jehoiachin. That king surrendered with his mother, princes, servants and officers and was carried away captive to Babylon. The temple was again pillaged of such vessels as remained, the nobles and chief citizens were removed to Babylon, and none "*save the poorest sort of the people*" were left in the land (xxiv. 8-16).

Second Deportation of Judah. B.C. 598.

3. In the reign of Zedekiah the Jews revolted once more and Nebuchadnezzar again besieged Jerusalem.

Zedekiah effected his escape when the city was taken by assault, but was pursued, captured and sent to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. His sons were put to death in his presence, his eyes were put out, and he was conveyed, laden with fetters, to Babylon.

Nebuzar-adan was then commanded to complete the destruction of the city. The Temple, the royal palace, and the houses of the rich were burnt down, the walls were destroyed, the sacred vessels were either destroyed or carried to Babylon. Many of the chief priests and officials were put to death, and the rest, with the greater part of the inhabitants, were removed to Babylon. Nebuzar-adan left only "*of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen*" (xxv. 12).

Third Deportation of Judah. B.C. 588.

4. The few remaining inhabitants were finally removed to Babylon by Nebuzar-adan.

Fourth Deportation of Judah. B.C. 583.

The Babylonian kings did not colonize Judah.

Evil-Merodach released Jehoiachin from captivity (2 Kings xxv. 27-30).

Neriglissar (the *Nergal-sharezar* of Jeremiah xxxix. 3) murdered Evil-Merodach, and after a reign of four years fell in battle.

Laboro-soarchod, son of Neriglissar, reigned nine months.

Labynitus or **Nabonidos**, son of Evil-Merodach, and grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. His son, Belshazzar, seems to have been admitted by his father to a share in the government.

Belshazzar. The night Belshazzar was feasting with his lords, Cyrus, having diverted the course of the Euphrates, marched up the dry bed of the river, captured Babylon, and slew Belshazzar (Dan. v.).

In the first year after the capture of Babylon, Cyrus issued the decree permitting the Jews to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the Temple B.C. 536, thus fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah that after the end of seventy years the people should return again (Jer. xxix. 10).

The duration of the Captivity is calculated

From The First Deportation by Nebuchadnezzar. B.C. 606.

To The Decree of Cyrus. B.C. 536.

THE CAPTIVITIES.

The so-called captivities of Israel and Judah are rather deportations or expatriations than captivities. It was the policy of Assyrian kings to transport conquered peoples from their native countries, and Nebuchadnezzar followed the same policy.

Thus the Israelites of Samaria were deported to Media, and their country was colonized by captives from the eastern side of the Euphrates.

This policy was adopted with the purpose of removing any chance of revolt. It might succeed if the deported nation became absorbed into the people amongst whom it settled.

But the Jews with their strong feeling of nationality were a nation most unlikely to become contented settlers, and they constantly longed to return.

The Assyrian and Babylonian system proved a source of weakness to the empire, and the colonists round Babylon hailed Cyrus as their deliverer.

It is better, then, to describe these captivities as forcible deportations of the Jews from their native land, and forcible detention as settlers in the country east of the Euphrates.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Abana, one of the rivers of Damascus, the modern Barada. It rises in Anti-Libanus, about twenty-three miles from Damascus, flows through the city and runs across the plain, losing itself in the lake or marsh Bahret-el-Kobliyah. The beautiful scenery of the Damascus oasis and the clear waters of its streams are in great contrast to the discoloured waters of Jordan and its narrow gorge.

Naaman might well consider Abana and **Pharpar** to be superior to any river of Israel (v. 12).

Abel-beth-maachah, a town of some importance, situated in the extreme north of Palestine, and described as "*a city and mother in Israel*" (2 Sam. xx. 19).

Notices.

- (1) It was the place of refuge of Sheba in his revolt against David (2 Sam. xx. 19).
- (2) It was captured by Benhadad, king of Syria, in his expedition with Baasha, king of Israel, against Asa, king of Judah (1 Kings xv. 20).
- (3) It was captured by Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, when he invaded Israel in the reign of Pekah (xv. 29).

Aphek. There are several places of this name. The one referred to in the Books of Kings is the Aphek in the plain of Jezroel, on the road by which the Syrians would come from the Jordan to Samaria. It is identified with *Fik*, six miles east of the Sea of Galilee.

Notices.

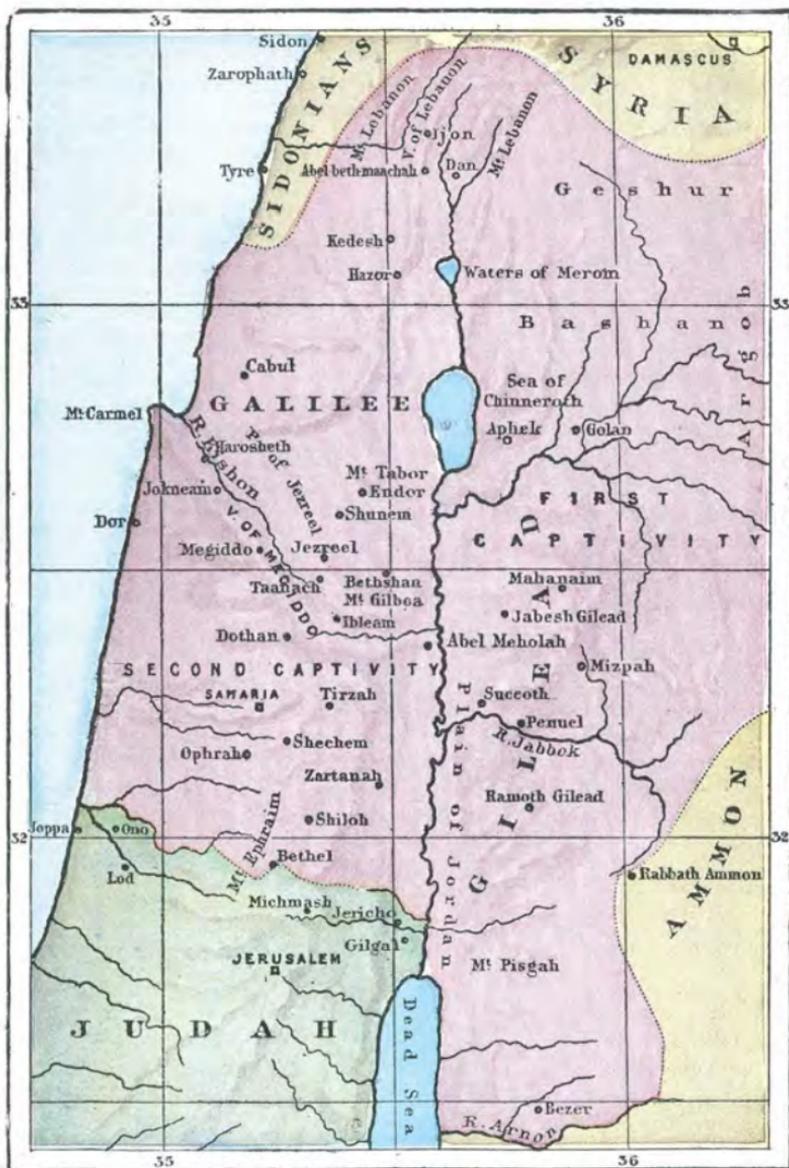
- (1) It was occupied by the Philistines before the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxix. 1).
- (2) It was the scene of Ahab's second and great defeat of Ben-hadad, when 27,000 Syrians were destroyed by the fall of the city wall (1 Kings xx. 26-30).
- (3) On his deathbed Elisha prophesied that Joash should smite "*the Syrians in Aphek*" till he had consumed them (xiii. 17).

From these notices we may conclude that Aphek was a spot where the Syrians and Israel often met in battle.

Armenia (so rendered in the A.V. The original Hebrew is Ararat, and is translated Ararat in R.V.). The district signified is the north-eastern portion of Armenia, the Assyrian *Aratu*, the great plain watered by the Araxes.



MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH.



MAP OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

Notice.

Adrammelech and Sharezer took refuge in the land of Armenia when they killed their father, Sennacherib (xix. 37).

From Assyrian inscriptions we learn that they would find a safe refuge in the land of Armenia, which was at that time independent of Assyria.

Arnon. A river or torrent which flowed into the Dead Sea on the east, and formed the southern boundary of Reuben, and the northern boundary of Moab (see Aroer).

Aroer. A city on the bank of the Arnon, and the southern point of the territory of Reuben.

Notice.

"*Aroer, which is by the river Arnon*" (x. 33).

The mention of Aroer in the conquests of Hazael on the east of Jordan indicates that the Syrian king penetrated to the furthest southern point; in fact, gained possession of all the territory of Israel east of Jordan.

Arpad, a city or district of Syria, apparently dependent upon Damascus. It is always mentioned along with Hamath, but no mention of the place has been found except in the Bible.

It is mentioned among the names of places conquered by Sennacherib (xviii. 34, xix. 13).

Ava or **Avvah** the same as **Ivah**. Identical with the modern *Hit*, a town upon the Euphrates. It is probably the Ahava of Ezra, where he assembled the second expedition from Babylon to Jerusalem. Thus it is on the caravan route from Babylon to Palestine.

The Avites, or people of Ava, were among the colonists who peopled the northern territory after the deportation of the Israelite population (xvii. 24).

Baal-shalisha, a place named only in 2 Kings iv. 42. It was apparently not far from Gilgal. Saul sought for his father's asses in the "*land of Shalisha*," in Mount Ephraim, so we may assume that Baal-shalisha was a village in this district.

It is the home of the man who came to Gilgal from Baal-shalisha with loaves and corn as an offering of the first-fruits to the prophet. Elisha miraculously multiplied the loaves and corn so that they sufficed to feed one hundred men (iv. 42-44).

Babylon, the capital of the Babylonian empire, on the Euphrates, which flowed through the city. First mentioned as belonging to Nimrod (Gen. x. 6-10). It was the chief town of the Chaldeans (for history see p. lxxxiii.).

Bashan, a district on the east of Jordan, conquered by Moses, and assigned to the half-tribe of Manasseh. It lay between Gilead on the south and Mount Hermon on the north. It is mentioned in the conquests of Hazael, who annexed Bashan, Gilead, even to Arnon, *i.e.* the whole district east of Jordan (x. 33).

Beer-sheba. One of the oldest places in Palestine; it formed the southern limit of the country. The name appears to have been derived either from the "seven ewe lambs" set apart by Abraham, or from its seven wells. *Sheba* is the Hebrew for *seven*.

Notices.

- (1) It was the scene of a treaty between Abraham and Abimelech, the king of the Philistines (Gen. xxi. 22-34), and subsequently of a treaty between Isaac and the same king (Gen. xxv. 26-33).
 - (2) When Elijah fled from Jezabel after the slaughter of the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel he "*came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there*" (1 Kings xix. 3).
 - (3) Josiah defiled the high places from "*Geba to Beer-sheba*" (xxiii. 8.)
- "From Geba to Beer-sheba" means the whole of Judah from north to south, Geba being in the extreme north, and Beer-sheba in the extreme south.
- "From Dan to Beer-sheba" became a general expression for the whole of Canaan, equivalent to our "from Land's End to John o' Groat's House," as signifying the whole of Great Britain.

Beth-el (*Beth*, house; *El*, God) = the house of God. Its ancient name was Luz. It was situated on the extreme south of Ephraim, and so just on the border of the kingdom of Israel.

Notices.

- (1) When Abraham entered Canaan he pitched his tent between Beth-el and Ai, and built an altar (Gen. xii. 8).
- (2) On his return from Egypt, Abraham again encamped there (Gen. xiii. 3).
- (3) On his journey from Beer-sheba to Haran, Jacob halted for the night at Beth-el. Here he had the vision of the ladder reaching from heaven, and of the angels ascending and descending. So he named the place Beth-el. "*This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven,*" but "*the name of that city was called Luz at the first*" (Gen. xxviii. 10-22).
- (4) On Jacob's return from Padan-aram he visited Beth-el in obedience to the command of God, built an altar, called the place Beth-el, and himself received the name of Jacob (Gen. xxxv. 6-10).
- (5) If we take the words "*house of God*" to mean Beth-el (Judges xx. 18, 26, 31; xxi. 19), we may conclude that the ark was at Beth-el under the charge of Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, and that the Israelites went up to Beth-el to ask counsel of God in the troublous times of the Judges.
- (6) It was one of the three cities, Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, to which Samuel went on circuit from year to year to judge the people (1 Sam. vii. 16).

Notices in Kings.

- (1) Jeroboam, influenced partly by the sanctity of the spot, and partly by its situation on the southern border of the kingdom, selected Beth-el as one of the places where he set up a calf of gold. Here he built a "house of high places" and "an altar of incense" (1 Kings xii. 29-33).
- (2) On the occasion of the great festival at the dedication of the altar, Jeroboam was denounced by the "man of God who came out of Judah" (1 Kings xiii.), see p. xxvii.
- (3) Beth-el was captured by Judah towards the close of Jeroboam's reign (2 Chron. xiii. 19).
- (4) Elijah visited Beth-el with Elisha before his translation to heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings ii. 2-3.)
- (5) There was a "school of prophets" at Beth-el (2 Kings ii. 3).
- (6) At Beth-el the children mocked Elisha, and forty-two of them were slain by bears (2 Kings ii. 23-24).
- (7) After the desolation of the northern kingdom, the priest sent by the king of Assyria "came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord" (2 Kings xvii. 29).
- (8) Josiah in his reformation broke down the altar at Beth-el, and burnt bones out of the sepulchre upon it. He "burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned the grove" (2 Kings xxiii. 15-18), and thus fulfilled the prophecy spoken against Jeroboam by the man of God (1 Kings xiii. 2), see p. xxvii.

Two hundred and twenty-three of the men of Beth-el and Ai returned from the captivity (Ezra ii. 28).

Beth-Millo, the original for "the house of Millo" (see p. lxiii).

Beth-shemesh, a town on the northern boundary of Judah.

It is notable for two events:—

- (1) The Ark was brought to Beth-shemesh from the land of the Philistines. The men of Beth-shemesh looked into the Ark, and God smote fifty thousand and seventy for this sin (1 Sam. vi. 19).
- (2) It was the scene of the battle between Jehoash, king of Israel, and Amaziah, king of Judah, where Amaziah suffered a signal defeat and was taken prisoner (2 Kings xiv. 11-14).

Boscath, or **Bozkath**, a city in the lowlands of Judah. It is mentioned as the birthplace of Adaiah, the mother of King Josiah (xxii. 1).

Carmel, a ridge about twelve miles in extent, running S.S.E. from the Mediterranean, where it is a bluff promontory. It forms the southern boundary of the only bay upon the coast. It is almost equally abrupt at its southern end, whence it is continued into the lower hills of Samaria. It thus separates the plain of Sharon on the south from the plain of Esdraelon on the north.

It is famous as the scene of Elijah's challenge to the priests of Baal, in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings xviii.).

It was most probably from one of the hills of Carmel that Elijah called down fire upon the captains and troops sent by Ahaziah to arrest him (i. 9).

Elisha visited Carmel after the ascent of Elijah (ii. 25).

It seems probable that Elisha had some dwelling upon Carmel, for he was at Carmel when the Shunammite hurried to him on the death of her son (iv. 25, etc.).

Carchemish, *lit.* "the fort of Chemosh." By some it is identified with *Cercessium*, at the juncture of the Chebar and Euphrates, but Professor Rawlinson (*Anc. Mon.*) places it higher up the Euphrates, in lat. 36°, and describes it as the key of Syria on the east, and as commanding the passage of the Euphrates.

After his victory over Josiah at Megiddo, Pharaoh-Necho advanced to Carchemish and defeated the Chaldeans.

In B.C. 610 Nebuchadnezzar inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Egyptians at Carchemish. This battle may be described as the "decisive" battle of the period, and the turning point in the history. It established the supremacy of the Chaldeans compared with Egypt. Failure on the part of the Jewish rulers to recognize the importance of this victory led to all the subsequent disasters that overwhelmed the kingdom of Judah.

Chaldeans (see p. lxvii.).

Corruption, Mount of (see p. lxiv.) (Mount of Offence)

Cities of the Medes (see p. 69).

Cuthah or Cuth, one of the countries whence the kings of Assyria introduced colonists into Samaria (xvii. 24, 30).

According to modern discovery it was situated about fifteen miles to the north-east of Babylon, where bricks inscribed with the name of Cutha have been found. Assyrian inscriptions confirm the Bible statement that Nergal was the particular god of Cutha (see Nergal, p. 1).

Damascus, the great city of Syria, situated in a fertile plain of some thirty miles in diameter, lying to the east of Anti-Libanus. This place is watered by the rivers Barada (Abana) and Awaj (Pharpar).

Damascus is one of the most ancient cities in the world. Abraham's steward, Eliezer, was a native of Damascus (Gen. xv. 2).

It was the capital of the Syrian kingdom.

Notices in 2 Kings.

- (1) Elisha visited Damascus (the district, if not the city). Hazael was sent to the prophet on a mission from Benhadad, king of Syria, to inquire if that king would recover from his sickness. In the interview Elisha showed Hazael that he had read his (Hazael's) intention to murder Benhadad and to usurp the throne. The prophet also predicted the devastation and cruelties Hazael would inflict upon Israel when he should be king (viii. 7-15).

- (2) It is recorded that Jeroboam II. recovered Damascus and Hamath, and extended his kingdom to the limits formerly under the rule of Solomon (xiv. 25).
- (3) Tiglath-pileser, in the reign of Rezin, king of Syria (contemporary with Ahaz, king of Judah), captured Damascus, slew Rezin, and carried the people of Damascus captive to Kir (xvi. 9).
- (4) Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser, doubtless to pay homage to him as his suzerain. At Damascus he saw an altar, the pattern of which he sent to Urijah the priest at Jerusalem. A similar altar was built and erected in the Temple, in the place of the great brazen altar of king Solomon (xvi. 10-16).

Damascus was originally conquered by David, who placed garrisons there, and made Syria a tributary state to Israel (2 Sam. viii. 6). Thus Jeroboam is described as having "*recovered*" Damascus, *i.e.* having once more made Syria tributary to Israel.

It is also recorded that Benhadad granted to Ahab the privilege of making streets for himself at Damascus, *i.e.* establishing a Jewish quarter in that city (1 Kings xx. 34).

Dothan, some place evidently near to Shechem and Samaria. It is mentioned twice in Scripture.

- (1) In the history of Joseph. When sent by his father Jacob to inquire after the welfare of his brethren and their flocks he went from Shechem to Dothan, being told that his brethren were pasturing their flocks at Dothan (Gen. xxxvii. 17).
- (2) Elisha appears to have had a residence at Dothan. The king of Syria sent a company of horsemen and chariots to capture Elisha (see vi. 13-23), in order to prevent the prophet from giving information to the king of Israel (vi. 8-12).

From the narrative it is clear that Dothan was on a hill, and was encircled by rising ground, for

- (a) the Syrians "*came down*" to Elisha, *i.e.* descended from the high ground they had seized in the night;
- (b) "*the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha,*" *i.e.* round the hill on which Dothan stood there was a circle of the heavenly host guarding Elisha.

Eden. "*The children of Eden which were in Thelasar*" (xix. 12). The Beni-eden or sons of Eden, the name of an Arab tribe, which is probably preserved in the village of Adana or Adna, some distance to the north of Bagdad. Eden is mentioned in Ezekiel xxvii. 23, along with Haran and Canneh, as one of the marts which supplied Tyre with richly-embroidered stuffs.

Egypt, River of. Not the Nile but the El-Arish, a desert stream on the northern border of Egypt, flowing into the Mediterranean. It formed the boundary between Palestine and Egypt, hence the name.

The king of Babylon is said to have "taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt," i.e. he had conquered all the Asiatic possessions of Egypt (xxiv. 7).

Ekron, the most northerly of the five cities of the Philistines. It was assigned to Judah, forming one of the landmarks on the northern boundary. It seems to have been given to Dan at a later period.

Ekron is one of the Philistine cities which received the Ark when it was captured by the Philistines. Noting the plagues that visited Ashdod and Gath, the Ekronites made vehement, but unavailing, protest against receiving the Ark into their city.

The Ark was drawn by the kine in the cart from Ekron to Bethshemesh (1 Sam. v. 10; vi. 12).

Ahaziah, king of Israel, sent to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether he should recover from the injuries he had received by falling through a lattice from his upper chamber (2 Kings i. 2).

Elath or **Eloth**, a town of Edom, situated at the head of the gulf of Akabah. It is generally mentioned along with Ezion-geber.

Ezion-geber is chiefly noticeable as being the station for the navy of Solomon, which sailed thence down the Red Sea to Arabia and other countries (1 Kings ix. 26-28).

Later Jehoshaphat, in alliance with Ahaziah, king of Israel, built a fleet at Ezion-geber. The fleet was destroyed by a storm at the commencement of the first voyage (1 Kings xxii. 48).

Azariah (Uzziah), king of Judah, recovered Elath from Edom (2 Kings xiv. 22), and made it a Jewish harbour.

In the reign of Ahaz, Rezin, king of Syria, overran the eastern districts of Palestine as far south as Elath, which he wrested from Judah and made a Syrian port.

Ephraim. **Mount Ephraim**. The title is misleading. It should be "the hill country of Ephraim." What is meant is the hilly district of the territory of Ephraim, one of the most fertile and beautiful regions of Palestine. Shechem and Samaria were situated in this district, which was almost inaccessible on its westward side. It was the highway for all roads from the south to the north. It appears to have been successfully invaded from the plain of Esdraelon.

For the "Gate of Ephraim," see p. lxiv.

Esdraelon, Plain of, known also as the Plain of Jezreel, extending across Central Palestine from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, separating the mountain ranges of Carmel and Ephraim from those of Naphtali.

It is celebrated as being the great battlefield of Palestine, and four great encounters are recorded in Scripture:—

- (1) The battle of Kishon, in which Sisera's host was routed by Deborah and Barak (Judges iv. 13-15).
- (2) The defeat of the Midianite horde by Gideon (Judges vii.).
- (3) The battle of Gilboa, in which Saul lost his life (1 Sam. xxxi.).
- (4) The battle of Megiddo, where Josiah fell in the endeavour to check the march of Pharaoh-Necho as he advanced northwards to the Euphrates (xxiii. 29-30).

"The situation of the plain of Esdraelon may be compared with the plain of Stirling, situated in a similar manner at the entrance to the Highlands of Scotland. As the plain of Esdraelon was the battle-ground of Palestine, so almost all the great battles of Scottish history were decided in the plain of Stirling" (STANLEY).

The plain of Esdraelon is also connected with many events in the history of the country.

Here Ahab built his capital, Jezreel, on the spur of Gilboa, abutting the plain, commanding the view to Jordan on the east, and visible from Carmel on the west.

On the ridge of Carmel, Elijah slaughtered the priests of Baal, and ran along the plain before Ahab to Jezreel.

At Beth-shan, on the east, the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and Jonathan on the city wall.

Past Beth-shan, from the east, came Jehu from the camp at Ramoth-Gilead to execute vengeance on the house of Ahab.

From Jezreel fled Ahaziah, king of Judah, making for Judah by the western pass, and receiving his death wound at the ascent, dying at Megiddo.

At Aphek on the plain (or it may be at Aphek on the east of Jordan), Joash, king of Israel, inflicted three defeats upon the Syrians, as foretold by Elisha on his deathbed.

Ezion-geber, a town of Edom, situated at the head of the gulf of Akabah, and generally mentioned along with Elath (see Elath, p. xciii.).

Gallee. In the New Testament this name is applied to the whole district north of the province of Samaria. In the Old Testament it signifies the country round Kedesh-Naphtali. In this district were the twenty cities given by Solomon to Hiram, king of Tyre (1 Kings ix. 11). The district was conquered by Tiglath-pileser, in the reign of Pekah (xv. 29).

Gath, one of the five cities of the Philistines. It occupied a strong position on the border of Judah and Philistia, and its strength and resources made it the key of both countries. It is closely connected with the history of David.

It was captured by Hazael, king of Syria, who was thus enabled to advance against Jerusalem. The Syrians were bought off by Joash, the king of Judah (xii. 17-18).

Gath-hepher or **Gittah-hepher**, a town on the border of Zebulun, about four miles from Nazareth. It was the native place of the prophet Jonah (xiv. 25).

Gaza or **Azzah**, one of the five chief cities of the Philistines, and the last town on the south-west of Palestine on the frontier of Egypt. It occupied a position of great strength. Joshua was not able to subdue it, and though the tribe of Judah once obtained possession of it, they did not hold it for any length of time. During the days of Samuel, Saul and David, it was in the hands of the Philistines, and appears to have been their capital.

Solomon gained possession of it, and it is said that his territory extended from "*Tiphseh even to Azzah*" (1 Kings iv. 24).

Hezekiah is said to have smitten "*the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city*" (xviii. 8), *i.e.* that he completely overran the country of Philistia.

Geba, a priestly town of Benjamin, about eight miles north of Jerusalem, on the borders of Israel and Judah. It was together with Mizpah fortified by Asa out of the materials left by Baasha at Ramah. His object was to guard the frontier of Judah against further invasion from the northern kingdom (1 Kings xv. 17-22).

Josiah defiled the "*high places from Geba to Beer-sheba*" (xxiii. 8), *i.e.* from north to south of the land (see Beer-sheba, p. lxxxix.).

Gihon (see p. lxiii.).

Gilead. Gilead proper is a mountainous district on the east of Jordan bounded on the north by Bashan, and on the south by Moab and Ammon. Mahanaim, Ramoth-Gilead, and Jabesh-Gilead were its chief towns.

The name often includes the whole district east of Jordan.

Gilead was the district of Elijah's birthplace, and the scene of his translation (ii. 7-12).

Hazeal conquered the whole east of Jordan, "*the land of Gilead*" (x. 33). In this passage we see the double signification of the term, *viz.* :

- (a) "*The land of Gilead*" as including the tribes of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh.
- (b) "*Gilead and Bashan*," *i.e.* Gilead, the northern division, as distinct from Bashan, the southern division of the land east of Jordan.

Gilgal. There are two places of this name—

- (1) Gilgal in the plain of Jericho, the site of the first camp of the Israelites after the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. iv. 19).
- (2) Gilgal in the hill country of Ephraim, to the north of Beth-el, and on a higher level.

The Gilgal mentioned in 2 Kings is the Gilgal in the hill country of Ephraim.

At Gilgal was a school of the prophets (iv. 38), where Elisha wrought two miracles—

- (1) The healing of the pot of deadly pottage (iv. 39-41).
- (2) The increasing of the loaves and corn brought to Elisha at Gilgal as an offering to the prophet by the man from Baalshalisha (iv. 42-44).

Elijah started with Elisha from Gilgal on his last journey to the scene of his translation, visiting the schools of the prophets at Gilgal, Beth-el, and Jericho on the route. They "*went down*" to Beth-el, *i.e.* from the higher elevation of Gilgal to the comparatively lower situation of Beth-el.

Gozan, River of. The A.V. is misleading. Gozan is not a river, but a district watered by the Habor. It is the district into which the people of the northern kingdom of Israel were carried away captive by the Assyrian kings (xvii. 6).

For "*in Habor, by the river of Gozan*" read "*On Habor, the river of Gozan.*"

Gozan is the *Gauzanitis* of Ptolemy, now known as *Kaushan*.

Gur, the going up to, an ascent or rising ground, at which Ahaziah received his death wound when endeavouring to escape from the soldiers sent in pursuit of him by Jehu after the murder of Joram (ix. 27).

Gur is probably the name given to some difficult portion of the road from Jezreel to the plain of Sharon, as the road rises from the plain of Jezreel to ascend the pass lying between the hills of Samaria and Carmel.

Habor. Not a place but a river, "the river of Gozan" (see Gozan, above). It is identified with the Khabour, the famous western affluent of the Euphrates. The inhabitants of the northern kingdom were removed to the district of Gozan (*Gauzanitis*) and settled on the banks of the Habor (xvii. 6).

Halah, one of the districts to which the Israelites were removed after the capture of Samaria (xvii. 6). It is identified with *Chalcitis*, adjoining *Gauzanitis* (Gozan), and thus near the river *Khabour* (Habor) (see Gozan, above).

Hamath, an important city of Upper Syria in the valley of the Orontes, which it commanded. This valley was the main entrance to Palestine from the north, and was the route traversed by the armies of Assyria and Babylon when they invaded that country.

Hence "*the entering in of Hamath*" signifies the valley between Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, which may well be termed the gateway of Palestine from the north.

Solomon's kingdom extended from the "*entering in of Hamath unto the river of Egypt*" (1 Kings viii. 65), a phrase which signifies the whole of Palestine. Jeroboam II. is said to have "*restored the coast of Israel from the entering in of Hamath unto the sea of the plain*" (xiv. 25), i.e. recovered all the land from Hamath in the north with the territory on the east of Jordan as far as the Dead Sea.

Some of the inhabitants of Hamath were sent to colonize Samaria (xvii. 24).

Riblah was in the land of Hamath (xxiii. 33) (see Riblah, p. c.).

Haran, the country to which Abraham migrated from Ur of the Chaldees (Gen. xii. 4), known also as Charran and Padan-Aram. It was situated in Mesopotamia (Gen. xxiv. 10). It is identified with the fertile stretch of country at the foot of Mount Masius lying between the Khabour (the Habor) and the Euphrates, in which district there is a village still called Harrán.

Haran is mentioned in the list of the conquests of Assyria, following upon Gozan, which lies between Haran and Assyria proper.

Hazor, an important city in the tribe of Naphtali, situated between Ramah and Kedesh, on the high ground overlooking the waters of Merom, and occupying a very strong position.

Notices.

- (1) Joshua defeated Jabin, King of Hazor and the northern confederacy of kings, and burnt the city of Hazor (Josh. xi. 1).
- (2) Later it was the capital of another Jabin, whose host under Sisera was defeated by Deborah and Barak (Judges iv. 2).
- (3) It was fortified by Solomon as guarding the route of invasion from the north (1 Kings ix. 15).
- (4) It was captured by Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah (xv. 29).

Ibleam, a city of Manasseh, situated near "*the ascent of Gur*" (ix. 27) (see Gur, p. xcvi.).

Ivah or Ivvah, supposed to be the same as Ava (see p. lxxxviii.).

Ijon, a town in the north of Palestine, in the tribe of Naphtali.

- (1) It was taken by Benhadad, king of Syria, when, at the request of Asa, he advanced against Baasha, who was fortifying Ramah and threatening Judah (1 Kings xv. 22).
- (2) It was also captured by Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah (xv. 29).

Janoah, some town in Naphtali, captured by Tiglath-pileser (xv. 29). Its site has not been determined.

Jericho, situate on the plain of the Jordan, exactly opposite the place where the Israelites under Joshua crossed that river.

After the capture of the city Joshua laid it under a curse, forbidding the erection of walls as fortifications of the city (Josh. vi. 26).

The city walls were rebuilt by Hiel in the reign of Ahab, and he suffered the penalty of the curse pronounced by Joshua (1 Kings xvi. 34).

The position of Jericho, as commanding the fords of the Jordan, caused the city to be admirably adapted for commerce, and it quickly rose to importance.

Notices in 2 Kings.

- (1) There was a school of the prophets at Jericho (ii. 5).
- (2) When Elijah left Jericho he smote the waters of Jordan with his mantle, thus making a passage for himself and Elisha.
After the translation of Elijah, Elisha returned to Jericho in the same manner (ii. 8-14).
- * (3) At Jericho Elisha healed the spring of waters by casting in salt (ii. 19-22).
- (4) Zedekiah, whilst endeavouring to escape from Jerusalem, was captured in the plain of Jericho (xxv. 5).

* The spring healed by Elisha is no doubt the present spring *Ain-es-Sultân*, the only spring near to Jericho, a large and beautiful spring about a mile from the site of the ancient Jericho. It takes its rise in some elevations not far from the foot of Quarantaria. Most of the springs in the district are brackish.

Jezeel, a city on an eminence rising out of the plain of Jezreel, commanding a view of Jordan on the east and Carmel on the west. It also gave its name to the plain, so that the plain of Jezreel is only another name for the plain of Esdraelon. This plain was the highway into Palestine from west and north, and the traditional battlefield of the country (see Megiddo, p. xcix.).

The strong and commanding position of Jezreel caused it to be chosen by Ahab as his chief residence. After the fall of his dynasty Jezreel sank into insignificance.

It is the scene of many notable incidents in Kings—

(1) Elijah ran from Carmel before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel (1 Kings xviii. 46).

(2) At Jezreel Ahab had a palace, and here he built for himself an ivory house (1 Kings xxii. 39).

(3) In Jezreel was the vineyard of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 1).

*(4) At Jezreel, Jehu slew Joram, and here Jezebel also met her death (ix. 14-37).

Jezeel, Plain of (see Esdraelon, Plain of, p. xciii.).

Joktheel, the name of a city in the low country of Judah, but this is not the place so named in xiv. 7. Jokthe-el (*sublud* by God) was the name given by Amaziah to Selah, the cliff, captured from the Edomites. Amaziah applies the name in acknowledgment that the victory was gained by divine aid (xiv. 7).

Jotbah, the native place of Meshullemeth, the queen of Manasseh (xxi. 19). It is probably the same as the Jotbath or Jotbathah, a desert station of the Israelites in their wanderings, and near Ezion-geber (Deut. x. 7; Numb. xxxiii. 33).

Kedesh, known as Kedesh-Naphtali to distinguish it from other places of the same name. A fortified city of Naphtali, appointed as a city of refuge. It was the residence of Barak, and there he and Deborah assembled the tribes of Zebulon and Naphtali preparatory to the expedition against Sisera (Judges iv. 9).

It was taken by Tiglath-pileser in the reign of Pekah (2 Kings xv. 29).

Kidron. The river (see p. lxi.).

Kir. The land to which the Syrians were transported by Tiglath-pileser after the fall of Damascus (xvi. 9). It is mentioned by Amos as the original home of the Syrians or Arameans (Amos ix. 7).

Isaiah names Kir in conjunction with Elam (Is. xxii. 6), so we may conclude that it is some part of Mesopotamia.

*The garden house at Jezreel. "Ahaziah fled by the way of the garden house" (ix. 27). This may be—

1. An arbour or pavilion near the entrance of the palace garden or pleasure grounds which included the vineyard of Naboth taken in by Ahab. Ahaziah would escape as quickly as he could.

2. "By the way of Beth-Gan" (Soptuagint). Beth-gan=house of the garden, and if a proper name may be identical with En-Gannim, the modern *Jerim*. *Jerim* lies on the direct road of Ahaziah's flight from Jezreel.

Kir-haraseth, called by Isaiah Kir-moab, the fortress of Moab (*Kir*=fortress). The great fortress of Moab where the Moabites took refuge after their defeat by the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom (iii. 21-27). When the king of Moab failed to break through the besieging lines, he sacrificed his son to Chemosh on the wall of the fortress, whereupon the allies abandoned the expedition (iii. 27).

It is considered to be the modern Kerak, a strong city on a steep hill to the east of the southern part of the Dead Sea.

Lachish, a city of the Amorites in the low country of Judah. The Amorites were mountaineers, so that Lachish must have been in a hilly district, though its site cannot be identified.

It was a fortress of exceptional strength, for though Joshua in his southern campaign captured other cities in one day, the attack against Lachish lasted two days (Josh. x. 31-33).

It was fortified and garrisoned by Rehoboam after the revolt of the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 9).

Amaziah fled to Lachish to escape from the conspirators. There he was seized and put to death, his body being conveyed to Jerusalem for burial (xiv. 19-20).

Sennacherib laid siege to Lachish, but he appears to have been baffled by the strength of the place and to have raised the siege (xviii. 14, xix. 8).

Libnah, a city in the lowland of Judah, not far from Lachish.

Notices.

- (1) It was captured by Joshua in his southern campaign (Josh. x. 29-39).
- (2) In the reign of Jehoram, king of Judah, son of Jehoshaphat, Libnah revolted from Judah at the same time as Edom (viii. 22).
- (3) On relinquishing the siege of Lachish, Sennacherib laid siege to Libnah (xix. 8).
- (4) Libnah was the native place of Hamutal, the queen of Josiah, and the mother of Jehoahaz and Zedekiah (xxiii. 31, xxiv. 18).

Megiddo, a famous town on the southern extremity of the plain of Esdraelon, commanding a pass from the north into the hill country.

Notices.

- (1) It was near the scene of the defeat of Sisera (Judges v. 19).
- (2) It was the scene of the death of Ahaziah of Judah, in the revolt of Jehu against Joram. "*He fled to Megiddo and died there*" (ix. 27).
- (3) It is chiefly memorable for the death of Josiah. When Pharaoh-Necho advanced against Assyria, Josiah espoused the cause of the latter, and barred the march of the Egyptian army at Megiddo. There he was defeated and slain. The battle was disastrous in its consequences. The military power of Judah was shattered, whilst the death of the pious king destroyed

all hope of religious reform. Moreover, the success of Egypt had a fatal effect upon Jewish policy, for the kings and their advisers saw in this victory of Egypt a proof of the might of that empire, and henceforth leaned to an alliance with Egypt instead of courting the friendship of Babylon.

Millo, The house of. (see p. lxiii.).

Mizpah. The Mizpah of xxv. 23 is a town in Benjamin, on the frontier of Ephraim, near Ramah and Gibeon.

It was fortified by Asa with the stones and timber prepared by Baasha to build Ramah, and which he abandoned when compelled to return to meet Benhadad, king of Syria (1 Kings xv. 22). At the same time he constructed a pit or cistern to supply the fortress with water in case of a siege (Jer. xii. 9).

After the destruction of Jerusalem Mizpah became the residence of Gedaliah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had appointed governor of the land (xxv. 23).

Here he was murdered by Ishmael, and his body was cast into the pit or cistern made by Asa (see Gedaliah, p. cv., and Ishmael, p. cviii.).

Mount Ephraim (see Ephraim, p. xciii.).

Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, on the Tigris (see Map, p. lxxx.).

Pharpar, the second of two rivers mentioned by Naaman as rivers of Damascus (v. 12). Abana, is the *Barada*, and Pharpar, the *Awaj*. It rises in the S.E. slope of Hermon, flows through the plain of Damascus and ends in the most southerly of the three lakes or swamps of the plain due east of Damascus, and about forty miles from the source (see Abana, p. lxxxv.).

Ramoth-Gilead, the chief town east of Jordan, in the tribe of Gad, and a city of refuge. It is famous in the wars between Syria and Israel.

- (1) It was taken by the Syrians in the reign of Omri, and not restored to Ahab according to the promise of Benhadad (1 Kings xx. 34 and xxii. 3).
- (2) Ahab met his death in an expedition to retake it in alliance with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah (1 Kings xxii. 29-38).
- (3) It was retaken by Joram, and held by him against all attacks of the Syrians (ix. 14).
- (4) At Ramoth-Gilead Joram was wounded by the Syrians, and returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds (ix. 15).
- (5) At Ramoth-Gilead Jehu was anointed King by a prophet, and led the army thence to Jezreel, where he slew Joram and gained the throne (ix. 15-24).

Thus Ramoth-Gilead was a fatal spot in the history of the house of Ahab.

Riblah, in the land of Hamath—to distinguish it from the Riblah of Numbers xxxiv. which marked the eastern boundary of Egypt.

Riblah is a place of great importance in the struggle between Egypt and the empires of Assyria and Babylon for the mastery of the East.

It lay on the great road between Palestine and Babylonia, and was successively the headquarters of Pharaoh-Necho and Nebuchadnezzar whilst directing the operations of their armies.

Notices in 2 Kings.

- (1) At Riblah, Pharaoh-Necho deposed Jehoaahaz, putting him in chains and carrying him captive to Egypt (xxiii. 33).
- (2) Nebuchadnezzar made Riblah his headquarters, and thence directed operations against Tyre and Jerusalem.
- (3) Zedekiah was brought from Jerusalem to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah.
Then he was condemned, his sons put to death before his eyes, and the nobles of Jerusalem also executed. Then Nebuchadnezzar "*put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him into Babylon*" (xxv. 7).
- (4) Nebuzar-adan took Seraiah, the chief priest, and Zephaniah, the second priest, the three keepers of the door with other officials, and brought them to Nebuchadnezzar, at Riblah, where they were put to death (xxv. 18-21).

Razeph, one of the places mentioned by Sennacherib in his letter to Hezekiah as having been conquered by Assyria. It is probably the Razeppa of the Assyrian inscriptions. This Razeppa was near Haran.

Samaria, the later capital of the kingdom of Israel. The site was bought by Omri for two talents of silver from Shemer, whence the name of the city Samaria.

The spot was well chosen. It lay to the north-west of Shechem, on an oblong hill standing alone, and rising in the middle of a basin of the hills of Ephraim. The sides of the hill were steep but accessible, and the top was flat. The surrounding country was productive, and the hill contained several springs of water, so from a military point of view it was admirably adapted for defence.

It was twice besieged by the Syrians.

- (1) By Benhadad, in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings xx. 1). The siege was ineffectual, and Ahab, by twice defeating Benhadad, broke the power of Syria for a time.
- (2) In the reign of Joram, when the siege lasted so long that the distress in Samaria from the famine was very great. A panic among the Syrians caused the dispersion of the besieging army (vi. 24, vii. 20).
- (3) Samaria was besieged by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, and fell after a siege of three years (xvii. 5-6).

The fall of the capital was the end of the Kingdom of Israel.

Selah, a city of Edom taken by Amaziah. As Selah means "rock," it is probably the same place as Petra, which is in the neighbourhood of Mount Hor, about two days' journey north of the top of the gulf of Akabah. Petra, though on a steep hill, lay in a hollow shut in by cliffs, and only approachable through a narrow ravine. After the capture Amaziah called the place Joktheel = *God subdued* (see p. xviii.).

Sepharvaim, a city mentioned by Sennacherib as unable to resist the might of Assyria (xviii. 34), where it is coupled with Hena and Ivah.

It is also mentioned as one of the towns which furnished colonists for Samaria (xvii. 24), where it is connected with Cutha, Ava, and Hamath.

As all the places coupled with Sepharvaim are towns on the Euphrates above Babylon, Sepharvaim has been identified with the famous town of Sippara, on the Euphrates, north of Babylon.

Shunem, a city of Issachar. It is situated on the south-west slope of the Hill of Moreh (now known as "Little Hermon"), and is separated from Jezreel and Gilboa by the deep valley of Jezreel. As Shunem is only three miles north of Jezreel, whilst Carmel is in full view on the west, it is clear that Elisha would easily attract the notice of the Shunammite woman as he passed to and fro between Carmel and Jezreel.

Notices.

- (1) It was the site of the Philistine camp before the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4).
- (2) It was the native place of Abishag, the Shunammite (1 Kings i. 3).
- (3) It was the home of the Shunammite woman, who was hospitable to Elisha, and whose son was raised to life by that prophet (iv.).

Sur, Gate of. (see p. lxxv.).

Thelasar (xix. 12) or **Telassar** (Is. xxxvii. 12), a city inhabited by "the children of Eden," who had been conquered by the Assyrians. It must have been in the north-west of Mesopotamia, in the neighbourhood of Haran (see Eden, p. xcii.).

* **Tipsah** or **Thapsacus**, in Northern Syria, on the Euphrates. The word means ford or passage, and there is a ford by which it is usual to cross the river. It has been identified as *Suriyeh*, forty-five miles south of Balis. There armies marching east or west crossed the Euphrates, as Cyrus did in the expedition of the Ten Thousand.

* Commentators differ as to the identity of the **Tipsah** captured by Menahem, with Thapsacus on the Euphrates.

Arguments against.

- (1) That it is highly improbable that a king who ascended the throne by violence, would, in the disorganized state of Israel, be able to advance as far as the Euphrates.
- (2) That Josephus calls it Thapsa, and names it as a place which refused to admit Menahem.

Arguments for.

- (1) Jeroboam II. extended his rule as far as Hamath (xiv. 23).
- (2) The reigns of Zachariah and Shallum were ten months and one month respectively; thus Menahem seized the throne within one year from the death of Jeroboam II.
- (3) Menahem went through the land requiring the submission of all places to his rule. He would naturally proceed as far as Hamath, and an expedition to Thapsacus would easily follow.
- (4) Assyria was in a state of comparative weakness at this period (see p. lxxix.).
- (5) The name signifies "ford" or "passage," and therefore very appropriate for some such crossing place over a great river.

So there is no valid reason why Menahem should not have advanced as far as the Euphrates.

Solomon's dominions extended as far as Tiphshah (1 Kings iv. 24).

Menahem is said to have captured Tiphshah and to have massacred the population with savage cruelty in revenge for their resistance to his attack (xv. 16). If Tiphshah in this passage be Thapsacus, Menahem must have extended his rule from Samaria to the Euphrates.

Tirzah, an ancient city, whose king is enumerated among those overthrown by Joshua (Josh. xii. 24).

Notices.

- (1) Jeroboam made it a royal residence, and was evidently residing there when his wife visited the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings xiv. 1-8).

Tirzah was probably near Shechem, and seems to have been a palatial residence rather than the actual capital of the country.

- (2) Zimri conspired against Elah, and murdered him at Tirzah. Seven days later Omri, who had marched from Gibbethon with the troops encamped before that town, besieged Zimri at Tirzah. Seeing that resistance was hopeless, Zimri set fire to the palace or castle and perished in the flames (1 Kings xvi. 9-20).

Tirzah remained a royal residence till Omri built Samaria, in the sixth year of his reign (1 Kings xvi. 23-24).

- (3) Towards the close of the Northern Kingdom it was the seat of the conspiracy of Menahem, who murdered Shallum and succeeded him (xv. 14).

Valley of Salt. The district south of the Dead Sea bordering on Edom. Amaziah defeated the Edomites, and slew ten thousand of them in the Valley of Salt (xiv. 7).

Zair, the place where Joram, king of Judah, met the Edomites. He appears to have been surrounded by the Edomites, but to have broken through the cordon by a night sally. After breaking through, his army dispersed to their homes. Thus Edom regained its independence (viii. 20-22).

By some Zair is identified with Zoar, but to this it is objected that Zoar is in Moabite territory rather than in Edom.

It is probable that Seir, the famous mountain of Edom, is intended.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

Achbor, son of Michaiah. One of the five sent by Josiah to consult Huldah, the prophetess (xxii. 14) (see p. xxviii.). He is called Abdon in Chronicles; and appears to have been the father of Elnathan mentioned in Jer. xxvi. 22; xxxvi. 12.

Adrammelech, son of Sennacherib. In conjunction with his brother Sharezer, he murdered his father Sennacherib in the temple of Nisroch, at Nineveh. The parrioides fled into Armenia (xix. 37). Date of the event, B.C. 680. He was named after the Assyrian god Adrammelech (see p. l.).

Ahikam, son of Shaphan the scribe. One of the chief officers in the reigns of Josiah and Jehoiakim.

Notices.

- (1) He was one of the five delegates sent to consult Huldah the prophetess (see p. xxviii.) (xxii. 12-14).
- (2) He protected Jeremiah in the reign of Jehoiakim, and probably saved his life at a time when the king was incensed against the prophets, and had put Urijah to death (Jer. xxvi. 24).
- (3) He was the father of Gedaliah, the governor of the land after the destruction of Jerusalem (Jer. xxxix. 14).

Argob. Argob and Arieih were two of the supporters of Pekahiah, and were slain by Pekah in his usurpation. As Menahem, the father of Pekahiah, is said to be the son of Gadi, which clearly means that he was of the tribe of Gad, and as fifty Gileadites were also slain in the palace, it is reasonable to conjecture that Menahem and Pekahiah enlisted men of their own tribe as their body-guard, and that Argob and Arieih were the officers commanding the same (xv. 25).

Arieih (see Argob).

Asahiah, one of the five delegates sent by Josiah to consult the prophetess Huldah (see p. xxviii.). He is described as "*a servant of the king's*," i.e. some prominent official in close attendance upon the king (xxii. 12).

Baalis. Not mentioned in Kings. King of the Ammonites, who instigated Ishmael to murder Gedaliah, and who gave refuge to the assassin after the perpetration of the massacre at Mizpah (Jer. xl. 14.)

Benhadad (see p. lxxvi., lxxvii.).

Berodach-baladan (see p. lxxxiii.).

Bidkar, one of Jehu's captains. He had formerly been a fellow-officer with Jehu, and appears to have ridden either alongside Jehu or with him in the chariot of Ahab, as one of Ahab's body-guard.

He accompanied Jehu from Ramoth-gilead to Jezreel in the revolt, and was entrusted with the commission to cast the body of Jehoram into "*the portion of the field of Naboth*," in fulfilment of the prophecy of Elijah (ix. 25).

Eliakim, the original name of Jehoiakim (see p. xxix.).

Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, who "was over the household" in the reign of Hezekiah. He was one of the three: Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah, sent by Hezekiah to receive the message of Sennacherib delivered by Tartan, Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh (xviii. 17-18).

The office now assigned to Eliakim had been held formerly by Shebna, who had been degraded, and now filled the post of "*scribe*" or "*royal secretary*."

We gather the high character of Eliakim from the Book of Isaiah, where:—

(a) He is termed God's "*servant*" (Is. xxii. 20).

(b) He was to be "*a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah*" (Is. xxii. 21).

- (c) And "a glorious throne to his father's house" (Is. xxii. 23).
 (d) He should be fastened "as a nail in a sure place" (Is. xxii. 23).
i.e. be permanently fixed in his office, as distinguished from Shebna, whose degradation Isaiah is predicting.

Elnathan, described as "Elnathan of Jerusalem," father of Nehushta, the mother of Jehoiachin. He appears to be the same person as the Elnathan sent by Jehoiakim to fetch the prophet Urijah from Egypt. Urijah was put to death by Jehoiakim (Jer. xxvi. 22). His name also appears among the princes before whom Michaiah read the roll of Baruch, first to the princes and then in the presence of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxxvi. 25).

Esar-haddon (see p. lxxxii.).

Evil-Merodach (see p. lxxxiv.).

Elisha (see p. xxxvi.).

Elijah (see p. xl.).

Gadi. Menahem is called "*the son of Gadi*" = the Gadite, signifying that Menahem was of the tribe of Gad (xv. 17).

Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, and grandson of the Shaphan who was the scribe or secretary of King Josiah. He was the friend and protector of Jeremiah, as his father Ahikam had been.

He was evidently a supporter of the policy of the submission to Babylon, for after the destruction of the Temple, Nebuzar-adan appointed Gedaliah governor of those Jews who remained in the land, and left him a Chaldean guard.

He made Mizpah his headquarters, where he was joined by Jeremiah, who elected to stay with his friend, and support him by his presence and advice, instead of going to Babylon. Mizpah became the resort of Jews from various quarters.

Ishmael, incited by Baalis, King of Ammon, laid a plot to murder Gedaliah, who, though warned of the plot by Johanan, refused to believe Ishmael capable of treachery. Ishmael came to Mizpah with ten men, and was hospitably entertained by Gedaliah. Ishmael and his companions treacherously slew their unsuspecting host. (For particulars see Ishmael, p. cviii.).

The rule of Gedaliah lasted only two months, and with his death vanished all hope of peace and prosperity for the remnant of Judah.

Gehazi, the servant of Elisha.

Notices.

1. He was a medium of communication between Elijah and the Shunammite woman (iv. 12-17).
2. He was with Elisha on Carmel, when the Shunammite sought the aid of the prophet upon the death of her child. Gehazi would have thrust the woman away from the feet of Elisha; Elisha sends him forward to Shunem with his own staff and bids him lay it upon the face of the child, but this had no effect in reviving the dead lad (iv. 18-31).

3. For his sin in the matter of Naaman he was smitten with leprosy, and dismissed from the service of Elisha (v. 20-27).
4. Later he is described as being in the presence of King Joram, relating to the king all the great works which Elisha had done. Whilst he was so engaged the Shunammite woman appeared, appealing to the king for the restoration of her land, which had been appropriated whilst she was in the land of the Philistines during a famine. Gehazi immediately said, "*My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life*" (viii. 1-6). The king at once gave orders not only for the restoration of her land but also of the value of the seven years' produce during her absence.

The sin of Gehazi in the matter of Naaman.

- (1) **In act**
 - (a) *Greed or avarice*, which led him to seize the opportunity to enrich himself.
 - (b) *Deception of Naaman*. He obtained the money and the raiment by false pretences. He lied to Naaman with a plausible tale, that completely took in the unsuspecting Syrian.
 - (c) *Lying*. He unblushingly told a direct lie to Elisha, asserting that he had not left the house.
- (2) **In spirit**. Sin against Jehovah. In fact his sin is the parallel to that of Ananias and Sapphira, who were said by St. Peter to have lied to the Holy Ghost. His sin appears in a two-fold manner, viz.
 - (a) In his appeal to Naaman in the name of Elisha. The prophet had specifically declined any present. His object in so doing was to teach Naaman that Jehovah's favour was not to be won by gifts. Jehovah could not be propitiated in the same manner as the gods of the heathen; His grace was bestowed as a free gift to man, and of His own divine graciousness. Gehazi's act destroyed the value of this lesson.
 - (b) In imagining he could deceive the prophet. In lying to Elisha he was, like Ananias and Sapphira, lying to God.

Hence his immediate, signal, and lasting punishment.

When did King Joram speak with Gehazi?

Most probably before the incident of Naaman, and the punishment of Gehazi with leprosy.

Reasons (1) The famine referred to (viii. 1) must be the "dearth" mentioned in (iv. 38). This is the link of connection. Elisha's prophecy had been fulfilled, and this extraordinary event had impressed the king.

- (2) The miracles of Elisha are not related in chronological order, so there is nothing to prevent the history of the Shunammite occurring early in Elisha's ministry.

- (3) It is most improbable that the king would have admitted a person so plainly afflicted with leprosy to converse with him on such familiar terms.

The only other possible explanation is that Gehazi had repented, and had been healed of the disease. But of this there is no indication whatever.

Hadadzezer (see p. lxxvi.).

Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah, of Libnah; one of the wives of Josiah, and the mother of Jehohaz.

Hazael (see p. lxxvii.).

Hepzibah, the queen of King Hezekiah, and the mother of Manassen. The name signifies "my delight in her," and is the name given by Isaiah to the restored Jerusalem (Is. lxii. 4).

Hilkiah. High-priest in the reign of Josiah. He is described as the son of Shallum, and was probably the father of Jeremiah. "*Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth*" (Jer. i. 1).

It also appears from the genealogy of Ezra (Ezra vii. 1-2) that Hilkiah was the ancestor of Ezra.

Notices.

- (1) Josiah sent Shaphan, the scribe, to receive from Hilkiah the money collected for the repair of the Temple (xxii. 4).
- (2) In cleaning out the rubbish from the Temple, Hilkiah found the Copy of the Law, which he handed to Shaphan, who read it, and then took it to King Josiah (xxii. 8-11).
- (3) He was one of the five delegates sent to consult Huldah, the prophetess (see p. xxviii.) (xxii. 14).

Hiram (not mentioned in 2 Kings). The worker in brass who cast the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, and the great molten sea for King Solomon.

Hoshea (see p. xvii.).

Huldah. The prophetess, wife of Shallum, the keeper of the wardrobe, in the reign of Josiah. She dwelt in Jerusalem, in the college (Second quarter, see p. 117), and was visited by Hilkiah, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asahiah, sent to her by Josiah on the finding of the Book of the Law in the Temple.

Her reply is undoubtedly prophetic. Its tenor is twofold.

1. That the evils pronounced in the Book would certainly come upon the land, as a punishment for its idolatry.
2. That Josiah, for his piety, should be spared seeing the evil in his days, and should be gathered to his grave in peace.

But Josiah died in *battle*. How, then, was the prophecy of Huldah fulfilled?

The evils to be wrought upon the land would come from Babylon, not from Egypt, and to these does the prophetess refer.

The Babylonians burst upon the land in the reign of Jehoiakim, three years after the death of Josiah, and their attacks did not cease till the

destruction of the city and of the Temple, and the complete destruction of Judah as an independent nation.

Isaiah (see p. xlv.).

Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal.

His conspiracy against Gedaliah is briefly recorded in 2 Kings. We get the full details in Jeremiah xl. 13, xli. 16.

During the siege of Jerusalem, Ishmael had fled over Jordan, and had taken refuge with Baalis, king of the Ammonites.

Incited by Baalis, and also aggrieved that he, one of the royal house of David, was set aside in favour of Gedaliah, he at once determined to murder Gedaliah, and to usurp his position.

Gedaliah received warning of the plot from Johanan, but refused to give credence to the information.

Ishmael arrived at Mizpah with his men, and was entertained by Gedaliah at a banquet, during which he and his followers treacherously murdered Gedaliah and his attendants. With such secrecy was this accomplished, that no alarm was raised, and Ishmael was enabled to surprise and put to the sword the whole of the garrison, including Gedaliah's Chaldean body-guard. For two days the people of the town were unaware of the massacre. On the second day, eighty men from Samaria and Shechem, on their way to Jerusalem to bring incense and offerings to the Temple ruins, were induced by Ishmael to turn aside to the residence of Gedaliah. When inside they were at once put to death, with the exception of ten, who escaped by the offer of ransom for their lives. The bodies were then thrown into a well in the courtyard. Then Ishmael surprised the town of Mizpah, and carried off the people, including the daughters of Zedekiah, who had been committed to the care of Gedaliah. He made off with his booty and captives to the country of the Ammonites. Johanan, hearing of the massacre, went in pursuit, overtook the band and recovered the captives and the plunder, but Ishmael escaped with the loss of two of his men and fled to the Ammonites.

Jaazaniah, one of the captains of the forces under Johanan (see Johanan) (xxv. 23).

Jabesh. Father of the Shallum who murdered Zachariah, the last of the house of Jehu (see Shallum) (xv. 10).

Joah. The son of Asaph, and chronicler or keeper of the records in the reign of Hezekiah.

He was one of the three, Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah, sent by Hezekiah to receive the message of Sennacherib delivered by Rab-shakeh and his fellow officers (xviii. 18). He did not accompany Eliakim and Shebna on their errand to Isaiah (xix. 2).

At the conference with the Assyrian officers it would be Joah's duty to record what took place.

Jecholiah. Queen-mother in the reign of Azariah (Uzziah) (xv. 2).

Jehoiada. High-priest at the time of Athaliah's usurpation of the throne. He married Jehosheba, daughter of King Jehoram, and sister of king Abaziah.

He is remarkable for two great acts.

1. The preservation of the royal house of David (xi. 2-12).
2. The restoration of the prestige of the priesthood. Jehoiada is the first to be termed High-priest, "a title not given to Aaron, Eli, or Zadok, but given to Jehoiada, and afterwards continued to his successors. He was regarded as a second founder of the order, so that in after days he, rather than Aaron, is described as the chief." (STANLEY).

The preservation of Joash. In the general massacre of the princes Jehosheba saved Joash, then an infant in arms. Her connection with the royal family probably enabled Jehosheba to conceal the infant and his nurse in the mattress store-room (*bed-chamber*) of the palace, and subsequently to convey them to the Temple to the protection of Jehoiada. The young prince was evidently brought up as if he were one of Jehoiada's own offspring.

The revolution. Jehoiada waited for six years, and in the seventh year struck the great blow. He gained over the representatives of the three great parties, viz. the Levites, the military officers (the army) and the elders (the representatives of the nation), and then on a Sabbath proclaimed the King. (For particulars of his arrangements see p. 44). Here we may, however, note the order of the coronation.

1. The young Prince was on a raised platform (*stood by the pillar*) according to the custom of crowning the kings.
2. The crown was placed upon his head.
3. The "Testimony" was given to him, an indication that the new King would rule according to the Law of Jehovah, and as a pledge that despotic rule like that of Athaliah should cease.
4. He was anointed.
5. The people hailed the ceremony by clapping their hands and saying, "*God Save the King.*"

*Only three kings of Judah are mentioned as having been anointed, viz.

1. Solomon, by Zadok (1 Kings i. 39).
2. Joash, by Jehoiada (xi. 12).
3. Jehoahaz, elected by popular choice (xxlii. 30).

In all three cases there is a departure from the direct succession, thus:—

- (1) In the case of Solomon, the eldest son of David was Adonijah.
- (2) In the case of Joash, the regular succession had been broken by the usurpation of Athaliah, *not of the house of David*. So Joash is anointed to mark the restoration of David's line.
- (3) In the case of Jehoahaz, the people had chosen him as king in preference to Eliakim (Jehoiakim), the eldest surviving son of Josiah.

Saul was anointed as first king of Israel.

David, as being specially chosen to fill the place of Saul, was anointed by Samuel.

Jehu was also anointed to show that he was specially selected to destroy the house of Ahab, and to put down the worship of Baal.

Jehoiada exerted great influence in the reign of Joash, who "*did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days wherein Jehoiada the priest instructed him*" (xii. 2), and must have co-operated with the king in the repair of the Temple.

"On his death his services, as preserver of the royal dynasty, and as restorer of the Temple worship, were esteemed so highly, that he received an honour allowed to no other subject in the Jewish monarchy. He was buried in state within the walls of Jerusalem, in the royal sepulchres" (2 Chron. xxiv. 16).

Jehonadab, the son of Rechab (son = descendant), was the founder of the half-religious sect of the Rechabites. Amongst the regulations of this sect were :—

- (1) They were not to build houses.
- (2) Nor to drink wine.
- (3) Nor to sow seed nor plant vineyards, and not even to possess any land.

Rechab belonged to the tribe of the Kenites, who, through their connection with Moses, joined themselves to Israel, accompanying them in their wanderings in the wilderness, and finally receiving a location in the wilderness of Judah.

Jehonadab was a well-known ascetic of his time, and joined with Jehu in his efforts to extirpate the Baal-worship (for particulars see x. 15-17).

In inviting Jehonadab into his chariot, Jehu evidently wished to impress the nation that his cause was approved of by Jehovah.

Jehosheba, daughter of Jehoram, king of Judah, and half-sister of Ahaziah. She married Jehoiada the high-priest. This is the only recorded instance of the marriage of a high-priest with a princess of the royal family. It was providentially the means of the rescue of the infant Joash from the massacre of his brothers.

Jehosheba first secreted the infant prince and his nurse in the mattress-room of the palace, and later removed them to the Temple, to be under the protection of her husband, Jehoiada (see Jehoiada, p. cix.).

Jehozabad, one of the palace officials in the reign of Joash. In conjunction with Jozachar, he murdered the king. The murderers were put to death by Amaziah, the son of Joash, as soon as that king was firmly seated on the throne (xii. 21, xiv. 5).

Jezebel, daughter of Eth-baal, king of the Zidonians. The wife of Ahab and the mother of Athaliah who married Jehoram king of Judah, and of Ahaziah and Joram, kings of Israel.

She was a clever, strong, bold, unscrupulous woman, in whose hands Ahab became a mere puppet. She was a devotee to the worship of Baal. Her power, influence and unscrupulous character stand out clearly marked.

She established the worship of Baal on a grand scale. At her table were supported no less than four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and four hundred of Astarte.

She relentlessly persecuted the prophets of Jehovah, with the avowed object of their extermination.

Her character for vindictiveness, boldness and utter indifference to crime necessary to accomplish her ends, is exhibited conspicuously in her conduct towards Elijah and Naboth.

- (1) **Elijah.** Jezebel was unmoved by the occurrences on Carmel. These only roused her to further action, and Elijah was forced to flee before the threats of the Queen, who vowed to take his life as he had taken the lives of the prophets of Baal.
- (2) **Naboth.** She taunted Ahab on the want of firmness in not exercising his kingly power, and with unscrupulous disregard for truth and justice she manufactured a false charge against Naboth, and by a judicial murder removed him from Ahab's path. The prompt manner in which the elders of the city performed her bidding indicates that they knew the character of Jezebel, and understood that they were dealing with her and not with Ahab. It was to Jezebel they sent saying, "*Naboth is stoned and is dead*" (1 Kings xxi. 14).

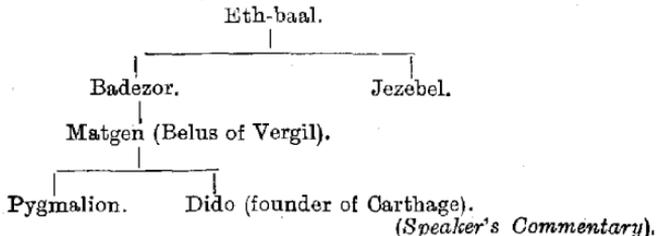
For this crime her death was predicted by Elijah. "*The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel*" (1 Kings xxi. 23). She met this horrible fate in the successful conspiracy of Jehu. Thrown down from the window, as she contemptuously reminded him of the fate of the conspirator Zimri, she was trampled under the feet of the horses, and when they sought her body to give her burial they found only the "*skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands*" (ix. 30-37).

Her influence in the government is indicated by the words of Jehu. "*What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?*" (ix. 22). Clearly Jezebel was the dominant spirit in the government, and evidently the nation was tired of her tyranny and idolatry.

The effect of the marriage of Ahab with Jezebel.

- (1) The worship of Baal was introduced into Israel.
- (2) The evil conduct of Ahab is ascribed to her influence (1 Kings xxi. 25.)
- (3) Her daughter Athaliah married Jehoram, king of Judah. This marriage introduced Baal worship into the southern kingdom, and nearly resulted in the extinction of the house of David (see p. xxxi.).

PEDIGREE OF JEZEBEL.



Josephus mentions Ithobalus (Eth-baal) as being priest of Astarte at Tyre. He conspired against his brother, slew him, and usurped the kingdom. He was thus both priest and king. This double office of Eth-baal will explain the great devotion of Jezebel to the worship of Baal.

Jerusha, daughter of Zadok, wife of Azariah (Uzziah), and mother of Jotham, king of Judah (xv. 33).

Johanah [we gather particulars from Jeremiah.] Son of Kareah, a captain of one of the bands of Jews who had escaped the army of the Chaldeans when Zedekiah fled out of Jerusalem. He joined Gedaliah at Mizpah, and warned him of the contemplated treachery of Ishmael (see p. cviii.). After the murder of Gedaliah he led the pursuit after Ishmael, and succeeded in rescuing the captives carried off from Mizpah. In fear of the vengeance of the Chaldeans, Johanah and the other captives determined to take refuge in Egypt.

Jozachar, one of the palace officers of Joash, who conspired with Jehozabad to murder the king (see Jehozabad, p. cx.).

Kareah, the father of Johanah (see above).

Mattan. The priest of Baal slain before his altar in the temple of Baal at Jerusalem, when Jehoiada crowned Joash, killed Athaliah, and put down the worship of Baal. It is probable that Mattan accompanied Athaliah from Samaria, and that, as there is no mention of other altars of Baal, the people generally had not abandoned the worship of Jehovah, Baal being merely the god of Athaliah and her court (xi. 13).

Mattaniah or Zedekiah (see p. xxix.).

Mesha, king of Moab, in the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah and Joram, kings of Israel. He is described as a "sheep-master," *i.e.* an owner of vast flocks of sheep. Mesha was tributary to Ahab, but took advantage of the confusion in Israel consequent upon the death of Ahab at Ramoth-Gilead, to declare his independence and to refuse the payment of the burdensome tribute.

When besieged in Kir-haraseth by the armies of Israel, Judah and Edom, he endeavoured, with 700 fighting men, to cut his way through the beleaguering army. Failing in the attempt, he endeavoured to avert the wrath and to obtain the aid of his god Chemosh by sacrificing his first-born son, the successor to the kingdom, on the wall of the city in the sight of the allies. Struck with horror, the kings of Israel, Judah and Edom withdrew their forces and returned to their own countries. (For further particulars see p. lxxii.).

Man of God which came out of Judah. A prophet sent out of Judah by God to denounce the calf worship at Bethel on the day of its solemn inauguration by the king.

For his disobedience to the injunction not "*to eat bread nor drink water*" at Bethel, he was slain by a lion on his journey back to Judah. His body was brought back to Bethel and buried there by the old

prophet of Bethel, who had persuaded him to disobey the command of God. The old prophet ordered that his own body should be buried in the same tomb as that of "the man of God out of Judah."

His prophecy against the altar and calf worship was—

"O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee" (1 Kings xiii. 2).

The prophecy was fulfilled by Josiah who

- (1) Broke down the altar at Beth-el.
- (2) Slew all the priests of the high places.
- (3) Burnt men's bones on the altar (*i.e.* the site of the altar), and so defiled it, taking the bones from tombs on the hill opposite the altar.
- (4) Spared the sepulchre of the "man of God from Judah."

Naaman, a Syrian holding a high position at the court of Benhadad. He was commander-in-chief of the army, and was nearest the person of the king, whom he accompanied officially and supported, when he went to worship in the house of Rimmon (v. 18). He was afflicted with leprosy of the white kind, which was incurable. On the details of his cure see Chapter V.

The slight notices give us a favourable impression of Naaman's character, *e.g.*

- (1) The little maid was anxious that her master should be cured.
- (2) His servants address him with affectionate respect, "My father."
- (3) He stops his chariot when he sees Gehazi coming, alights to do honour to him, and generously doubles the amount asked for.
- (4) His outburst of pride is excusable in a heathen accustomed to the great deference paid to high personages, and the subserviency of heathen priests to great officials. But common-sense soon replaced pride.
- (5) His evident desire to serve Jehovah in his own land.

Two points in the narrative form subjects of debate :

1. "By him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria." To what does this refer?

According to Jewish tradition he was the archer whose arrow struck down Ahab at the battle near Ramoth-Gilead. Thus Naaman, in delivering his country, had also fulfilled the purpose of Jehovah, whose prophet Micaiah had foretold disaster at Ramoth-Gilead.

Assyrian monuments tell us that the conquests of Assyria had extended as far as Syria, but that at this period Syria had revolted and become independent once more. Naaman may have distinguished himself in the war of independence.

2. Elisha's permission as regards Naaman's request with respect to worship in the house of Rimmon.

We must judge Naaman by his lights. As a heathen he was accustomed to regard gods as being many, each nation and each city having its special deity.

He renounces the worship of other gods, but naturally does not deny their existence, whilst he recognizes the superiority of Jehovah. The miracle of curing his leprosy did not carry his faith further.

He is not inclined to be a martyr to his faith. He was not prepared to refuse to enter the house of Rimmon, or to decline to bow down before the god when his master bowed in worship. According to his time and his lights it could not be expected of him that he should. He is anxious that Jehovah should not consider these acts as worship of Rimmon on his part, and so is desirous of obtaining from Jehovah's prophet an assurance that Jehovah will view his conduct by his intentions, not by his acts.

Elisha expresses neither approval nor disapproval. He dismisses Naaman with the words "*Go in peace.*" The prophet, too, must be judged by his lights. He was not the stern, uncompromising Elijah, and may have felt that gentle dealing may have been the more likely course to draw the new convert to higher views. Nor can we expect that in those days God's prophet would have any special enlightenment of how God would deal with the heathen. Had Naaman lived in Canaan the answer would have been different. We may assume Elisha to have intended, "It is not for me to judge. I leave the matter in the hands of Jehovah himself."

Naboth, a Jezreelite, whose death was compassed by Jezebel for Ahab in order to gain possession of his vineyard, which the king coveted to add it to the royal gardens (1 Kings xxi.). The punishment foretold by Elijah on the house of Ahab was fulfilled by Jehu (see pp. xiii., cxi.).

Nathan-melech, called Nathan-melech the chamberlain, an inferior official of the king's household in the court of Josiah. The horses and chariots of the sun were said to have been stabled near his chamber or lodging. Nathan-melech may have been entrusted with the care of them (xxiii. 11).

Nebuchad-nezzar (see p. lxxxiii.).

Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard of Nebuchad-nezzar = the chief of the executioners. Part of the duties of the "runners" (see p. 128) was the execution of state prisoners. He held high office under Nebuchad-nezzar, and apparently was next to the monarch himself.

He does not appear to have been present at the capture of Jerusalem, but to have arrived in the city soon after the Chaldeans obtained possession of it. From that time everything was directed by him.

Among the acts recorded of him are :—

- (1) The burning of the city and of the temple (xxv. 9).
- (2) The breaking down the walls of the city (xxv. 10).
- (3) The deportation of the people into captivity (xxv. 11-12).
- (4) The carrying away of the great pillars, the molten sea, the bases and other vessels (xxv. 13-17).

- (5) The securing of the persons of Seraiah and Zephaniah, and other officials. These he took to the king of Babylon to Riblah, where they were executed (xxv. 18-21).
- (6) According to Jeremiah he appointed Gedaliah governor of the land, and five years later again visited Jerusalem, and carried off 745 additional captives.

Oded (see p. xlv.).

Omri (see p. ix.).

Pekah (see p. xvii.).

Pekahiah (see p. xvi.).

Pul (see p. lxxix.).

Rab-saris, not a proper name, but a title=chief of the eunuchs. An Assyrian officer sent by Sennacherib with Tartan and Rab-shakeh against Jerusalem in the reign of Hezekiah. Rab-saris was probably the scribe of the mission (xviii. 17).

Rab-shakeh, not a proper name, but a title=chief of the cup-bearers. An Assyrian officer sent by Sennacherib with Tartan and Rab-saris. He was the civil officer entrusted with the delivery of Sennacherib's message. The mission failed in inducing Hezekiah to surrender the city, and Rab-shakeh returned to Sennacherib, whom he found at Libnah having raised the siege of Lachish (xix. 8). (For particulars of Rab-shakeh's speech, see chap. xviii, and notes, p. lxxxii.).

Rab-shakeh, the civil officer, the chief of the legation, hence chief speaker.

Rab-saris, the scribe or secretary, to record what took place.

Tartan, the military officer in command of the escort.

Rezin (see p. lxxviii.).

Sargon (see p. lxxxi.).

Sennacherib (see p. lxxxi.).

Seraiah, the chief priest in the reign of Zedekiah. Taken by Nebuzaradan in Jerusalem, conveyed to Riblah, where he was executed. Probably one of those who advocated the Egyptian alliance, and consequently dangerous to Babylon (xxv. 18-21).

Seraiah, son of Tanhumeth. One of the captains of the bands who had escaped on the dispersion of Zedekiah's army, when the king endeavoured to escape from Jerusalem. He came to Gedaliah at Mizpah (xxv. 23) (see Johanan, p. cxii.).

Shallum. There are three Shallums mentioned in 2 Kings.

1. Shallum the king of Israel, who ascended the throne by the murder of Zachariah (see p. xvi.).
2. Shallum, or Jehoahaz, king of Judah (see p. xxviii.).
3. Shallum, the husband of Huldah the prophetess, and the keeper of the wardrobe of the priests (xxii. 14).

Shalmanezer (see p. lxxxi.).

Shaphan, The scribe or secretary of king Josiah.

Notices.

- (1) Sent by Josiah to Hilkiah the high-priest to take the sum of the money collected for the repair of the temple (xxii. 3-7).
- (2) Hilkiah showed Shaphan the Book of the Law found in the temple (xxii. 8).
- (3) Shaphan read it and then took it to king Josiah, and read it before him (xxii. 9-11).
- (4) He was one of the five delegates sent by Josiah to consult the prophetess Huldah (xxii. 14).

Sharezer. Son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. In conjunction with his brother, Adrammelech, he murdered his father in the temple of Nisroch, and fled to the land of Armenia (xix. 37).

Shebna, the scribe or secretary of king Hezekiah. He was sent along with Eliakim, who was over the household, and Joah the recorder, to receive the message of Sennacherib delivered by Rab-shakeh (xviii. 18).

He had formerly been "*over the household*" (prefect of the palace), but had been degraded, and now held the inferior office of secretary, his former post being held by Eliakim (Is. xxii. 15-25).

His deposition was due

- (1) To his luxury and extravagance.
- (2) To his favouring an Egyptian alliance.

He appears to have been of low origin, for no mention is made of his father. He owed his deposition probably to the influence of Isaiah with the king.

So (see p. lxxviii.).

Tartan, not a proper name but a title=commander-in-chief. An Assyrian officer sent by Sennacherib with Rab-saris and Rab-shakeh (see Rab-shakeh, p. cxv.). He would be the military officer in charge of the escort.

Tiglath-pileser (see p. lxxix.).

Tirhakah (see p. lxxviii.).

Urijah, the priest in the reign of Ahaz. Ahaz sent from Damascus to Urijah in Jerusalem the pattern of the altar at Damascus. Urijah so far forgot his duty as high-priest as to cause the altar to be made at the bidding of the king (xvi. 10-16). His conduct is in strong contrast with that of Azariah, the priest who resisted King Uzziah when he attempted to offer incense in the temple (2 Chron. xxvi. 17-20).

Urijah is probably the same as Uriah (Is. viii. 2). His official position would make him a credible witness.

NOTE.—Another Urijah, a prophet, prophesied against Jehoiakim. He sought refuge in Egypt to escape the wrath of the king. Jehoiakim sent Elnathan to fetch Urijah from Egypt. Urijah was put to death at Jerusalem (Jer. xxvi. 20-23).

Zebudah, wife of Josiah, and mother of Eliakim (Jehoiakim) (xxiii. 36).

Zedekiah or **Mattaniah** (see p. xxix.).

Zephaniah, the second priest, *i.e.* next in rank to the high priest=deputy high priest. He was seized by Nebuzar-adan in Jerusalem, taken to Riblah where he was put to death by the order of Nebuchadnezzar (xxv. 18-21).

He belonged to the party who opposed the Chaldean alliance and favoured Egypt. As one of the chief advocates of resistance to Babylon he was put to death at Riblah.

Zimri, captain of half the chariots in the army of Elah. He conspired against Elah at Tirzah, and murdered the king as he was feasting in the house of Arza his steward.

Zimri reigned seven days only, for Omri marched from Gibbethon at the head of the army which was besieging that city, and quickly took the city of Tirzah. Zimri, seeing that resistance was hopeless, retreated into the royal palace, set it on fire and perished in the ruins.

Jezebel taunts Jehu, whom she calls a second Zimri. "*Had Zimri peace who slew his master?*" (ix. 32), *i.e.*

1. She contemptuously alludes to Jehu as a regicide like Zimri.
2. She threatens him the same fate, viz. a short-lived rule, ending in his death.

THE MOABITE STONE.

This famous stone was discovered in 1869, and is now in Paris. It was erected by Mesha, king of Moab (2 Kings iii. 4), as a monument or record of his victories over Israel. It deals with the reigns of Omri and Ahab, and throws light upon the relations between Moab and Israel.

It commences thus:—

"I am Mesha, son of Chemoshmelek, King of Moab the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father. And I made this *bamah* ('high place,' 'pillar') for Chemosh."

From the stone and the Scripture narrative we can draw the following inferences:—

- (1) That following the great schism in the reign of Rehoboam the district east of Jordan became part of the Northern Kingdom. Possibly, during these troubles, Moab may have become virtually independent.
- (2) That Omri and Ahab reduced them to a state of vassalage. The Moabite stone records that they were "oppressed" for "forty years," confirming the enormous tribute imposed upon them by Ahab (2 Kings iii. 4).
- (3) That the death of Ahab and the blow dealt to Israel by the defeat at Ramoth-Gilead gave Moab the opportunity to regain her independence.

Mesha, king of Moab, would erect the monument to commemorate his successes in this war of liberation. Mesha records on the stone: Omri occupied the land of Medeba, and dwelt therein, during his days and half his son's days (forty years). But Chemosh looked on it (*i.e.* restored it) in my days."

This is quite in accord with the general order of events in the East. Rawlinson points out that on the death of an Assyrian king there was invariably a revolt of many of the subject nations, who refused tribute, and endeavoured to recover their independence.

THE CUNEIFORM INSCRIPTIONS.

The name "*Cuneiform*" is given to these inscriptions because the characters are wedged shape, like arrows. Lat. *cuneus*, a wedge.

Sir Henry Layard discovered the site of Nineveh, and dug up the Assyrian records. They were deciphered by Sir Henry Rawlinson, and throw great light upon the Scripture narrative. We may point out the following:—

- (1) Jehu. He is described as Jehu, *the son of Omri*, and is twice mentioned as paying tribute to the king of Assyria.
- (2) Pul and Tiglath-pileser. The Assyrian monuments seem to lead us to the conclusion that Pul is identical with Tiglath-pileser, for the name of Pul does not occur in the cuneiform records. Professor Schrader has advanced very strong arguments in support of the identity of Pul with Tiglath-pileser.
- (3) Tiglath-pileser. The Assyrian records confirm the Bible narrative in many respects, *e.g.*—
 - (a) The capture of Damascus and death of Rezin (xvi. 9).
 - (b) The tribute paid by Menahem (xv. 19).
 - (c) The conquest of Gilead and Northern Israel (xv. 29).
 - (d) The death of Pekah and the appointment of Hoshea as tributary king (xv. 30). The Assyrian monuments clearly bear out the fact that Hoshea became king by consenting to be the vassal of Assyria.
 - (e) The tribute paid by Ahaz to Assyria (xvi. 7-8).
 - (f) Merodach-baladan, king of Babylon, paid tribute, and became the vassal of Assyria.
- (4) Shalmaneser. The cuneiform inscriptions give Shalmaneser as the successor of Tiglath-pileser, but the records of his reign were mutilated by his successor Sargon.
- (5) Sargon. The Assyrian inscriptions give Sargon as having captured Samaria. This agrees with the narrative of 2 Kings xvii. 6, where the name of the "King of Assyria" is not given, and with the mention of the name of Sargon by Isaiah (Is. xx. 1).
- (6) Sennacherib, the successor of Sargon. The death of Sargon was followed as usual by the revolt of several tributary kings. This will account for the revolt of Hezekiah (xviii. 14), and the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib. The successes, but not the great disaster, of Sennacherib are recorded. He was the first Assyrian monarch to make Nineveh his permanent residence. This agrees with 2 Kings xix. 36, which states that Sennacherib "*departed and went and returned and dwelt at Nineveh.*"

THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS.

TEXT AND NOTES.

The Reign of Ahaziah, King of Israel.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

1. Then ¹Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab. 2 And Ahaziah fell down through ^{2a}a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick : and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, enquire of ³Baal-zebub the god of ⁴Ekron whether I shall recover of this ⁵disease. 2 But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the ⁶Tishbite, Arise, ⁷go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, ⁸Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? 4 Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah ⁹departed. 5 And when the messengers ¹⁰turned back unto him, he said unto them, Why are ye now ¹⁰turned back? 6 And they said unto him, There came a man ¹¹up to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, ¹²Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that thou sendest to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. 7 And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told

Then = And (a continuation of 1 Kings).

¹ Intro. p. x. and xx.

² The lattice (see p. 123).

³ Intro. p. 1. = The Lord of flies.

⁴ Intro. p. xciii. The most northerly of the five Philistine cities.

⁵ Sickness.

⁶ Of Thisbe in Naphtali.

⁷ Go up. Thus Elijah met the messengers as they descended the hill whereon Samaria was built.

⁸ Is it because there is no God in Israel?

⁹ On the Lord's errand, *i.e.* to meet the messengers of Ahaziah.

¹⁰ Returned.

¹¹ Another indication of the ascent of a hill, and that Elijah met them as they came down the hill of Samaria.

¹² Is it because there is no God?

you these words? 8 And they answered him, ¹³He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. 9 Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And he went up to him: and, behold, he ¹⁴sat on the top of ¹⁵an hill. And he spake unto him, ¹⁶Thou man of God, ¹⁷the king hath said, Come down. 10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and ¹⁸consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and ¹⁹consumed him and his fifty. 11 Again also ²⁰he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, ²¹Come down quickly. 12 And Elijah answered, and said unto them, If I be a man of God, ²²let fire come down from heaven, and ¹⁸consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and ¹⁹consumed him and his fifty. 13 And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and ²³fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be ²⁴precious in thy sight. 14 Behold there came fire down from heaven, and ²⁵burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. 15 And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, ²⁶Go down with him: be not afraid of ²⁷him. And he arose, and went down

¹³ Clad in a garment of hair—the hair mantle worn by Elijah.

¹⁴ Was sitting.

¹⁵ The. Probably Carmel, a favourite abode of Elijah.

¹⁶ Evidently spoken in mockery.

¹⁷ So his commands must be obeyed.

¹⁸ Devour.

¹⁹ Devoured.

The calling down of fire from heaven was intended to teach the king that there was a God in Israel, as well as to punish the captain.

²⁰ Ahaziah.

²¹ A more impudent command than the other.

²² Our Lord's disciples, James and John, would have imitated Elijah, and have called down fire on the Samaritan village which refused to receive Jesus. They were rebuked by our Lord (see St. Luke ix. 54).

²³ i.e. praying that his life might be spared.

²⁴ See 1 Sam. xxvi. 21.

²⁵ Devoured.

²⁶ From the top of the mountain.

²⁷ Him = Ahaziah, not the captain.

with him unto the king. 16 And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, ²⁸is it not because there is no God in Israel to enquire of his word? ²⁹therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. 17 So he died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram ³⁰reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; ³¹because he had no son. 18 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the ³²chronicles of the kings of Israel?

²⁸ Is it because there is no God?

²⁹ *i.e.* because he had forgotten Jehovah, and gone after another god, viz. Baalzebub.

³⁰ Began to reign.

³¹ Jehoram was the brother of Ahaziah. On the chronology see P. 133.

³² The official records of their respective reigns.

Elijah Translated. Elisha his Successor.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

2. And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven ¹by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from ²Gilgal. 2 And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to ³Beth-el. And Elisha said unto him, ⁴As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. 3 And the ⁵sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master ⁶from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. 4 And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to ⁷Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. ⁸So

¹ In the tempest or storm, *i.e.* a tempestuous storm.

² Not the Gilgal of Jordan, for it is on higher ground than Bethel (verse 2) (Intro. p. xcv.).

³ Intro. p. lxxxix.

⁴ A solemn oath.

⁵ Young men under training for the prophetic order. At Bethel there was a school of the prophets (see p. xxxvi.).

⁶ *i.e.* from being thy teacher. The teacher sat on a raised seat, his feet being level with the head of the pupil. St. Paul is thus said to have sat at the feet of Gamaliel.

⁷ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁸ In bidding farewell to the world, Elijah visited the schools of the prophets.

they came to Jericho. 5 And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, ⁹Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he answered, ¹⁰Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. 6 And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on. 7 And ¹¹fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood ^ato view afar off: and they two stood by Jordan. 8 And Elijah took his mantle, and ¹²wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. 9 And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, ¹³Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a ¹⁴double portion of thy spirit be upon me. 10 And he said, Thou hast asked a ¹⁵hard thing: nevertheless, ¹⁶if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee: but if not, it shall not be so. 11 And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, ¹⁷and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. 12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the ¹⁸chariot ¹⁹of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and ²⁰rent them in two pieces. 13 He took up also the ²¹mantle of Elijah that

⁹ So the Lord had revealed His purpose of translating Elijah not only to Elijah but to the prophets at Bethel and Jericho.

¹⁰ I know it, be silent.

¹¹ The school of the prophets at Jericho must have been large.

^a Over against, opposite. Ascended the hills behind Jericho, and watched the proceedings.

¹² Rolled it up, making a long roll like a rod.

¹³ Elijah would leave a last blessing with Elisha as a father would bless his son.

¹⁴ The double portion of the first-born (Deut. xxi. 17) (see p. xxxvii).

¹⁵ Because it was not in his power to grant the request. The power to grant it lay with God alone.

¹⁶ The condition of the fulfilment of Elisha's request.

¹⁷ Made parting between them, i.e. enveloped Elijah and separated him from Elisha in the storm-blast.

¹⁸ Chariots.

¹⁹ Expressing that Elijah had been the defence of the nation.

²⁰ Symbolical of his sorrow at being parted from Elijah.

²¹ The badge of Elijah's office left with Elisha.

fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; 14 And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, ²²Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he ²³also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. 15 And when the sons of the prophets which were ^{a2}to view at Jericho ²⁵saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and ²⁶bowed themselves to the ground before him. 16 And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek ²⁷thy master: lest peradventure ²⁸the Spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, ²⁹Ye shall not send. 17 And when they urged him till he was ³⁰ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. 18 And when they came again to him, (for he tarried at Jericho), he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

a see R.V. and comment p. 107.

²² Not a question of doubt, but a prayer that God would bestow upon him the same gifts that He had vouchsafed Elijah.

²³ Elisha smote the waters once only.

²⁴ Opposite, over against.

²⁵ They saw Elisha perform the same miracle that Elijah had wrought, and immediately recognised the Divine appointment of Elisha as the successor of Elijah. This miracle accredited Elisha in the eyes of the prophets.

²⁶ Outward submission to Elisha as the successor of Elijah.

²⁷ This word indicates how close had been the relationship of Elisha to Elijah. The prophets knew this well.

²⁸ Compare Obadiah's language to Ahab (1 Kings xviii. 12). Elijah was noted for the suddenness of his appearances and disappearances.

²⁹ Elisha was quite certain of Elijah's ascent to heaven.

³⁰ *i.e.* ashamed to refuse them any longer. The doubts of the prophets thus succeeded in confirming the story told by Elisha.

On Elijah's work, influence and the Jewish belief in his return, see pp. xxxvii. -xl.

First Miracle of Elisha. Cures the Waters at Jericho.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

19 And the men of the ¹city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, ²the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is ³naught, and the ground ^{a4}barren. 20 And he said, Bring me a ⁵new ⁶cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to

¹ Jericho.

² The plain of Jericho is most fertile "*the garden of the Lord*" (Gen. xiii. 10).

³ Bad.

⁴ Casteth her fruit.

⁵ New, therefore untainted.

⁶ Any vessel, *i.e.* cup or bowl.

him. 21 And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the ⁷salt in there, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from ⁸thence any more death or *abbarren* land. 22 So the ⁹waters were healed ¹⁰unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.

a see R.V. and comment p. 107.

⁷ Salt, symbolical of purification.

⁸ *i.e.* from the waters.

⁹ There is now at Jericho a fine spring of water, known as the Sultan's fountain.

¹⁰ *i.e.* the time when the history was written.

Elisha Curses the Children at Bethel.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

23 And he went ¹up from thence ²unto Beth-el: and as he was going up ³by the way, there came forth ⁴little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, ⁵Go up, thou ⁶bald head; go up, thou bald head. 24 And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth ⁷two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. 25 And he went from thence to mount ⁸Carmel, and from thence he returned to ⁹Samaria.

⁶ (Intro. p. xc.). The residence of Elisha from time to time, as it had been that of Elijah.

⁹ Where he had a house (see verse 9).

¹ *i.e.* from the plain of Jericho to the highlands.

² Elisha returns by the same route that he had traversed with Elijah.

³ Along the usual path.

⁴ Young lads; they may have been sons of those who worshipped the golden calf at Bethel.

⁵ = go up the hill, not ascend to heaven as Elijah had done.

⁶ Bald head = round or shorn head. Elisha kept his hair cut short, and not in long straggling locks as Elijah had done.

⁷ Wild beasts were common in Palestine at that period.

The only miracle of vengeance wrought by Elisha.

The Revolt of Moab.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

3. Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria ¹the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. 2 And *he* ²wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his

¹ For chronological note see p. 134.

² He did that which was evil.

father, and like his mother: for ³he put away the ^b*image* of Baal that his father had made. ³ Nevertheless he ⁵cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ^c*which made* Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. ⁴ And ⁷Mesha king of Moab was a sheep-master, and ⁸rendered unto the king of Israel an ^a*hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams*, with the wool. ⁵ But it came to pass when ⁹Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab ¹⁰rebelled against the king of Israel.

a see R.V. and comment p. 107. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 107. *c* see R.V. and comment p. 107. *d* see R.V. and comment p. 107.

⁹ Taking advantage of the weakness of Israel after the defeat and death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead.

¹⁰ Refused to pay the annual tribute.

³ He abandoned the worship of Baal. Probably the fate of Ahaziah had been a warning to him.

⁴ Pillar erected by Ahab.

⁵ He retained the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel (1 Kings xii. 26-33).

⁶ This phrase is constantly used in connection with Jeroboam. It shows how grievous was his sin in the introduction of the calf-worship.

⁷ Intro. p. cxii. The name is found on the Moabite stone (p. cxvii.).

⁸ Paid as yearly tribute. Moab is a district specially suitable for sheep-farming. The tribute was paid in fleeces not in live sheep.

JEHORAM'S ABANDONMENT OF BAAL WORSHIP.

The decree against Ahaziah by the mouth of Elijah was directed at Baal worship. Elijah's life was a continual protest against this worship. Evidently the death of Ahaziah had great effect upon Jehoram. He commences his reign by a public act of renunciation of the state worship of Baal. But Baal worship continued, and we find Jehu destroying the house of Baal and his pillars. It is likely that Jezebel soon restored the worship of Baal. Jehoram certainly acquiesced in the continuance of Baal worship by the people (x. 26-27).

The Expedition against Moab. Alliance of Israel, Judah and Edom.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

⁶ And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the same time, and ^a*numbered* all Israel. ⁷ And he went and sent to ²Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up. ³ I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses. ⁸ And he said, ⁴Which way shall we go up? And he answered, ⁵The way through the wilderness of

¹ Mustered, reviewed.

² Whose son Ahaziah had married Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (see p. cx.).

³ *i.e.* placing his whole force at the disposal of Jehoram.

⁴ *i.e.* across Jordan and attack Moab from the north, or round to the south of the Dead Sea, and attack from the south.

⁵ The latter is selected to secure the assistance of Edom. Attack on this side was easy. It would not be necessary to force the passage of the Arnon.

Edom. 9 So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, and the ⁶king of Edom: and they ⁷ fetched a compass of seven days' journey: and there was no water for the host, and for the ⁸cattle that followed them. 10 And the king of Israel said, Alas! that the ⁹LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab! 11 But Jehoshaphat said, ¹⁰Is there not here a ¹¹prophet of the LORD, that we may enquire of the LORD by him? And one of the king of Israel's ¹²servants answered and said, ¹³Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, ¹⁴which poured water on the hands of Elijah. 12 And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the LORD is with ¹⁵him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him. 13 And Elisha said unto the king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to, the ¹⁶prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother. And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab. 14 And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that ¹⁷I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. 15 But now bring me a ¹⁸minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him. 16 And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this ¹⁹valley full of ²⁰ditches. 17 For thus saith the LORD, ²¹Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water,

⁶ A vassel king to Judah at this time. The revolt of Edom was later (viii. 20).

⁷ Made a circuit.

⁸ Beasts. The baggage animals.

⁹ Jehovah. Note that this word is a strong indication that the calf-worship was considered by Israel to be a worship of Jehovah.

¹⁰ He put the same question to Ahab before the march to Ramoth-gilead (1 Kings xxii. 7).

¹¹ For those with Jehoram would be prophets of the calf-worship.

¹² Officers.

¹³ Elisha had evidently followed the expedition.

¹⁴ *i.e.* performed for him the duties of a servant.

¹⁵ Him (Emphatic). Jehoshaphat could rely upon the word of Elisha.

¹⁶ *i.e.* the prophets of Baal and the prophets of the groves, supported and kept by Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xviii. 19).

¹⁷ Deliverance is given for Jehoshaphat's sake.

¹⁸ Music is generally associated with prophecy in the schools of the prophets (1 Sam. x. 5).

¹⁹ Wady or torrent bed.

²⁰ Trenches. The water flowing down the steep sides of the torrent bed (the valley) would quickly run away, but for the trenches that caught it up. Possibly they were dams, making small reservoirs.

²¹ *i.e.* The rain did not fall in the camp, but elsewhere unseen by them. Rain in the east is generally accompanied by wind. The rain not being seen, the wind not being heard, caused the mistake of the Moabites.

that ye may drink, both ye, and your ²²cattle, and your ²³beasts. 18 And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. 19 And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all ²⁴wells of water, and ²⁵mar every good piece of land with stones. 20 And it came to pass in the morning, ^dwhen the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came ²⁶water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 108. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 108. ^d see R.V. and comment p. 108.

²² *i.e.* Cattle for food.
²³ Beasts *i.e.* beasts of burden, carrying the baggage.

²⁴ Fountains, springs.

²⁵ Spoil. Moab was to be thoroughly laid waste in the usual eastern manner.

²⁶ A sudden fall of rain ran down the sides of the hills, and filled the trenches, dug to receive it. Coming from Edom it would not be noticed by the Moabites.

The Defeat of the Moabites.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

21 And when all the Moabites ¹heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered ²all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and ³stood in the border. 22 And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water ⁴on the other side as ⁵red as blood: 23 And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and ⁶they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. 24 And when they came to ⁷the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they ⁸went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country. 25 And they beat down ⁹the cities, and on every

¹ Learnt that the expedition was coming by the way of Edom.

² A levy *en masse* of all the males in the country.

³ Had taken their stand on the frontier.

⁴ Over against them (see R.V. and comment p. 107).

⁵ Partly from the rays of the sun, partly from the nature of the soil. Edom means red land.

⁶ The Moabites imagined that the alliance was broken up, and that the armies of the different kings had fought against each other.

⁷ The allied forces awaited in their camp the disorderly approach of the Moabites, then sallied forth and completely routed them.

⁸ They went forward through the country, destroying the villages, and devastating the open country.

⁹ The walls of the cities, which furnished stones to be cast on the pasture land, making the land unfit for pasture.

good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the ¹⁰wells of water, and felled all the good trees: only in ¹¹Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and ¹²smote it.

¹⁰Fountains, springs.

¹¹Kir of Moab (Intro. p. xcvi.). The Capital; probably the only strong fortress in the land.

¹²Driving the defenders from the wall.

THE ERROR OF MOAB.

The Moabites might be excused falling into the mistake they made, for the rays of the sun, and the red colour of the soil might well give the appearance of blood to the water.

They had no knowledge of the fall of rain. It fell in Edom (see v. 20).

They had had their own knowledge of a similar instance when jealousy and mutual enmity had led the Moabites and Ammonites to slaughter each other during an expedition against Jehoshaphat earlier in his reign (II Chron. xx. 23). They might, therefore, well imagine that the jealousy between Israel and Judah and the enmity of Edom towards both nations had led to mutual slaughter amongst the allied forces.

The King of Moab Sacrifices his Son.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

26 And when the ¹king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew swords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not. 27 Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and ²offered him for a burnt offering ³upon the wall. And there was ⁴great indignation ⁵against Israel: and they departed from him, and ⁶returned to their own land.

¹The king of Moab attempts a sally on the side occupied by the army of Edom; either because it was the weakest, or that he was likely to have a friendly reception.

²To his god Chemosh (Intro. p. xlix.).

³In sight of the allied forces.

⁴Some judgment of God, either for the wanton devastation of the land forbidden by the law (Deut. xx. 19-20), or because they had caused

the king of Moab to perpetrate such an abominable act.

⁵On Israel, not on Judah.

⁶The expedition thus failed in its object of subjugating Moab, and of compelling the renewal of the tribute.

The Widow's Oil Increased.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

4. Now there cried a certain woman of ¹the wives of the sons of the prophets ²unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest

¹So the "sons of the prophets" married, supported themselves, and had property.

²As head of the prophets.



that thy servant ³did fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two ⁴sons to be bondmen. 2 And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a ⁵pot of oil. 3 Then he said, Go, borrow these vessels ⁶abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; ⁷borrow not a few. 4 And when thou art come in, thou shalt ⁸shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full. 5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured out. 6 And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil ⁹stayed. 7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children ¹⁰of the rest.

³ A family of faithful worshippers of Jehovah.

⁴ Children. We learn they were sons in verse 4, where the original is a different word. According to the law the creditor could take a debtor and his family as bondservants, or he might sell them. They must be set free in the year of jubilee.

⁵ Anointing flask, therefore a small vessel.

⁶ Outside the house.

⁷ The woman is rewarded according to her faith. The more vessels she borrowed the more the oil.

⁸ To avoid any display or ostentation.

⁹ i.e. ceased to run.

¹⁰ On the sum that remained after paying her debts.

Promise of a Son to the Shunammite Woman.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

8 And it fell on a day, that Elisha ¹passed to ²Shunem, where was a ³great woman; and she ⁴constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. 9 And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. 10 Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on

¹ Crossed the plain of Jezreel.

² Intro. p. cii. It lay a little off the road from Carmel to Jezreel.

³ Wealthy, rich.

⁴ Pressed hospitality upon him.

the ⁵wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a ⁶stool, and a ⁷candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. 11 And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber and lay there. 12 And he said to ⁸Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. 13 And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? ⁹wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, ¹⁰I dwell among mine own people. 14 And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no ¹¹child, and her husband is old. 15 And he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. 16 And he said, ¹²About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, ¹³do not lie unto thine handmaid. 17 And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.

⁶Built out of the wall or on the roof, with access by a separate staircase. Thus Elisha could come and go as he wished, and enjoy privacy during his stay.

⁶Couch or divan.

⁷Lamp-stand.

⁸He waited on Elisha as Elisha had waited on Elijah.

⁹Elisha would use his influence with the king and high officials, if the woman had any complaint of injustice done to her.

¹⁰Living among friends, she has no injustice to complain of.

¹¹Son. Lack of a son was a great grief to Israelitish women.

¹²At this time a year hence.

¹³Do not excite me with deceptive hopes. Compare. Sarah (Gen. xviii. 12-13).

The Child Dies and is Restored to Life by Elisha.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

18 And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. 19 And he said unto his father, ¹My head, my head. And he said ²to a lad, Carry him to his mother. 20 And when he had ³taken him, ⁴and brought him to his mother, ⁵he sat on her knees till noon, and then

¹He suffered from sun-stroke.

²To his servant.

³Carried.

⁴Into the house.

⁵The sun-stroke occurred in the forenoon.

died. 21 And she went up, and laid him ⁶on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, ⁷and went out. 22 ⁸And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, ⁹one of the young men, and one of the ¹⁰asses, that I may ¹¹run to the man of God, and come again. 23 And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? ¹²it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, ¹³It shall be well. 24 Then she saddled an ass, and said to her ¹⁴servant, Drive, and go forward; ¹⁵slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. 25 So she went and came unto the man of God to ¹⁶mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: 26 Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, ¹⁷Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well. 27 And when she came to the ¹⁷man of God to the hill, she ¹⁸caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to ¹⁹thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me. 28 Then she said, ²⁰Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? 29 Then he said to Gehazi, ²¹Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, ²²salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child. 30 And the mother of the child said, ²³As the LORD liveth, and as

⁶ On the bed of Elisha.

⁷ Evidently not very far off.

⁸ *i.e.* from the fields where all were engaged in the harvest.

⁹ One of the servants.

¹⁰ The usual animal for riding.

¹¹ Go quickly.

¹² The chief days for worship. On new moon see note p. 125. It was the first day of the lunar month.

¹³ Peace.

¹⁴ The servant was on foot by the side of the ass (see p. 108).

¹⁵ About sixteen miles distant. The journey would take about five hours.

¹⁶ Peace. The woman declines to discuss the matter with Gehazi. She does not intend to deceive him by a false statement.

¹⁷ Elisha was standing upon some hill which gave him a view of the plain.

¹⁸ The attitude of humble and earnest supplication (see St. Matt. xviii. 29, St. John xi. 32).

¹⁹ He resented the action as an indignity to his master.

²⁰ = Why give me a son not asked for by me, if I have had to lose him.

²¹ Bind up your long garment and make haste (see note p. 122).

²² The long eastern form of salutation and conversation would cause material delay.

²³ She relies on Elisha, and Elisha only.

thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her. 31 And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither ²⁴voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, ²⁵The child is not awaked. 32 And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead and laid upon his ²⁶bed. 33 He went in therefore, and shut the door upon ²⁷them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. 34 And he went up, and ²⁸lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the ²⁹flesh of the child waxed warm. 35 Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child ³⁰sneezed seven times, and the child ³¹opened his eyes. 36 And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, ³²Take up thy son. 37 Then she went in, and ³³fell at his feet, and ³⁴bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.

a see R.V. and comment p. 108. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 108.

²⁴ *i.e.* no sign of returning life.

²⁵ Death is often spoken of as a sleep.

²⁶ The bed of Elisha.

²⁷ Elisha and the dead child.

²⁸ Compare the similar action of Elijah in raising the widow's son at Zarephath (1 Kings xvii. 17-24).

²⁹ Denoting that life was returning.

³⁰ In the effort to regain breath.

³¹ The child is now restored to life.

³² Compare our Lord's words to the widow of Nain (St. Luke vii. 13).

³³ Expressive of gratitude.

³⁴ Paying honour to the prophet.

ON ELISHA SENDING GEHAZI TO LAY HIS STAFF ON THE CHILD.

Many reasons have been assigned for this action on the part of Elisha, viz. :—

- (1) To try the faith of the woman. Had she gone with Gehazi her faith would have been rewarded by the restoration of her son.
- (2) To teach the spiritual lesson that Elijah was the channel or means through which God worked out the source of miraculous powers. Elisha was only God's instrument.
- (3) To comfort the mother, and to show her that something was being done.

But this presumes that Elisha knew the mission of Gehazi to be useless. It is best to consider Elisha to have been sincere in sending Gehazi, and that the failure of the mission taught the prophet himself the deep spiritual lesson that he himself was only the instrument by which Jehovah worked, and that he had no authority or power to transmit his miraculous gifts to others.

The Deadly Pottage Healed.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a ¹dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophet were ²sitting before him: and he said unto ³his servant, Set on ⁴the great pot, and ⁵seethe ⁶pottage for the sons of the prophets. 39 And ⁷one went out into the field to gather ⁸herbs, and found ⁹a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild ¹⁰gourds his ¹¹lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they ¹²knew them not. 40 So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they ¹³cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. 41 But he said, Then bring ¹⁴meal. And he cast it into the pot; and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot.

to detect the poisonous plants.

¹³ They detected by the taste that there was something wrong.

¹⁴ Simply the outward sign of the healing of the pottage.

¹ Probably the seven years' famine foretold by Elisha (viii. 1).

² At the feet of Elisha who was instructing them.

³ Not Gehazi, but one of the students attending on Elisha.

⁴ The great vessel used for cooking the meals of the students.

⁵ Boil.

⁶ Broth, *i.e.* anything cooked in a pot.

⁷ One of the sons of the prophets.

⁸ In consequence of the famine they gathered the wild plants.

⁹ Not the wild vine, for that is harmless, but some climbing plant having tendrils like the vine.

¹⁰ Pumpkins.

¹¹ His shawl full, *i.e.* in the fold of his long outer garment.

¹² Were ignorant of their nature. Their knowledge of botany was not sufficient to enable them

MIRACLES OF RAISING THE DEAD.

In the Old Testament.

(1) The son of the widow of Zarephath by Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 17-24).

(2) The Shunammite's son by Elisha (2 Kings iv. 18-35).

(3) The dead man hurriedly placed in the tomb of Elisha (2 Kings xiii. 20-21).

In the New Testament.

Our Lord's Miracles.

(1) Jairus' daughter (St. Mark v. 21-43).

(2) The son of the widow of Nain (St. Luke vii. 11-16).

(3) Lazarus (St. John xi. 38-44).

The Apostles' Miracles.

(1) Tabitha or Dorcas raised by St. Peter (Acts ix. 36-42).

(2) Eutychus raised by St. Paul (Acts xx. 9-11).

Feeding a Hundred Men at Baal-shalisha.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

42 And there came a man from ¹Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God ²bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, ^aand ³full ears of corn ⁴in the husk thereof. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. 43 And his ⁵servitor said, What, should I set ⁶this before an hundred men? He said again, Give the people, that they may eat: for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. 44 So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 108.

¹Intro. p. lxxxviii.

²An offering to Elisha. The offering to the priests required by the law.

³Fresh ears of corn.

⁴In his sack.

⁵Servant, properly minister, attendant, so probably Gehazi is meant.

⁶This small quantity.

This miracle is a foreshadowing of the two miracles of Feeding the Multitudes by our Lord.

Naaman Healed of his Leprosy.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

5. Now ¹Naaman, captain of the host of the king of ²Syria, was a great man ³with his master, and ⁴honourable, because by him the LORD had given ^{a5}deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man ⁶in valour, but he was ⁷a leper. 2 And the Syrians had gone out by ⁸companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. 3 And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in ⁹Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. 4 And one went in, and told ¹⁰his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. 5 And the King of Syria said, ¹¹Go to, go, and I will send a ¹²letter unto the ¹³king of Israel. And he departed and took with him ten ¹⁴talents of silver,

¹Intro. p. cxiii.

²Intro. p. lxxvi.

³Lit. "before his lord."

⁴Holding a high place in the king's service.

⁵Victory and conquest.

⁶i.e. of valour.

⁷On leprosy see p. 124.

⁸In raiding bands.

⁹Where Elisha had a house (see verse 9, and vi. 32).

¹⁰The king of Syria, Naaman's lord. His name was Benhadad.

¹¹Start off at once.

¹²Israel and Syria must have been at peace at that time.

¹³Jehoram.

¹⁴Talent = £375 (see p. 131).

and ¹⁵six thousand pieces of gold, and ¹⁶ten changes of raiment. 6 And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now, when ¹⁷this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee ¹⁸that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. 7 And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, ¹⁹Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see ²⁰how he seeketh a quarrel against me. 8 And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, ²¹Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. 9 So Naaman came with his horses and with his ²²chariot, and ²³stood at the door of the ²⁴house of Elisha. 10 And Elisha ²⁵sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be ²⁶clean. 11 But Naaman was ²⁷wrath, and went away, and said, Behold, ²⁸I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and ²⁹strike his hand over the place, and ³⁰recover the leper. 12 Are not ³¹Abana and ³²Pharpar, rivers of ³³Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. 13 And ³⁴his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, ³⁵My father, if the prophet had

¹⁵ 6,000 gold shekels = about \$7,500.

¹⁶ According to the Eastern practice of presenting clothes as gifts of honour. Naaman came in great state, and with costly presents.

¹⁷ We have here only a part of the letter.

¹⁸ The king of Syria assumes that Jehoram can command the services of Elisha, as he himself would command the prophets in his own land.

¹⁹ Because he was asked to cure leprosy, an incurable disease.

²⁰ Jehoram imagines that the letter is a pretext for declaring war.

²¹ Thus reproving the king's want of faith.

²² Chariots.

²³ Stopped.

²⁴ So Elisha had a house in Samaria.

²⁵ Elisha would teach Naaman humility of heart, as well as cure his leprosy. A trial of faith. The cure would not be wrought till the seventh dipping in Jordan.

²⁶ Cleansed of thy leprosy.

²⁷ In a violent rage. Clearly he needed to be taught humility.

²⁸ I said within myself.

²⁹ Wave his hand to and fro.

³⁰ Take away the leprous sores.

³¹ Intro. p. lxxxv.

³² Intro. p. c.

³³ Intro. p. xci.

³⁴ The servants exercise common sense. Why not try the remedy? It is but a simple thing.

³⁵ Indicative of their respect and affection for Naaman.

bid thee do some ³⁶great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? 14 Then went he ³⁷down, and dipped himself ³⁸seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh ³⁹came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

a see R.V. and comment p. 109. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 109. *c* see R.V. and comment p. 109. *d* see R.V. and comment p. 109.

³⁶Difficult of accomplishment.

³⁷*i.e.* from Samaria to Jordan, about thirty miles.

³⁸The number of completion.

³⁹The sores all filled up, and the flesh became fresh and pure, all the foul matter of leprosy being discharged.

The Gratitude of Naaman.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

15 And he ¹returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold, now I know that there ²is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a ³blessing of thy servant. 16 But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive ⁴none. And he urged him to take it; but ⁵he refused. 17 And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant ⁶two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither ⁷burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD. 18 In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of ⁸Rimmon to worship there, and ⁹he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when ¹⁰I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing. 19 And he said unto him, ¹¹Go in peace. So he departed from him ¹²a little way.

a see R.V. and comment p. 109.

¹Back from Jordan to Samaria. He shows his gratitude. Compare Samaritan leper (St. Luke).

²The heathen notion was that each land had its own special god (see p. xlviii.).

³Present.

⁴No present.

⁵Elisha would teach Naaman that the gifts of Jehovah were of his free grace, and not to be won by presents and propitiation like the favour of heathen gods.

⁶To carry to Damascus, and there to erect an altar to Jehovah. This bit of earth would be Israelitish land, and so Naaman could worship Jehovah there as if he were in Israel.

⁷See p. 125.

⁸Intro. p. 1.

⁹See p. cxiv.

¹⁰The king will worship, but I, Naaman, though it is part of my state duties to accompany my master to the idol temple, and to bow before Rimmon, I shall not worship Rimmon.

¹¹Elisha accepts an imperfect worship from the sincere Naaman (see fully on p. cxiv.).

¹²He had not gone far before Gehazi overtook him.

Gehazi's Avarice, Lies and Punishment.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman ¹this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. 21 So Gehazi followed after Naaman. ²And when Naaman saw ^ahim running after him, he ³lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, ⁴Is all well? 22 And he said, All is well. ⁵My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, ⁶even now there be come to me from ^bMount ⁷*Ephraim* two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a ⁸talent of silver, and two changes of garments. 23 And Naaman said, ⁹Be content, take ¹⁰two talents. And he urged him, and ¹¹bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. 24 And when he came to ¹²the ^ctower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. 25 But he ¹³went in, and ¹⁴stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. 26 And he said unto him, ¹⁵Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet

¹Therefore a heathen. With such a miserable plea does Gehazi seek to justify his purpose.

²It was evident that the runner was desirous of overtaking the cavalcade.

³An extreme act of condescension.

⁴Is it peace?

⁵Gehazi asks in the name of his master, and invents a plausible reason for Elisha's change of purpose.

⁶Just now, immediately you left us.

⁷At Gilgal and Bethel in the hill country there were schools of the prophets (see II. 1-3).

⁸A large sum, nearly £400, but not great compared with the great presents Naaman had brought with him. Gehazi evidently had some difficulty in making up his mind between not asking too much, and yet not too little.

⁹Consent, i.e. oblige me by taking two.

¹⁰To his delight Naaman gives him double what he had asked for.

¹¹Tying up the mouths of the bags.

¹²Hill. Probably some well known hill near Elisha's house (see p. xlii.).

¹³Immediately, so that Elisha might not detect his absence.

¹⁴The eastern custom is for the servant to be in the presence of his master continually so as to be ready to execute his orders.

¹⁵Was I not with thee in spirit, and thus saw all that passed:

thee? ¹⁶Is it a time to ¹⁷receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? ²⁷The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as ¹⁸white as snow.

a see R.V. comment p. 109. *b* see R.V. comment p. 110. *c* see R.V. comment p. 110.

¹⁶A rebuke to Gehazi. Elisha desired to teach Naaman that the gifts of Jehovah were of his free grace. Gehazi had undone this teaching.

¹⁷Gehazi had already been planning how he would dispose of the money. Elisha clearly reads his thoughts.

¹⁸The white leprosy.

On Gehazi's sin see p. cvi.

Elisha makes an Axe Head Float.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

6. And the ¹sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the ²place where we dwell *with* thee is too ³strait for us. 2 Let us go, we pray thee, unto ⁴Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a ⁵place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. 3 And one said, ⁶Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. 4 So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. 5 But as one was felling a beam, the ⁷axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, ⁸Alas, master! for it was ⁹borrowed. 6 And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. ¹⁰And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and *the iron did swim*. 7 Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.

a see R.V. and comment p. 110. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 110.

¹Those who dwell in the college at Jericho.

²The common hall, in which they listened to the teaching of Elisha.

³Confined; not room enough for their number which had increased.

⁴The valley of which is well wooded.

⁵*i.e.* build a new college for the sons of the prophets.

⁶Consent: do us the favour to go with us.

⁷Of iron

⁸Addressing Elisha.

⁹Hence his anxiety because of the loss.

¹⁰A symbolical act, indicating that the iron would float like the wood.

With this miracle compare that of the piece of silver in the mouth of the fish (St. Matt. xvii. 27).

Compare this miracle with our Lord's "turning of the water into wine" at Cana of Galilee.

In each of the miracles there is a change of the laws of nature (see p. xlv.).

Elisha Discloses to Jehoram the Plans of the King of Syria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

8 Then the king of Syria ¹warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be ²my camp. 9 And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians ³are come down. 10 And the king of Israel ⁴sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, ⁵not once nor twice. 11 Therefore ⁶the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? 12 And ⁷one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

¹ Clearly raiding bands are meant.² Place of ambushade.³ Lying in ambush there⁴ To test the accuracy of Elisha's warning.⁵ *i.e.* several times.⁶ Evidently spies in Samaria had given information to the king of Syria of the intended movements of the king of Israel.⁷ The same spies would tell him how Elisha gave warning to the king of Israel.The Syrians sent to Arrest Elisha are Smitten with Blindness.
Elisha Leads them to Samaria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

13 And he said, go and ¹spy where he is, that I may send and ²fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in ³Dothan. 14 Therefore sent he thither ⁴horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came ⁵by night, and compassed the city about. 15 And when the ⁶servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host ⁷compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my

¹ See; the original does not convey the idea of "spying."² Capture him, and thus prevent his warning the king of Israel.³ Intro. p. xcii. Situated on a hill (v. 17).⁴ Cavalry, chariots, infantry.⁵ To surprise the city.⁶ Attendant.⁷ Surrounded it so that no one could escape.The position clearly is as follows (see below):
(1) Dothan on a hill.

(2) Between Dothan and the Syrians, the heavenly host.

(3) Syrians on hills surrounding or facing Dothan.

master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 17 And Elisha, prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, ⁸open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the ⁹mountain was full of ¹⁰horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. 18 And when they ¹¹came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with ¹²blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. 19 And Elisha said unto them, This is not ¹³the way, neither is this ¹⁴the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria. 20 And it came to pass, when they were come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, ¹⁵open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were ¹⁶in the midst of Samaria. 21 And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, when he saw them, ¹⁷My father, shall I ¹⁸smite them? shall I smite them? 22 And he answered Thou shalt not smite them: ¹⁹wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set ²⁰bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. 23 And he ²¹prepared great provision for them: and when they had eaten and drunk, he ²²sent them away, and they went to their master. So the ²³bands of Syria ²⁴came no more into the land of Israel.

⁸ As Elisha's eyes had been opened to see the translation of Elisha.

⁹ The hill on which Dothan was situated.

¹⁰ Symbolical of the presence of the heavenly host (see Ps. xxxiv. 7).

¹¹ The Syrians were on the surrounding hills, and now descended to enter the city.

¹² Bewilderment or illusion. They could see, but were affected with mental blindness, mistaking the objects before them. So the people of Sodom before the house of Lot (Gen. xix. 11).

¹³ The road to reach Elisha.

¹⁴ The city where he is.

¹⁵ Remove their illusion and let them see clearly.

¹⁶ And so prisoners. The tables were turned. They who would have captured Elisha are now his captives.

¹⁷ A respectful address. The king is expressing his pleasure at the capture of the Syrians.

¹⁸ Destroy them. Perhaps remembering how Ahab had been rebuked for sparing Syrians after his great victory (1 Kings xx. 36-43).

¹⁹ Thou wouldst not even slay those made captive in war, much less those who are my captives not thine.

²⁰ Food generally.

²¹ Treated them hospitably. Made a great feast for them.

²² The object of the miracle is that these Syrians should return home, and tell their countrymen what had happened; the Syrians would see how useless it was to attempt anything against Elisha.

²³ Raiding bands.

²⁴ Struck by the power and the generous action of Elisha, Benhadad abandons secret incursions, but he prepares for open war (v. 24).

The Siege of Samaria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

24 ¹And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria. 25 And there was a great famine in Samaria: and, behold, they besieged it, until ²an ass's head was sold for ³fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a ⁴cab of ⁵dove's dung for five pieces of silver. 26 And as the king of Israel was passing by ⁶upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. 27 And he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? ⁷out of the barnfloor, or ⁸out of the winepress? 28 And the king said unto her, ⁹What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, ¹⁰Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. 29 So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. 30 And it came to pass, when the king heard the words of the woman, that he ¹¹rent his clothes; and he passed by upon the wall, and ¹²the people looked, and, behold, he had ¹³sackcloth within upon his flesh.

¹ Jehoram unable to meet the Syrians in open field retires behind the walls of Samaria.

² An unclean animal, so forbidden as food.

³ About £5 or £8.

⁴ ⁵ A part of a seah; about 2 quarts (see p. 131), now sold for 6s. or 10s.

⁶ Either for fuel, or it may be a nickname for some coarse kind of pea.

⁷ The top of the broad wall. He went to encourage the defenders, or to inspect the defences, or to observe the enemy.

⁸ Something to eat.

⁹ Something to drink.

¹⁰ The woman has a more grievous complaint than want of food.

¹¹ Such horrors had been foretold in the Law (Lev. xxvi. 29, Deut. xxviii. 53-57).

Compare the horrors at the siege of Jerusalem by Titus.

¹¹ A sign of horror.

¹² Those gathered on the wall.

¹³ *i.e.* as mourning and humiliation for the great distress.

Note on Verse 29. Moses had explicitly warned the Israelites that if they did not walk in the commandments of Jehovah they should be reduced to such an awful strait that mothers should eat their own children. "*And thou shalt eat . . . the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters . . . in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee*" (Deut. xxviii. 53, see also Lev. xxvi. 29).

Three instances, at least, are known in Jewish History:—

(1) The siege of Samaria (2 Kings vi. 23-29).

(2) The siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (Lam. iv. 10).

(3) The siege of Jerusalem by Titus (recorded by Josephus).

The King Determines on the Death of Elisha. The Prophet
Foretells Sudden Plenty in Samaria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

31 Then ¹he said, ²God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. 32 But Elisha ³sat in his house, and the ⁴elders sat with him; and the king sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, ⁵he said to the elders, See ye how this ⁶son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, ⁷shut the door, and ^ahold him fast at the door: is not the sound of ⁸his master's feet behind him? 33 And while ⁹he yet talked with them, behold, the messenger came ¹⁰down unto him: and ¹¹he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; ¹²what should I wait for the LORD any longer? 7. Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the LORD, To morrow about this time shall a ¹³measure of fine flour be sold for a ¹⁴shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the ¹⁵gate of Samaria. 2 Then ¹⁶a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD would make ¹⁷windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, ¹⁸Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 110.

¹⁵ Where the market was held (see "Gate," p. 121).

¹⁶ The king's aide-de-camp (see p. 27).

¹⁷ *i.e.* to rain down corn and barley.

¹⁸ For the fulfilment of the prophecy see v. 17-20.

¹ The king.

² Incensed at the warnings probably given by Elisha, to whom he attributed the miserable state of the city, the king determines on the death of Elisha.

³ Undisturbed ⁴by the events.

⁴ Elders of the people, who may have come to the prophet for counsel.

⁵ Warned by God, Elisha foretells the errand of the messenger.

⁶ Jehoram, son of Ahab, Ahab had murdered Naboth.

⁷ Keep him from entering till Jehoram comes.

⁸ Jehoram who followed immediately after his messenger. The elders detained the messenger, and thus saved the life of Elisha.

⁹ He = Elisha.

¹⁰ From the wall of the city, where Jehoram had given him his orders.

¹¹ He = the king. He had already repented of his intention. He sees the calamity is from Jehovah.

¹² Possibly an expression of the intention to surrender Samaria, since this final calamity must come.

¹³ Seah, about a peck and a half.

¹⁴ (see p. 131). Worth about 2s. 6d.

The Four Lepers Report the Abandonment of the Syrian Camp.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

3 And there were four ¹leprous men ²at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, ³Why sit we here until we die? 4 If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and ⁴we shall die there: and ⁵if we sit still here we die also. Now therefore come, and let us ⁶fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live: and if they kill us, we shall but die. 5 And they rose up in the ⁷twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come ⁸to the ^auttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. 6 For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear ⁹a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the ¹⁰Hittites, and the kings of the ¹¹Egyptians, to come upon us. 7 Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and ¹²left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and ¹³fled for their life. 8 And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and ¹⁴did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. 9 Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, ^bsome

¹Forbidden to enter the city.

²At the outer door of the gate-house (see p. 121). They would be acting in accordance with the Mosaic Law (Lev. xii. 46, Num. v. 3).

³For no one now gave them food.

⁴Useless to enter the city because of the famine.

⁵To remain here is to die of hunger.

⁶Desert to the Syrian camp.

⁷*i.e.* of the evening.

⁸The outskirts of the camp nearest Samaria.

⁹And thus they thought they were going to be attacked in the rear by an army advancing to the succour of Samaria.

¹⁰Intro. p. ix.

¹¹Intro. p. lxxviii.

¹²Abandoning everything for silent flight.

¹³A general stampede, in which each man sought his own safety.

¹⁴They satisfied their hunger, made provision for the future, and then thought themselves of the city.

¹⁵*mischief* will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household. 10 So they came and called unto ¹⁶the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses ¹⁷tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. 11 And ¹⁸he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within.

a see R.V. and comment p. 111. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 111.

Relief of Samaria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

12 And the king ¹arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you ²what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. 13 And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, ³five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are ⁴as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed :) and let us send and see. 14 They took therefore ⁵two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. 15 And they went ⁶after them ⁷unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away ⁸in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. 16

¹⁵ Punishment for not conveying the good news to the city.

¹⁶ One of the guard at the gate.

¹⁷ All tethered lest they should scatter and make a noise, and thus betray the abandonment of the camp.

¹⁸ The porter called the other porters.

¹ The king, though in his chamber, is at once told the important news.

² The stratagem they are employing to catch us. He fears the flight is a feigned one to draw the hungry people out of Samaria.

³ A few only, not necessarily five.

⁴ *i.e.* if they are captured and slain they will only meet the same fate as the rest of us in the city who must soon die of hunger.

⁵ *i.e.* Two chariots (not two horses), one probably in advance of the other. If there is a trap then one might escape to take the news to Samaria.

⁶ Following the route of the Syrians flight.

⁷ The Syrians would flee by the great road down the plain of Esdraelon, past Beth-shan, and over Jordan.

⁸ In their alarm.

And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. ⁹So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. 17 And the king appointed ¹⁰the lord on whose hand he leaned ¹¹to have the charge of the gate: and the people ¹²trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. 18 And it came to pass ¹³as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: 19 And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. 20 And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

^a see E. V. and comment p. 111.

⁹As foretold by Elisha, verse 1.

¹⁰Captain, or aide-de-camp

¹¹To regulate the traffic to and fro through the gate.

¹²He was trampled to death in the crush. The crowd of persons, some rushing out, others returning with their spoil, and perhaps eager to get back to fetch more, paid little heed to the captain.

¹³An exact fulfilment of Elisha's prediction.

The lord saw the abundance, but had no share in it.

The Famine. Elisha obtains the Restoration of the Shunammite's Land.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

8. ¹Then spake Elisha unto ²the woman, ³whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and ⁴sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a ⁵famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. 2 And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she

¹Now Elisha had spoken. Clearly seven years before the return of the woman.

²The Shunammite woman.

³For the story see iv. 8-37.

⁴Sojourn = stay for a time, and then return.

⁵Probably the same famine as in iv. 38.

went with her household, and sojourned in the ⁶land of the Philistines seven years. 3 And it came to pass at the seven years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and ⁷she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. 4 And the king ⁸talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. 5 And it came to pass, as he was telling the king ⁹how he had restored a dead body to life, that, behold, ¹⁰the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life. 6 And when the king asked the woman, ¹¹she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was her's, and ¹²all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

⁶ A rich corn-growing country. And if the crops failed there Egypt was close at hand.

⁷ On her return she found others in possession of her land, so calls upon the king for its restoration.

⁸ This incident must have occurred before the visit of Naaman. The king could hold no intercourse with Gehazi if he were a leper (see p. cvi.).

⁹ The greatest of Elisha's miracles.

¹⁰ The woman appears as Gehazi was telling the story.

¹¹ The woman confirms Gehazi's story.

¹² Not the land only but the value of its produce for the last seven years as well.

It is suggested that the king himself had taken possession of the abandoned property. Hence it was easy to order the payment of the seven years' produce.

Elisha Visits Damascus. Hazael Murders Benhadad.

7 And Elisha came to ¹Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, ²The man of God is come hither. 8 And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present ³in thine hand, and go, meet the man of God, and ⁴enquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? 9 So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him, even of every good thing of Damascus, ⁵forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy ⁶son Benhadad

¹ The district round Damascus. The time had come for Hazael to ascend the throne of Syria (1 Kings xix. 15).

² Elisha was evidently well known in Syria.

³ With thee.

⁴ Not merely for information, but also to enlist the power of Elisha to work a cure, hence, the great present. Benhadad remembered the cure of Naaman.

⁵ Magnificent presents and a grand display.

⁶ A term of humble address to Elisha.

king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease? 10 And Elisha said unto him, Go, say unto him, ⁷*Thou mayest certainly recover*: howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die. 11 And he ⁸settled his countenance stedfastly, until ⁹he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. 12 And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, ¹⁰Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. 13 And Hazael said, ¹¹*But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?* And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria. 14 So he departed from Elisha, and came to his master: who said to him, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, ¹²He told me that thou shouldst surely recover. 15 And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a ¹³*thick cloth*, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 111. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 111. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 111.

⁷Thou wilt surely live. Ironic. Go give him a courtier's message, as you will do whatever be my reply. Tell him "that he will recover." But he will die.

⁸Fixed a set earnest gaze upon Hazael, reading his inmost thoughts.

⁹Hazael knowing that Elisha had correctly read his thoughts, turned in shame from the prophet's earnest gaze.

¹⁰This means that Hazael would inflict on Israel all the horrors of a successful Eastern war.

¹¹Hazael means to say, "Is it possible that a person in my position can become so powerful and successful a monarch?" (see p. xviii.).

Dog is a term of reproach (see p. 120).

¹²He gives Elisha's exact words, and then proceeds to murder Benhadad.

¹³The coverlet of the bed. This soaked in water would effectually stop the breath of the helpless sick king, and at the same time leave no trace of the cause of death. All would think that the king had died of his sickness.

The Reign of Jehoram (Son of Jehoshaphat) King of Judah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXI. 1-20.)

16 And in the ¹fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began

¹ See note I. 17, p. 3.

to reign. 17 Thirty and two years old was he ²when he began to reign; and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. 18 And he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab: for the ³daughter of Ahab was his wife: and ⁴he did evil in the sight of the LORD. 19 Yet the LORD would not destroy Judah for David his servant's sake, as he promised him to give him always ⁵a light, and to his children. 20 In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and ⁶made a king over themselves. 21 So Joram went over to ⁷Zair, and all the chariots with him: and he ⁸rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and ⁹the captains of the chariots: and ¹⁰the people fled into their tents. 22 Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day. Then ¹¹Libnah revolted at the same time. 23 And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 24 And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers ¹²in the ¹³city of David: and ¹⁴Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

² At the commencement of his reign he slew his six brothers and other princes (2 Chron. xxi. 2-4).

³ Athaliah.

⁴ The connection of the royal house of Judah, with the house of Ahab was disastrous to Judah (see p. xxxi.).

⁵ A lamp (see 1 Kings xi. 36). For the promise (see 2 Sam. vii. 12-16).

⁶ Became an independent kingdom.

⁷ Intro. p. ciii.

⁸ Broke through the encircling army of Edom.

⁹ Of the Edomites not of Israel. These are the chariots encompassing Joram's army.

¹⁰ Israel fled from the battle and went home. This defeat of Joram gave Edom its independence.

¹¹ Intro. p. xcix. A result of the weak rule of Joram.

¹² But not in the sepulchre of the kings.

¹³ Part of Jerusalem (see p. lxiii.).

¹⁴ Or Jehoahaz (Chron.).

THE REIGN OF JORAM IN CHRONICLES.

- (1) Jehoshaphat had placed six of his sons as rulers in the fenced cities. Joram slew them all, and several princes of Judah besides.
- (2) The revolt of Edom. The Edomites surrounded the king's forces. Joram broke through by a night sally. The Israelites dispersed to their homes, and Edom recovered her independence.
- (3) Libnah revolted because Joram "*had forsaken the God of his fathers.*"
- (4) He erected high places and encouraged idolatry.
- (5) The Philistines and Arabians burst into the land, and destroyed all the king's sons, except Jehoahaz or Ahaziah his youngest son.
- (6) He died of a disease in the bowels after an illness of two years.
- (7) No mourning was made for him, and though buried in the city of David, he was not interred in the sepulchre of the kings.

Ahaziah and Joram (of Israel) at Ramoth-Gilead.

(2 CHRONICLES XXII. 1-6.)

25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did ¹Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign. 26 ²Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah, ³the daughter of Omri king of Israel. 27 And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as did the house of Ahab: for he was the son in law of the house of Ahab. 28 And he went with Joram the son of Ahab ⁴to the war against Hazael king of Syria in ⁵Ramoth-gilead; and the Syrians wounded Joram. 29 And king Joram went back to be healed in ⁶Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him at ⁷Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah, ⁸went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

¹ Also known as Jehoahaz.

² Forty-two years in Chronicles which must be incorrect.

³ Daughter of Ahab, grand-daughter of Omri.

⁴ Joram captured Ramoth-gilead (see p. xi.).

⁵ Intro. p. c.

⁶ Intro. p. xviii. The country palace of Ahab.

⁷ The same as Ramoth-gilead.

⁸ Probably he returned to Jerusalem, and then went to visit Joram. This fatal visit is said in Chronicles to be of God, "the destruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram" (2 Chron. xxii. 7).

Elisha sends one of the Sons of the Prophets to Ramoth-Gilead to Anoint Jehu. (NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

The time had now come for the predicted destruction of the house of Ahab.

The prophesy of Elijah to Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth was:

"I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha, the son of Ahijah," i.e. completely destroy his family (1 Kings xxi. 22).

"The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel" (1 Kings xxi. 23).

The calamity did not occur in Ahab's reign, because of his penitence for the murder of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 29).

The command to Elijah at Horeb was:

"Anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room."

Elisha was now prophet.

Hazael was king of Syria.

The iniquity of the house of Ahab was full. It now remained for Elisha to anoint Jehu king of Israel.

Jehu cuts off the house of Ahab in Israel. Athaliah murders the seed-royal in Judah.

Jezebel is eaten by dogs by the wall of Jezreel.

All this is told us in chapters ix.—xi.

9. And Elisha the prophet called one of the ¹children of the prophets, and said unto him, ²Gird up thy loins, and take this box of oil in thine hand, and ³go to Ramoth-gilead: 2 And when thou comest thither, look out there ⁴Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among ⁵his brethren, and carry him to ⁶an inner chamber; 3 Then take the ⁷box of oil, and pour it on his head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, ⁸and flee, and tarry not. 4 So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-gilead. 5 And when he came, behold, the captains of the host ⁹were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. 6 And he arose, and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, ¹⁰Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. 7 And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants, ¹¹the prophets, and the blood of all the ¹²servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. 8 For the ¹³whole house of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab every male child and ¹⁴him that is shut up and ¹⁵left in Israel: 9 And I will make the house of Ahab like the ¹⁵house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the ¹⁶house of Baasha the son of

¹Sons.

²Prepare for a quick despatch of your mission.

³Joram's retirement from Ramoth-gilead may have offended the army. His wound could not have been very severe (see verse 21).

⁴Probably left in command at Ramoth.

⁵His fellow officers.

⁶Chamber in a chamber = a very private room.

⁷Vial (and so R.V.).

⁸To prevent questioning and to make the affair more striking.

⁹In the courtyard of the house. Probably they were holding a council of war.

¹⁰The prophet in anointing Jehu repeats the prophecy of Elijah (1 Kings xxi. 22-23).

¹¹Jezebel had slain the prophets of Jehovah (see 1 Kings xviii. 4, 13). Obadiah saved many.

¹²Though there is no record of it, it is probable there was a persecution of the worshippers of Jehovah.

¹³His dynasty shall be destroyed entirely. For this practice of removing the whole of a dynasty, see p. xiii.

¹⁴Left at large (see p. 11.).

¹⁵See 1 Kings xv. 29.

¹⁶See 1 Kings xvi. 11.

Ahijah: 10 And the ¹⁷dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. And he opened the door and fled.

a see B.V. and comment p. 112.

¹⁷ For Jezebel the establisher of Baal worship is designed a punishment of extraordinary horror, the most terrible that according to Jewish ideas could befall anyone

Jehu Proclaimed King. He at once makes for Jezreel.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

11 Then Jehu came forth ¹to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this ²mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know ³the man, ⁴and ^ahis communication. 12 And they said, It is false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me saying, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. 13 Then ⁵they hasted, and took every man ⁶his garment, and ⁷put it under him on the top of the ⁸stairs, and ⁹blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is King. 14 So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi ¹⁰conspired against Joram. (Now Joram had ¹¹kept Ramoth-gilead, he and ¹²all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria. 15 But King Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the ¹³wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria). And Jehu said, ¹⁴If it be your ¹⁵minds, then ¹⁶let none go forth nor escape out of the city to go to tell it in Jezreel. 16 So Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. ¹⁷And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram.

a see B.V. and comment p. 112.

¹ His fellow captains.

² A reference to the ecstatic utterances of the prophets when under inspiration.

³ i.e. can tell by his garb that he is one of the prophets.

⁴ His purpose in coming. There is an implied suggestion that the whole thing was planned by the officers.

⁵ The army was clearly ready for revolt.

⁶ His long outer garment.

⁷ Folding it and making a sort of throne for Jehu.

⁸ The staircase of the house.

⁹ Proclaiming Jehu as king.

¹⁰ Bound himself in a league with the other captains.

¹¹ Successfully defended.

¹² The main body of the army.

¹³ The wound must have been slight (see verse 21). The readiness with which Joram returned to Jezreel may have caused the troops to be bitter against him.

¹⁴ His object was to take Joram by surprise. The success of the conspiracy depended upon prompt action, and on seeing that Joram received no warning.

¹⁵ Mind or soul (singular).

¹⁶ Let not a fugitive escape.

¹⁷ A fatal visit.

The Death of Joram.

17 And there stood a watchman on the tower in Jezreel, and he spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, ²Is it peace. 18 So there went one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, ³What hast thou to do with peace? ⁴turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. 19 Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. 20 And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the ⁵driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously. 21 And Joram said, ⁶Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah ⁷went out, each in his chariot, and they went out ⁸against Jehu, and met him ⁹in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. 22 And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, ¹⁰Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the ¹¹whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her ¹²witchcrafts are so many? 23 And Joram ¹³turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah, ¹⁴There is treachery, O Ahaziah. 24 And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram ¹⁵between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and ¹⁶he

¹ A tower attached to the palace. On the eastern side overlooking the plain of Jezreel, the quarter whence danger from Syrian attack might be expected.

² = What news from Ramoth-gilead?

³ = What business is it of yours?

⁴ The horseman dared not disobey. Jehu does not mean to let Joram know his purpose.

⁵ Jehu's manner of driving was evidently well known. He was renowned for the impetuous manner in which he led his men to battle.

⁶ *Lit.* Bind = harness the horses to the chariot.

⁷ Suspecting no treachery they went out in person to learn what had happened. Without guard they are at the mercy of Jehu.

⁸ To meet.

⁹ A singular coincidence, fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah.

¹⁰ = Is all well at Ramoth-gilead?

¹¹ Spiritual whoredoms = idolatries.

¹² Sorceries = the use of divinations and incantations.

¹³ Turned his horses to flee.

¹⁴ Warning Ahaziah as he himself wheeled the chariot round to escape.

¹⁵ Between the shoulders; the arrow passed through his body.

¹⁶ The wound was immediately fatal.

sunk down in his chariot. 25 Then said Jehu to ¹⁷Bidkar his ¹⁸captain, Take up, and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou ¹⁹rode together after Ahab his father, the LORD ²⁰laid this burden upon him; 26 Surely I have seen ²¹yesterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood ²²of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this ²³plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take and ²⁴cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the LORD.

¹⁷ Intro p. civ.

¹⁸ Jehu's aide-de-camp.

¹⁹ Drove together in the same chariot with Ahab. They may have been present at Ahab's taking possession of the vineyard of Naboth.

²⁰ Pronounced this doom upon him.

Burden = a prophetic announcement of woe.

²¹ So Ahab took possession of the vineyard of Naboth the day after his death.

²² Put to death by Ahab, that Naboth might have no heirs.

²³ Plot of ground.

²⁴ Thus literally fulfilling the prophecy of Elijah.

Rode together after Ahab. May mean:

- (1) That they rode together in one chariot in Ahab's train. This is the generally accepted meaning.
- (2) That they rode on horseback. The retinue of Ahab would follow him in pairs. Jehu and Bidkar formed one pair.
- (3) That they rode side by side behind Ahab in his chariot. This is the explanation given by Josephus, and is confirmed by Assyrian sculptures, which represent the monarch going to war with two guards standing behind him in his chariot.

The Death of Ahaziah. (2 CHRONICLES XXII. 6-9.)

27 But when Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the ¹garden house. And Jehu ²followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot. And they did so at ³the going up to ⁴Gur, which is by ⁵Ibleam. And he fled to ⁶Megiddo, and died there. 28 And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and ⁷buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David. 29 ⁸And in the ⁹eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

¹ Some pavilion near the royal gardens. It may be a proper name. See note below.

² Not in person, but caused him to be pursued. It was Jehu's object to seize Jezebel at once.

³ The ascent.

⁴ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁵ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁶ Intro. p. xcix.

⁷ Jehu grants Ahaziah royal burial, as he would have done to Jezebel.

⁸ An unusual thing to announce an accession at the death of a monarch.

⁹ 12th year (viii. 25).

DEATH OF AHAZIAH AS IN CHRONICLES.

"And he (Jehu) sought Ahaziah; and they caught him (for he was hid in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu; and when they had slain him, they buried him" (2 Chron. xxii. 9).

The only reasonable suggestion of reconciling these two different accounts is to suppose that Ahaziah made his way first to Samaria, where he would naturally expect to find shelter with the royal family of his uncle Jehoram; then, seeing that the chiefs at Samaria would surrender to Jehu, he endeavoured to escape by the plain of Esdraelon, through the pass of Megiddo down the coast to Judah. He was pursued in this flight, wounded at the rise to Gur, and died at Megiddo.

The Death of Jezebel.

30 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she ^a*1* painted her face, and ²*tired her head*, and looked out at ³a window. 31 And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, ^b*Had* ⁴*Zimri peace, who slew his master?* 32 And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three ⁵eunuchs. 33 And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was ⁶sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and ⁷he trode her under foot. 34 And when he was ⁸come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this ⁹cursed woman, and bury her: for she is ¹⁰a king's daughter. 35 And they went to bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. 36 Wherefore they came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall ¹¹dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: 37 And the carcase of Jezebel shall be as dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that ¹²they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 112. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 113.

¹Painted her eyes with antimony, giving them unnatural brilliancy (S.C.). True to her character, Jezebel would die as a queen.

²Adorned with a head-dress.

³The window of the gate tower.

⁴(See 1 Kings xvi. 9-18). She calls Jehu a second Zimri, and threatens him with the same fate. (Intro. p. cxvii.)

⁵The usual attendants in an Eastern harem. They would be eager to wreak their vengeance on the tyrannical, imperious Jezebel.

⁶Spirited out upon.

⁷As he rode in at the gateway. The act seems to have been intentional.

⁸To the palace, where he sat down to a banquet.

⁹Upon whom lay the curse of Jehovah pronounced by Elijah.

¹⁰She was the daughter of Eth-baal king of the Sidonians. Jehu would not insult the royal house of that nation by refusing burial to Jezebel. As the wife of Ahab he would probably have left her body unburied.

¹¹The dogs, the scavengers, of an eastern city, had feasted upon the body of Jezebel (Intro. p. cxi.).

¹²i.e. not be able to recognize her remains.

THE DEATH OF JEZEBEL.

What a contrast! The great queen who had caused Elijah to fear for his life and to flee for safety (1 Kings xix. 2-3), who had been the ruling spirit, and the prominent personality in Israel during the successive reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, and Jehoram, perished by the most ignominious of deaths. Nothing remained of her body but the hard extremities, the skull, the palms of the hand, and the soles of the feet. Her dreadful fate is no less remarkable than the literal fulfilment of the prophecy pronounced against her by Elijah.

Jehu Destroys the whole House of Ahab.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

10. And Ahab had seventy ¹sons in Samaria. And Jehu ²wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto ³the rulers of ⁴Jezreel, to the elders, and ⁵to them that brought up Ahab's children, saying, ² Now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you chariots and horses, ⁶a fenced city also, and armour; ³ Look even out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and ⁷set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house. ⁴ But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, ⁸two kings stood not before him: how then shall we stand? ⁵ And he that was over ⁹the house, and he that was ¹⁰over the city, the elders also, and ¹¹the bringers up of the children, sent to Jehu, saying, We are ¹²thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make ¹³any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes. ⁶ Then he wrote ¹⁴a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye ¹⁵the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by ¹⁶to morrow this time. Now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up. ⁷ And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew seventy persons, and put their heads in baskets, and sent him them

¹ Sons and grandsons—male descendants.

² Very artful. His force may not have been sufficient to reduce the city.

³ Princes.

⁴ Probably an error in copying. "Israel" or "Samaria" should be read.

⁵ i.e. their tutors.

⁶ Samaria.

⁷ Jehu challenges the adherents of Ahab to select that one of Joram's sons best fitted for the throne and to fight for the kingdom.

⁸ The two kings, Joram and Ahaziah.

⁹ Household = the officer in charge of the palace.

¹⁰ The governor of the city.

¹¹ Those that brought up.

¹² They submit to Jehu.

¹³ Any man king.

¹⁴ A second letter.

¹⁵ To give Jehu absolute proof of their death. A very common practice with Eastern rulers to assure themselves of the death of a rival.

¹⁶ Ample time, considering how near Samaria was to Jezreel.

to Jezreel. 8 And there came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in ¹⁷two heaps at the ¹⁸entering in of the gate until the morning. 9 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and stood, and said to all the people, Ye be ¹⁹righteous: behold, I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who slew all these? 10 Know now that there shall fall unto the earth ²⁰nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath done that which he spake by his servant Elijah. 11 So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his ²¹great men, and his ²²kinsfolks, and ²³his priests, until he left him none remaining.

a see R. V. and comment p. 112.

¹⁷ One on each side of the gate.

¹⁸ See p. 121.

¹⁹ Just, and so can decide upon the merits of the case. Jehu's action was mild compared with the wholesale slaughter of Ahab's family.

²⁰ Jehu thus takes upon himself to execute the wrath of Jehovah upon the house of Ahab.

²¹ High court officials, owing their appointment to Ahab.

²² His familiar friends.

²³ The priests of Baal attached to the court. Jehu puts to death all who were likely to dispute his rule.

Jehu slays the Brethren of Ahaziah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

12 And he arose and ¹departed, and came to Samaria. And as he was *at the* ²shearing house in the way, 13 Jehu met with the ³brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are ye? And they answered, We are the ⁴brethren of Ahaziah; and we go down ⁵to salute the children of the ⁶king and the children of the ⁷queen. 14 And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the ⁸pit of the shearing house, even two and forty men; neither ⁹left he any of them.

a see R. V. and comment p. 112.

¹ *i.e.* left Jezreel, and took possession of Samaria, where there was now no opposition to him.

² Some solitary building on the road from Jezreel to Samaria.

³ Kinsmen.

⁴ So allied with the house of Ahab.

⁵ To visit and inquire after their health.

⁶ Joram, king of Israel.

⁷ Jezebel, the queen mother.

They were ignorant of what had occurred at Samaria and Jezreel.

⁸ Cistern or pond where the sheep were washed.

⁹ Because they were of the house of Ahab.

Jehu meets with Jehonadab.

15 And when he was departed thence, he ¹lighted on ²Jehonadab the son of ³Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand; and ⁴he took him up ⁵to him into the chariot. 16 And he said, Come with me, and ⁶see my zeal for the ⁷LORD. So they made him ride in his chariot. 17 And when he came to Samaria, ⁸he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the LORD, which he spake to Elijah.

¹ Happened to meet.² Intro. p. cx.³ Intro. p. cx.⁴ A mark of honour to Jehonadab.⁵ The presence of Jehonadab, a man well known for his pious life, would redound to the credit of Jehu with the people.⁶ Look out and observe.⁷ Jehovah.⁸ Thoroughly clearing out all however remotely connected with the family of Ahab. Jehu does his work thoroughly.

Jehu destroys the Worshippers of Baal and the House of Baal.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

18 And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, ¹Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. 19 Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his ²servants, and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great sacrifice to do ³to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall not live. But Jehu did it ⁴in subtilty, to the intent that he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. 20 And Jehu said ⁵Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal. And they ⁶proclaimed it. 21 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and ⁷all the worshippers of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came not. And they came into the house of Baal;

¹ A prelude to the gathering of the worshippers of Baal for their slaughter.² Worshippers (as vv. 19, 21, 22, 23).³ For the Baal.⁴ Treacherously.⁵ Sanctify.⁶ Made proclamation throughout the land.⁷ All came, anxious to please the new king, and to be present at this public acknowledgment of their religion.

and the ⁸house of Baal was full from one end to another. 22 And he said unto him that was over the ⁹vestry, Bring forth ¹⁰vestments for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth vestments. 23 And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of Rechab, into the house of Baal, and said unto the worshippers of Baal, ¹¹Search, and look that there be here with you none of the ¹²servants of the LORD, but the worshippers of Baal only. 24 And when ¹³they went ¹⁴in to offer ¹⁵sacrifices and burnt offerings, Jehu appointed fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands escape, he that letteth him go, his life shall be for the life of him. 25 And it came to pass, as soon as ¹⁶he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the ¹⁷guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains ¹⁸cast them out, and went to the ¹⁹city of the house of Baal. 26 And they brought forth the ²⁰images out of the house of Baal, and burned them. 27 And they brake down the ²¹image of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal, and made it a ²²draught house unto this day. 28 Thus Jehu ²³destroyed Baal out of Israel. 29 Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ^{24c} who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, ²⁵the golden

⁸ The temple would be surrounded by courts. All available space was crowded.

⁹ The wardrobe of the house of Baal.

¹⁰ The vestments = those proper to be worn on such an occasion.

¹¹ The presence of those of another religion would profane the rites. Hence the Baal worshippers would be ready to eject all not of their persuasion. This precaution would denote extreme reverence on the part of Jehu, and would not excite suspicion.

¹² Worshippers of Jehovah.

¹³ The priests and prophets.

¹⁴ Into the inner court.

¹⁵ These would be offered in the court not in the temple proper.

¹⁶ He; better "they," i.e. the priests of Baal. Jehu would not take part in the service.

¹⁷ The runners attendant on the chariot of Jehu (see p. 128).

¹⁸ Threw the corpses outside the temple.

¹⁹ Citadel, i.e. the central temple, fortified like a citadel.

²⁰ Pillars, evidently of wood (smaller pillars).

²¹ Pillar of stone, for it was broken down, not burnt (the chief pillar).

²² A muck heap. A mark of the greatest insult (see Dan. ii. 5).

²³ The work was thoroughly done. There was no revival of Baal worship as the national religion.

²⁴ Wherewith (see p. xxxiii).

²⁵ Destruction of Baal-worship by Jehu was mainly political.

(1) He got rid of all possible supporters of Ahab's family.

(2) The sensuous rites of Baal-worship debased and weakened the nation.

But the calf-worship was connected with the independence of Israel. Jehu does not put this away lest Israel should return to the house of David.

calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. 30 And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the ²⁶fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. 31 But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin.

a see R.V. and comment p. 113. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 107. *c* see R.V. and comment p. 107.

²⁶Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam II., and Zachariah, who was the last of the house of Jehu. The longest dynasty on the throne of Israel.

The Cutting short of Israel.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

32 In ¹those days the LORD began ²to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the ³coasts of Israel; 33 From Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the ⁴Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from ⁵Aroer, which is by the river ⁶Arnon, even ⁷Gilead and ⁸Bashan. 34 Now the rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 35 And Jehu slept with his fathers: and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. 36 And ⁹the time that Jehu reigned over Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

a see R.V. and comment p. 113.

v. 34. All his might. An expression also applied to Hezekiah (xx. 20), and to Jehoash (xiii. 12, xiv. 15). Here it must refer to Jehu's "personal courage," not to any success in war, for he was repeatedly defeated by Hazael, and became tributary to Assyria (see p. cxviii.).

In Samaria. This emphasizes the fact that Jehu made Samaria the seat of his court. Ahab had resided principally at Jezreel. Jehu removed the court from Jezreel to Samaria.

¹i.e. the reign of Jehu.

²To deprive Israel of parts of its territory.

³Borders.

⁴These three tribes had their possessions on the East of Jordan.

⁵Intro. p. lxxxviii.

⁶Intro. p. lxxxviii.

⁷Intro. p. xc.

⁸Intro. p. lxxxviii.

In Jehu's reign Israel lost all the territory east of Jordan. The Syrians could attack this district more easily than any other part of the land.

⁹For note on chronology see p. 133.

Athaliah usurps the Throne of Judah.

11. And when ¹Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that ²her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the ³seed royal. 2 But ⁴Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons which were slain; and they hid him, even him and his nurse, in the ⁵bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. 3 And he was with ⁶her hid ⁷in the house of the LORD six years, And Athaliah did reign over the land.

¹Intro p. xiv.

²Ahaziah.

³All the male members of the royal family (see p. 119).

⁴Intro. p. cx., half-sister of Ahaziah. She was not the daughter of Athaliah. She was the wife of Jehoiada.

⁵A place where bedding was stored, not a sleeping chamber. It may have been one of the chambers of the Temple.

⁶Jehosheba.

⁷The best place for hiding the child. Athaliah would not trouble herself about the Temple worship.

Jehoiada Proclaims Joash King. Athaliah put to Death.

(2 CHRONICLES XXIII. 1-15.)

4 And the ¹seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the ²rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the ³guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD, and made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son. 5 And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do; A third part of you that ⁴enter in on the sabbath shall even be ⁵keepers of the watch of the ⁶king's house; 6 And a third part shall be at the gate of Sur; and a third part at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, ⁷that it be not broken down. 7 And two parts of all you that ⁸go forth on the sabbath, even they shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king. 8 And ye ⁹shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in

¹Possibly discontent with the rule of Athaliah had come to a head.

²Captains.

³The runners, the body-guard of the monarch (p. 128).

⁴Come on duty. (Levites and priests in Chronicles.)

⁵Guards at the exits of the palace leading to the Temple (called "the gate of the foundation" (Chron.) (see p. lxx.).

⁶Palace.

⁷That there may be no approach of any military force from the king's palace into the Temple.

⁸Go off duty. (Levites and priests in Chronicles) (on the gates, see p. lxx.).

⁹Surround him, to protect his person.

his hand: and he that cometh ¹⁰within the ranges, let him be slain: and be ye with the king ¹¹as he goeth out and as he cometh in. 9 And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. 10 And to the ¹²captains over hundreds did the priest give king David's spears and shields, that were in the temple of the LORD. 11 And the ¹³guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, ¹⁴from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple. 12 And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him ¹⁵the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands and said, ¹⁶God save the king. 13 And when Athaliah heard ¹⁷the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people into the temple of the LORD. 14 And when she ¹⁸looked, behold, the king stood by ¹⁹a pillar, ²⁰as the manner was, and the princes and the trumpeters by the king, and ²¹all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets: and Athaliah ²²rent her clothes, and cried, ²³Treason, Treason. 15 But Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of the hundreds, the officers of the host, and said unto them, ^aHave her forth ²⁴without the ranges: and ²⁵him that followeth her kill with the sword. For the priest had said, Let her not be slain in the house of the

¹⁰ Within the ranks of the soldiers.

¹¹ Wherever he goes. It is fanciful to suppose that going out of the Temple, and entering the palace is meant by this expression (see p. 123).

¹² They had come without their arms in order to avoid suspicion, or they may have gone off duty without arms. So Jehoiada arms them.

¹³ The runners, i.e. Levites acting as the body-guard of Joash.

¹⁴ Making a triangle, the three angles being the right corner of the Temple, the great brazen altar, and the left corner of the Temple (C.B.). Joash was crowned in the open space of this triangle.

¹⁵ The Law, a sign that the Law was to be the guide of his reign.

¹⁶ "Let the king live."

See (1) Saul (1 Sam. x. 24).

(2) Adonijah (1 Kings i. 25).

(3) Solomon (1 Kings i. 34).

¹⁷ The loud cries of rejoicing, "running and praising the king" (Chron.).

¹⁸ She at once saw what was happening.

¹⁹ The pillar. "At his pillar" (Chron.). Some spot connected with the coronation of the kings.

²⁰ According to custom.

²¹ Evidently a large representative assembly.

²² With horror at the evident success of the plot against her.

²³ Conspiracy, conspiracy.

²⁴ Within the ranks, either to prevent rescue, or to keep the people from killing her in the Temple.

²⁵ Any one attempting to take her part.

LORD. 16 And ²⁶they laid hands on her; and she went ²⁷by the way by the which the horses came into the king's house: and there was she slain.

a see R.V. and comment p. 113. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 113. *c* see R.V. and comment p. 113. *d* see R.V. and comment p. 113. *e* see R.V. and comment p. 113.

²⁶ *Lit.* gave her space, i.e. allowed her to leave the Temple uninjured.

²⁷ A private carriage road to the king's palace, not the "horse gate" of the city (Neh. iii. 28).

THE ARRANGEMENTS OF JEHOIADA.

Compare this account with that in 2 Chronicles xxiii. 1-15. We see:—

1. That Jehoiada disclosed his plans to five captains of the royal guards. Their names are Azariah, Ishmael, Azariah, Maaseiah, Elishaphat.
2. That these captains went about through the land and summoned the Levites and heads of families to Jerusalem, probably on pretence of some festal ceremony. Jehoiada made a covenant with these.
3. That Jehoiada had two places to guard, viz. the Palace and the Temple, so he divided his men into five divisions, evidently according to the number of the captains. The first three guarded the palace, viz. at the three gates of it, evidently to prevent any force coming from the palace to the Temple. The other two guarded the king.
4. That the people assembled in the court of the Temple, where the Levites guarding the king are arranged in two lines forming a triangle. One line diagonally across the court from the right-hand corner to the brazen altar, the other along the opposite diagonal from the left-hand corner to the brazen altar, which was the apex.

Thus there was ample space for the people, and yet an open space for the crowning of the king.

There is apparently some difficulty in reconciling the account of 2 Kings xi. 4-16, and 2 Chronicles xxiii. 1-15.

It is best to take it that the conspiracy was the outcome of the united action of the priests and the military. A revolution carried out within the Temple courts could no more have taken place without the co-operation of the priesthood than a removal of the reigning sovereign could have been effected without the aid of the military leaders.

Thus we may take it that the writer of the Chronicles is relating the part taken by the priesthood in the national rising, and emphasizes what was specially done by the priesthood, whilst the writer of Kings deals more particularly with the part taken by the military.

Thus we may conclude:

1. That the Levites guarded the Temple entrances in three divisions, a duty consistent with their special duties.
2. That the military guard (the runners) protected the person of the young king, and put Athaliah to death, thus performing their specific duties.
3. The five divisions were under the charge of the five officers of the royal guard, whose experience would qualify them to arrange and order both Levites and Royal guard.

Restoration of the Worship of Jehovah. The Temple of Baal destroyed.

(2 CHRONICLES XXIII. 16—XXIV. 1.)

17 And Jehoiada made ^{1a}a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; between the king also and the people. 18 And all the people

¹ *The* covenant, viz. the king to rule according to the Law, the people to be loyal subjects (see Deut. v. 3). It was renewed because the people had forsaken Jehovah for Baal.

of the land went into the ²house of Baal, and ³brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew ⁴Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest ⁵appointed officers over the house of the LORD. 19 And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and ⁶they brought ⁷down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the ⁸gate of the guard to the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the kings. 20 And all the people of the land ⁹rejoiced, and the city was ¹⁰in quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword beside the king's house. 21 Seven years old was Jehoash when he began to reign.

²Baal worship had been introduced by Athaliah.
³The first thing was to root out Baal worship.

⁴Intro. p. cxii.

⁵Restored the regular order of services in the Temple.

⁶A triumphal procession escorting the king from the Temple to the Palace.

⁷The Temple is on higher ground than the Palace.

⁸(See p. lxx.).

⁹At the accession of Joash
¹⁰Acquiesced in the death of Athaliah.

Reign of Joash. The Temple Repaired.

12. In the seventh year of Jehu Jehoash began to reign; and forty years reigned he in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was ¹Zibiah of Beer-sheba. 2 And Jehoash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD ²all his days wherein Jehoiada ³the priest instructed him. 3 But the ⁴high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. 4 And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the ⁵dedicated things that is brought into the house of the LORD, *even ⁶the money of every one that passeth the account, the ⁷money that ⁸every man is set at, and all the ⁸money that cometh into any man's heart to bring into the*

¹The queen-mother is always an important person (see p. 127).

²As long as he was under the guidance of Jehoiada i.e. as long as the latter lived.

³Jehoiada's time is marked by a revival of priestly influence and power.

⁴See p. 122. Not abolished as in Hezekiah's reign, and then restored by his successor Manasseh.

⁵Hallowed.

⁶The poll-tax of the half-shekel, paid by persons numbered at the annual census (see p. 126).

⁷The redemption money e.g. the redemption of the first born (see p. 126)
Set at = valued at.

⁸Freewill offerings.

house of the LORD. 5 Let the priests take it to them, ⁹every man of his acquaintance: and let them repair the ¹⁰breaches of the house, wheresoever any breach shall be found. 6 But it was so, that in the three and twentieth year of the king Jehoash ¹¹the priests had not repaired the breaches of the house. 7 Then king Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and the other priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but ¹²deliver it for the breaches of the house. 8 And the priests consented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house. 9 But Jehoiada the priest ¹³took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the door ¹⁴put therein all the money that was brought into the house of the LORD. 10 And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's ¹⁵scribe and the high priest came up, and they ¹⁶put in bags, and ¹⁷told the money that was found in the house of the LORD. 11 And they ¹⁸gave the money, ¹⁹being told, into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they ²⁰laid it out to the carpenters and builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD. 12 And to masons, and hewers of stone, and to buy timber and hewed stone to repair the breaches of the house of the

⁹ Each priest from those whom he knows, *i.e.* to collect in the district with which he is personally acquainted (2 Chron. xxiv. 5).

During the reigns of the late monarchs (especially Athaliah), the Temple had been neglected.

¹⁰ Dilapidations.

¹¹ For some cause the arrangement not being successful, the king relieves the priests from the duty of collecting the money, and from the obligation of doing the repairs. There is no charge of misappropriation of funds.

¹² Hand it over to me.

¹³ By the king's orders (2 Chron. xxiv. 8).

¹⁴ Used to put.

¹⁵ Secretary. The repairs are now under royal control.

¹⁶ Tied up in bags first, and then the bag weighed. The value was by weight.

¹⁷ Counted (see p. 130).

¹⁸ Used to give.

¹⁹ When counted.

²⁰ Paid it out.

LORD, and for all that was laid out for the house to repair it. 13 Howbeit there were not made for the house of the LORD ²¹bowls of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD: 14 But they gave that ²²to the workmen, and repaired therewith the house of the LORD. 15 Moreover they reckoned not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to be bestowed ²³on workmen: for they dealt faithfully. 16 The trespass money and sin money ²⁴was not brought into the house of the LORD: it ²⁴was the priests.

^aSee R.V. and comment p. 114. ^bsee R.V. and comment p. 114.

Money dedicated to the repair of the Temple.

1. The half-shekel paid by each person at the annual census.
2. All redemption money, e.g. first-born, vows, etc.
3. All Freewill offerings.

Money left for the support of the Priests.

Trespass and sin offerings in money.

²¹All the money collected was appropriated for repairs, none of it was spent on any utensil or vessel.

²²To them that did the work; the overseers of verse 11.

²³Was not put into the chest.

²⁴i.e. for the support of the priests (see p. 127).

Invasion of Judah by Hazael. Death of Joash.

(2 CHRONICLES XXIV. 23-27).

17 Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against ¹Gath, and took it: and Hazael ²set his face to go up to Jerusalem. 18 And Jehoash king of Judah ³took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and in the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria:

¹Intro. p. xciv. He would make his way by the usual route along the maritime plain.

²Determined to attack.

³Jehoash buys the Syrians off, but not before he had been defeated by them. In Chronicles we learn that the Syrians were a small band, and that the forces of Joash were numerous. The defeat was considered to be a divine judgment.

From Chron. we learn:

- (1) That Joash was left in great diseases, i.e. severely wounded in the fight with the Syrians.
- (2) That his officers slew him because of the murder of Zechariah, and the other sons of Jehoiada.

and he went away from Jerusalem. 19 And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20 And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and slew Joash ⁴in the house of Millo, which goeth down to Silla. 21 For ⁵Jozachar the son of Shimeath, and ⁶Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the ⁷city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

⁴ The fortress of Millo built by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 24). Intro. p. lxiii.

⁵ The name is given as Zabab in Chron. Intro. p. cxii.

⁶ Intro. p. cx.

⁷ "But not in the sepulchres of the kings" (Chron.).

NOTE.—In Chronicles we find a reason stated for this invasion.

The order of event is:—

1. Death of Jehoiada at the age of 130
2. The king and the people fell away into idolatry.
3. Prophets were sent to reprove and warn, but no heed was given to their warnings.
4. Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, rebuked the king, and was stoned in the Temple court.
5. The Syrian invasion followed, and was regarded as a judgment of God for the idolatry of the king and people.

The Reign of Jehoahaz, Son of Jehu.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

13. In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of Ahaziah king of Judah Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned seventeen years. 2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ¹which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. 3 And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and ²he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, ³all their days. 4 And Jehoahaz be-

For chronological notes see p. 133.

¹ Wherewith he made (see note p. xxxiii).

² As a punishment for the continuance of the calf worship.

³ The whole time, i.e. of the reign of Jehoahaz, not of the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad, for Benhadad was thrice defeated by Joash, the successor of Jehoahaz (see verses 24, 25).

hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. 5 (And the LORD gave Israel ^aa saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt ^bin their tents, as beforetime. 6 Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel sin but walked therein: and there remained ^cthe grove also in Samaria.) 7 Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz but fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria had destroyed them, and had made them ^dlike the dust ^aby threshing. 8 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 9 And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria; and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^d see R.V. and comment p. 114.

⁴ Joash, and later Jeroboam II.

⁶ At home, in their houses, without fear of Syrian invasion. It may mean "in the open country," but this is not probable.

⁶ The Asherah (see p. 119). It may have remained from the time of Ahab, for it is not mentioned that Jehu destroyed it.

⁷ Allowed him to keep no greater force as a standing army.

⁸ Like dust to be trodden upon. Expressing how completely Israel was trodden down under Syrian oppression.

The reign of Joash (of Israel), Son of Jehoahaz.

10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. 11 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein. 12 And the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith ¹he fought

The story of his victories over Syria is narrated in verses, 22-25.

Whilst the challenge by Amaziah, and the defeat of Judah are recorded in xiv. 8-11.

¹ See xiv. 8-11.

against Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 13 And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

The Death of Elisha.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

14 Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the ¹chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. 15 And Elisha said unto him, ²take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. 16 And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha ³put his hands upon the king's hands. 17 And he said, Open ⁴the window ⁵eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The ⁶arrow of the LORD's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in ⁷Aphek, till thou ⁸have consumed them. 18 And he said, Take the ⁹arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and ¹⁰stayed. 19 And the man of God was ¹¹wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

¹ Chariots, referring to Elisha as the defence of Israel.

² Elisha would inspire the king with courage to meet Syria.

³ Laid his hands, indicative of blessing the king's action.

⁴ The lattice.

⁵ Towards the quarter whence Syrian attack could be expected. The arrow is directed against Syria. Gilead was occupied by Syria at this time.

⁶ An arrow of deliverance from the Lord.

⁷ Intro. p. lxxxv.

⁸ Utterly annihilate the army of Syria in the battle at Aphek.

⁹ The bundle of arrows.

¹⁰ Ceased smiting.

¹¹ Because the king lacked zeal or energy. This same want of energy indicated want of vigour in prosecuting the war. Perhaps Joash obeyed the command without any strong faith in the result.

The extent of faith marks the extent of victory. Little faith, only few victories.

A Dead Man raised to Life on touching Elisha's Bones.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

20 And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the ¹Moabites invaded the land at ²the coming in of the year. 21 And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a ³band of men; and they ⁴cast the man into the ⁵sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was ⁶let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and ⁷stood up on his feet.

¹Who had pushed northwards past the Arnon, and now regularly raided the plain of Esdraelon.

²In the spring, the season for military operations.

³A raiding band.

⁴Thrust.

⁵The grave would be a cave or excavation in the side of a rock, with the entrance closed by a large stone.

⁶The body would not be lowered into the grave.

⁷The body was on a bier,

not in a closed coffin. So the son of the widow of Nain (St. Luke vii. 15). On miracles of raising to life, see pp. xlv. and 15.

This miracle was regarded by the Jews as the greatest honour to Elisha. It is referred to in the Apocrypha. "No word could overcome him, and after his death his body prophesied. He did wonders in his life, and at his death were his works miraculous" (Ecclesi xlviii. 13-14).

The miracle would draw attention to his death-bed prophecy of success against Syria, and would encourage and reassure the Israelites oppressed by Hazael.

Fulfilment of Elisha's Prophecy. Victories of Jehoash over Benhadad.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

22 But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz. 23 And the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet. 24 So Hazael king of Syria died: and Benhadad his son reigned in his stead. 25 And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael ²the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. ³Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

¹ Hazael reigned after the death of Jehoahaz, the cities captured by Benhadad (verse 25), must have been captured by him, not as king, but as general under his father (s.c.).

² Hazael conquered Gilead in the reign of Jehu, so these cities were on the west of Jordan. Later Jeroboam II. recovered Gilead (xiv. 25).

³ In exact fulfilment of the prophecy of Elisha.

Accession of Amaziah, King of Judah.

He puts his father's murderers to death, and defeats the Edomites.

(2 CHRONICLES xxv. 1-4.)

14. In the second year of Joash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel reigned Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah. 2 He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. 3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, ¹yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father ²did. 4 Howbeit the ³high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places. 5 And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom was ⁴confirmed in his hand, that he slew his servants which had slain the king his father. 6 But the children of the murderers he slew not: according unto ⁵that which is written in the book of the law of Moses, wherein the Lord commanded saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers; but every man ⁶shall be put to death for his own sin. 7 He slew of ⁷Edom in the ⁸valley of salt ten thousand, and took ⁹Selah by war, and called the name of it ¹⁰Joktheel ¹¹unto this day.

¹ "But not with a perfect heart" (Chron.).

² Had done.

³ He failed in perfectness through not putting down these high places.

⁴ Established, i.e. as soon as he felt he was securely settled on the throne.

⁵ See Deut. xxiv. 16.

⁶ Shall die.

⁷ We find particulars of this war in Chronicles, see below.

⁸ Intro. p. lxxviii.

⁹ Intro. p. ci.

¹⁰ Intro. p. xcviii.

¹¹ i.e. the time when the original account was written.

Particulars of the Edomite War (2 Chronicles xxv. 5-13).

1. He hired 100,000 Israelite mercenaries at the price of 100 talents.
2. He sent these troops back at the bidding of a man of God.
3. These mercenaries, angry at being sent back, pillaged certain cities of Judah.
4. There was a massacre of 10,000 Edomites after the fall of Selah.
5. Amaziah carried off the gods of Edom, and worshipped them. He was rebuked by a prophet for this sin, and his fall was foretold.

Amaziah Challenges Jehoash King of Israel. Defeat of Amaziah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXV. 17-24.)

REASONS OF THE CHALLENGE.

- (1) In pride at his victory over Edom.
- (2) To punish Israel for the sack of the cities of Judah by the mercenaries he had sent back from the Edomite war (2 Chron. xxv. 13).

But Amaziah forgot:—

- (1) That he was pitting *two* tribes against *ten*.
- (2) That Jehoash had thrice defeated Benhadad of Syria.
- (3) That his own victory over Edom had been won by the assistance of Jehovah (2 Chron. xxv. 7-9).
- (4) That he had fallen into idolatry by his worship of the Edomite gods which he had carried off, and had forfeited all hope of divine help. Indeed, a prophet had foretold his downfall for this sin of idolatry (2 Chron. xxv. 14-16).

8 Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, ¹Come, let us look one another in the face. 9 And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, ²The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to ³the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by ⁴a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and ⁵trode down the thistle. 10 Thou has indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: ⁶glory of this, and tarry at home: for why shouldest ⁷thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? 11 But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash king of Israel ⁸went up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah ⁹looked one another in the face at ¹⁰Bethshemesh, which belongeth to Judah. 12 And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and fled every man to their ¹¹tents. 13 And Jehoash king of Israel ¹²took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah,

¹A formal challenge to battle.

²Bramble or briar, a worthless shrub.

³A noble, useful tree.

⁴A powerful beast of prey.

⁵This parable clearly indicates how insignificant Judah was as compared with Israel.

⁶Be content with the honour you have gained.

⁷Provoke a disaster.

⁸He did not wait to be attacked, but invaded Judah at once.

⁹Met in battle.

¹⁰Intro. p. xc.

¹¹Homes, i.e. disbanded after the battle, as usual after a defeat.

¹²Took him prisoner in the battle.

at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and ¹³ brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the ¹⁴ gate of Ephraim unto the ¹⁵ corner gate, ¹⁶ four hundred cubits. 14 And he took ¹⁷ all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and ¹⁸ hostages, and returned to Samaria.

¹³ Made a breach in the wall.

¹⁴ Intro. p. lxiv. The gate facing the great highway from Central Palestine to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ Intro. p. lxiv.

¹⁶ See p. xv., about 200 yards.

His object was to leave Jerusalem open to attack from the north.

¹⁷ *i.e.* all that was left, with the implication that it was not much.

¹⁸ Jehoash left Amaziah on the throne, but took hostages to compel him to refrain from hostility to Israel. (See note on verses 17-20).

THE PARABLE.

The Thistle, a worthless, insignificant shrub = Amaziah and Judah, a weak nation and a petty king.

The Cedar, a noble, great useful tree = Jehoash and Israel, a powerful king, and a great wealthy nation.

Daughter of the Cedar = Israel

Son of the Thistle = Judah

Possibly referring to a demand from Ahaziah that Jehoash should make some return to Amaziah for the 100 talents given to the Israelite mercenaries, and also make compensation for the cities sacked by them (2 Chron. xxv. 6 and 13).

Wild beast. May mean:

either (1) The forces of Israel swooping down on Judah as a wild beast on its prey; or (2) Any chance disaster—for a passing beast destroys the thistle.

Lesson. Whilst it is clear that Jehoash is comparing Israel with Judah it is best to take the parable as giving a broad lesson to Amaziah of his insignificance compared with Israel, and of his presumption in daring to challenge the northern kingdom.

Compare Jotham's parable of the trees (Judges ix. 8-15).

The Death of Jehoash, King of Israel.

15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 16 And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam his son reigned in his stead.

These two verses are almost the same as xiii. 12-13.

They interrupt the narrative of Amaziah's reign.

Possibly the compiler of Kings had two documents which he consulted.

His might, *i.e.* his great victories over Syria, fulfilling the prophecy of Elisha.

Special mention is made of the defeat of Amaziah, as if this victory was the greatest of Jehoash's achievements.

The Death of Amaziah, King of Judah. Accession of Azariah or Uzziah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXV. 25-28, XXVI. 1-2).

17 And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah ¹lived after the death of ²Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel fifteen years. 18 And the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 19 Now ³they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem: and he fled to ⁴Lachish; but they sent after him to Lachish, and slew him there. 20 And they brought him ⁵on horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his fathers in the city of David. 21 And ⁶all the people of Judah took ⁷Azariah, which was sixteen years old, and made him king instead of his father Amaziah. 22 He ⁸built ⁹Elath, and restored it to Judah, after that ¹⁰the king slept with his fathers.

¹ Evidently not in full enjoyment of regal power. (See note below).

² He survived that king fifteen years, so though Chronicles (xxv. 27) connects the conspiracy against him with that period it is clear that the defeat at Bethshemesh cannot have been the sole cause of the revolt against him. The passage in Chronicles may be taken to mean that the conspiracy was a judgment upon him for his idolatry, which may have well alienated the better disposed of his subjects. His death was acquiesced in by the whole nation, see xiv. 21.

³ His subjects.

⁴ Intro. p. xxi. A strong fortress. Amaziah flees to it for safety and security.

⁵ Means "chariot." Amaziah's body was conveyed back to Jerusalem in his own chariot.

⁶ The whole nation acquiesced in the removal of Amaziah.

⁷ Called Uzziah in Chronicles.

⁸ Fortified; restored the walls.

⁹ On the gulf of Akabah. Intro. p. xciii.

The subjugation of Edom by Amaziah had rendered it possible for Judah to reopen this trade route. (See p. xx).

¹⁰ Amaziah. So the fortifying of Elath was the first act of Azariah's reign.

CONCLUSION OF AMAZIAH'S REIGN.

It is clear that Jehoash king of Israel inflicted a very severe defeat upon Amaziah, that Amaziah was taken prisoner, and entered Jerusalem as a prisoner in the train of his triumphant captor (2 Chron. xxv. 23).

Jehoash also broke down the northern wall of the Jerusalem, and took hostages for the assurance of the submission of Judah.

It is therefore very probable that Amaziah, though nominally king, was under a kind of vassalage to Israel. This conjecture agrees with the description of the latter part of his reign. He "lived" (verse 17), i.e. he is not described as "reigning."

Jeroboam II. of Israel. His Conquests and Death.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES).

23 In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years. 24 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ^awho made Israel to sin. 25 He restored the ^bcoast of Israel from the ^centering of Hamath unto ^dthe sea ^eof ^fthe plain, according to the word of the LORD GOD of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant ^gJonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of ^hGath-hepher. 26 For the LORD saw ⁱthe affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there ^jwas not any ^kshut up, nor any ^lleft, nor any helper for Israel. 27 And the LORD ^msaid not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them ⁿby the hand of ^oJeroboam the son of Joash. 28 Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered ^pDamascus, and Hamath, ^qwhich belonged to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 29 And Jeroboam slept with his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and ^rZachariah his son reigned in his stead.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 113. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^d see R.V. and comment p. 112.

foretold on the house of Jehu is accomplished. His sons were to sit on the throne till the fourth generation and no longer (x. 30).

¹ In the course of this long reign he recovered the old boundaries of the kingdom promised to the Israelites on their entrance into Canaan (Josh. 1. 4).

He also reduced Moab (Amos vi. 14).

² Wherewith he made (see p. xxxiii.).

³ Border.

⁴ Intro. p. xvi. The northern pass giving entrance into Syria.

⁵ The Dead sea.

⁶ The Arabah. (Intro. p. lx.).

⁷ Intro. p. xiv.

⁸ Intro. p. xciv. A town near Nazareth in the tribe of Zebulon.

⁹ Refers to the oppression by Syria.

¹⁰ Left at large. There was not any one young or old, bond or free, great or small from whom they could expect assistance.

¹¹ Did not yet decree the destruction of the nation, but granted it deliverance.

¹² By means of.

¹³ For power and wealth the greatest king of Israel with, perhaps, the exception of Omri.

¹⁴ Damascus had been garrisoned by David, so that Jeroboam "recovered" what had once been the possession of Israel.

¹⁵ Had belonged, *i.e.* in David's time, also in Solomon's, and so described as having belonged to Judah. Jeroboam adds them to Israelite (*i.e.* the northern kingdom) territory for the first time.

¹⁶ The fourth in descent from Jehu, *viz.* Jehoahaz, Jehuash, Jeroboam II., Zachariah.

In this reign the judgment

The Reign of Azariah (Uzziah) King of Judah.

(2 CHRONICLES xxvi. 1-23.)

15. In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of Israel began ¹Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. ²Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem. And his ²mother's name was ³Jecholiah of Jerusalem. ³And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, ⁴according to all that his father Amaziah had done: ⁴Save that the ⁵high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places. ⁵And the LORD ⁶smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a ⁷several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the ⁸house, ⁹judging the people of the land. ⁶And the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? ⁷So Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

¹Called Uzziah, in verses 13, 30, 32, 34.

²The queen-mother (see p. 127).

³Intro. p. cviii.

⁴i.e. in the early part of the latter's reign. Azariah did not follow the idolatries brought from Edom (2 Chron. xxv. 14).

⁵But he did not remove the high places.

⁶For presuming to take upon himself the priest's office of burning incense.

⁷Separate, standing apart by itself.

⁸Household. Jotham was "regent" during the lifetime of Azariah.

⁹Exercised the royal function of administering justice in the land.

THE REIGN OF AZARIAH OR UZZIAH (as recorded in Chronicles).

1. He re fortified Elath (also in Kings).
2. His wars—
 - (a) With the Philistines. He captured and dismantled Gath, Jabneh and Ashdod, and established colonies of Jews, for whom he built cities in Philistia.
 - (b) With the Arabians of Gur-baal.
 - (c) With the Mehunims or Maonites.
3. Reduction of Ammon to a tributary state.
4. Strengthened the fortifications of Jerusalem.
5. Took measures for the improvement of agriculture and pasture, protecting the husbandmen by means of towers, which he built.
6. Re-organized the army. Equipped his forces with engines for the attack on towns.
7. Planted engines for casting stones on the walls of Jerusalem.
8. His sin in usurping priestly functions, presuming to offer incense

The Reign of Zachariah, King of Israel. End of the Jehu dynasty.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zachariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in Samaria ¹six months. 9 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ²*who made* Israel to sin. 10 And ³Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him ⁴before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. 11 And the rest of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. 12 This was the word of the LORD which ⁵he spake unto Jehu, saying, ⁶Thy sons shall sit on the throne of Israel unto the ⁷fourth generation. And so it came to pass.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 107.

¹ A short reign.

² Wherewith he made.

³ Intro. p. xvi. The only mention of his name.

⁴ Publicly, openly. So Jehu had slain Jehoram (ix. 24).

⁵ See ix. 30.

⁶ Jehu was rewarded for his extirpation of Baal worship, by being allowed to found a dynasty.

⁷ But as he did not remove the calf-worship that dynasty was to last for four generations only.

The Reign of Shallum. Murdered by Menahem.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

13 Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziiah king of Judah; and he reigned ¹a full month in Samaria. 14 For Menahem the son of Gadi went up from ²Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew him, and reigned in his stead. 15 And the rest of the acts of Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

¹ The space of a month. He had but a short career.

² Intro. p. ciii. A royal residence in the reign of Jeroboam I. (1 Kings xiv. 17).

Menahem probably marched from Tirzah to Samaria to avenge the death of Zachariah.

The Reign of Menahem.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

16 Then Menahem smote ¹Tiphsah, and all that were therein, and the ²coasts thereof ³from Tirzah: ⁴because they opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and ⁵all the women therein that were with child he ripped up.

17 In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah began Menahem ⁶the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and reigned ⁷ten years in Samaria. 18 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat ⁸who made Israel to sin. 19 And ⁹Pul the king of Assyria ¹⁰came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul ¹¹a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him ¹²to confirm the kingdom in his hand. 20 And Menahem ¹³exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man ¹⁴fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria ¹⁵turned back, and stayed not there in the land. 21 And the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? 22 And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 113. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 107.

Pul. On the identity of this monarch with Tiglath-pileser, see Intro. p. cxviii.

M

¹ Intro. p. cii. Thapsacus.

² Borders.

³ Menahem went through the land reducing the towns as he went.

⁴ Incensed at their resistance.

⁵ The only instance of such gross cruelty by any king of Israel. It marks the low state of morality in Israel at this period.

⁶ A Gadite.

⁷ He established his power with an iron rule, and left the kingdom to his son.

⁸ Wherewith he made.

⁹ Intro. p. lxxix.

¹⁰ Evidently he was invited by Menahem.

¹¹ A very large sum, about £375,000 (taking a shekel as 2s. 6d.), indicative of the wealth of the land.

¹² To establish Menahem on the throne as the vassal of Assyria.

¹³ Levied a forced contribution.

¹⁴ One talent = 3,000 shekels. So 60,000 wealthy men contributed. Israel was still a wealthy, prosperous country. 50 shekels = £6 5s. taking a shekel as 2s. 6d.

¹⁵ Menahem and Pul may have met at Thapsacus on the border, and made their arrangements there.

On Menahem's relations with Assyria (see p. xvi.).

The Reign of Pekahiah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

23 In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah ¹Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years. 24 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ²who made Israel to sin. 25 But Pekah the son of Remaliah, ³a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the ⁴palace of the king's ⁵house, with ⁶Argob and ⁷Arieh, and with him fifty men of the Gileadites: and he killed him, and reigned in his ⁸room. 26 And the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 115.

¹ Menahem's rule was strong, so Pekahiah succeeded him. He reigned two years only.

² Wherewith he made.

³ Only a captain, a subordinate officer.

⁴ Castle, i.e. the citadel of the palace, the keep.

⁵ Palace.

⁶ Intro. p. civ.

⁷ Intro. p. civ. The names indicate that these were from Gilead, Menahem was a Gadite. His body-guard would likely be composed of men of his own tribe. Argob and Arieh would be the officers of this body-guard.

⁸ Stead.

The conspiracy of Pekah meant that the party opposed to the Assyrian alliance had gained the upper hand. Those who favoured the Egyptian alliance displaced the party favourable to Assyria.

The Reign of Pekah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

27 In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. 28 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. 29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel ¹came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took ²Ijon, and ³Abel-beth-maachah, and ⁴Janoah, and ⁵Kedesh, and ⁶Hazor, and ⁷Gilead, and ⁸Galilee, ⁹all the land

¹ In answer to the appeal of Ahaz for assistance, (See xvi. 10).

² Intro. p. xcvi.

³ Intro. p. lxxxv.

⁴ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁵ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁶ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁷ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁸ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁹ Tiglath-pileser subdued the district north of the plain of Esdraelon.

of Naphtali, and ¹⁰carried them ¹¹cap-
tive to Assyria. 30 And Hoshea the
son of Elah made ^{12a}a conspiracy
against Pekah the son of Remaliah,
and smote him, and slew him, and
reigned in his stead, ¹³in the twentieth
year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. 31
And the rest of the acts of Pekah, and
all that he did, behold, they are
written in the book of the chronicles of
the kings of Israel.

The Reign of Jotham, King of Judah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXVII. 1-9.)

32 In the second year of Pekah the
son of Remaliah king of Israel began
Jotham the son of Uzziah king of
Judah to reign. 33 Five and twenty
years old was he when he began to
reign, and he reigned sixteen years in
Jerusalem. And his ¹mother's name
was Jerusha, the daughter of Zadok.
34 And he did that which was right in
the sight of the LORD: he did according
to ²all that his father Uzziah had done.
35 Howbeit the high places were not
removed: the people sacrificed and
burned incense still in the high places.
He ³built the ⁴higher gate of the house
of the LORD. 36 Now the rest of the
acts of Jotham, and all that he did,
are they not written in the book of the
chronicles of the kings of Judah? 37
In those days the LORD began to send
against Judah ⁵Rezin the king of Syria,
and Pekah the son of Remaliah. 38
And Jotham slept with his fathers, and
was buried with his fathers in the city
of David his father: and Ahaz his son
reigned in his stead.

The great invasion occurred in the reign of Ahaz (xvi. 5).

¹⁰Following the usual custom of Assyrian conquerors (see p. 84).

¹¹The first deportation.

¹²The party of Assyria now regains the upper hand and Hoshea removes Pekah.

¹³On the chronology (see p. 134). The statement in the verse is evidently inaccurate.

Additions to Jotham's reign in Chronicles.

(1) He restored the wall of Ophel as well as the gate of the Temple.

(2) He built cities in the hill country of Judah.

(3) He fought against the Ammonites and compelled them to pay tribute.

(4) He became mighty because he followed God.

¹The queen-mother (see p. 127).

²Save that he did not attempt to offer incense. "*Howbeit he entered not into the Temple of the Lord*" (2 Chron. xxvii. 2).

³Restored.

⁴Upper. On the northern or highest part of the Temple mount (Intro. p. lxiii.).

⁵Rezin now formed the plan of uniting Israel and Judah with Syria in combined resistance to Assyria. Pekah, the representative of the Egyptian party in Israel now guided the policy of Israel, and readily supported Rezin in forcing Judah to join the coalition.

Accession of Ahaz King of Judah. His Idolatry.

(2 CHRONICLES XXVIII. 1-4.)

16. In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. 2 Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father. 3 But he walked ¹in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass ²through the fire, according to the ³abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD ⁴cast out from before the children of Israel. 4 And ⁵he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under ⁶every green tree.

¹ Not the calf worship, it is thus explained in Chronicles, "Made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom" (2 Chron. xxviii. 2-3).

² i.e. to Moloch (see p. xlix.).

³ The foul rites of heathen worship.

⁴ The worship of Moloch was common amongst the Canaanites at the conquest of the land. In later times the worship of this god was confined to Moab and Ammon.

⁵ Not merely allowed his people to do so as other kings had done, but offered sacrifices himself.

⁶ Mentioned in Deut. xii. 2 as places where the heathen nations of Canaan selected as sites for their sacrifices.

The Expedition of Syria and Israel against Judah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXVIII. 5-21.)

5 Then ¹Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel ²came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but ³could not overcome him. 6 At that time Rezin king of Syria ⁴recovered Elath to Syria, and drave the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there unto this day. 7 So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am ⁵thy servant and ⁶thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which ⁷rise up against me. 8 And Ahaz ⁸took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the

¹ For details of the expedition see note below.

² The immediate object was the dethronement of Ahaz (see p. 63), the ulterior object was to unite Syria, Israel and Judah in a coalition against Assyria.

³ The fortifications of Jerusalem wisely strengthened by the two last kings could not be carried by the allies.

⁴ Rezin advanced on the east of Jordan, captured Elath, restored it to the Edomites and enlisted them as allies against Judah (see note below).

⁵ Tributary.

⁶ Vassal king.

⁷ Which are assailing.

The Edomites and Philistines had now joined in the attack on Judah (see p. 63), so Ahaz was in sore straits. ⁸ Without such tribute Ahaz would have appealed in vain to Assyria.

treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a ⁹present to the king of Assyria. 9 And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and ¹⁰took it, and carried the people of it captive to ¹¹Kir, and slew Rezin.

⁹Bribe or Tribute.

¹⁰The end of independence for Syria.

¹¹Intro. p. xxviii.

THE EXPEDITION OF REZIN AND PEKAH.

(See 2 Chronicles xxviii. 5-21. Isaiah vii., viii.)

The object. Dethronement of Ahaz, who was to be replaced on the throne by "*the son of Tabeal*" (Is. vii. 6).

This meant the extinction of the house of David.

So Isaiah is bidden to meet Ahaz at the conduit of the upper pool. At this meeting the prophet announces:

(1) The fall of Syria and Israel.

(2) Utters the Messianic prophecy, quoted in St. Matthew i., "*Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel*" (Is. vii. 14), as a sign of the deliverance of Judah from her foes.

Immanuel = God with us (St. Matt. i. 23). So the prophecy gives a sign of the continuance of the house of David, until the ultimate object of its continuance is fulfilled, viz. the birth of the Virgin's son, Jesus Christ, David's son, the King of God's Church, His spiritual Israel.

The Campaign. Rezin advanced on the east of Jordan as far as Elath, which he took and restored to the Edomites. Then the Edomites and the Philistines attacked Judah from the south-east and the south-west.

Pekah advanced from the north, met Ahaz in the field, and defeated him with a loss of 120,000 men (2 Chron. xxviii. 6).

The two kings then joined forces and besieged Ahaz in Jerusalem.

Failure. Jerusalem with fortifications restored by Uzziah and Jotham proved too strong to be captured.

Ahaz obtained the assistance of Tiglath-pileser, and the allies retired.

Pekah took with him 200,000 captives of Judah, but allowed them to return on the bidding of the prophet Oded, and the remonstrances of certain chiefs of Ephraim (2 Chron. xxviii. 8-15). It is clear from the words of the heads of Ephraim that the object of the expedition, viz. to extinguish the house of David, met with their disapproval.

10 And king Ahaz ¹went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw ²*an altar* that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to ³Urijah the priest the ⁴fashion of the altar, and the ⁵pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. 11 And Urijah the priest built ⁶an altar according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus: so Urijah the priest made it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. 12 And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king approached to the altar,

¹Either to thank him, or because summoned by the Assyrian king. The visit is mentioned for the purpose of accounting for the building of the altar by Ahaz.

²The altar, *i.e.* the one in the principal Temple at Damascus.

³Intro. p. cxvi. He is termed a faithful witness by Isaiah (Is. viii. 2).

⁴A sketch or drawing.

⁵A model.

⁶A reason given why Ahaz chose the altar. "*Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me*" (2 Chron. xxviii. 23).

and ⁷offered thereon. 13 And he burnt ⁸his burnt offering and his ^bmeat offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. 14 And he brought also the brasen altar, which was ⁹before the LORD, from the fore-front of the house, from ¹⁰between the altar and the house of the LORD, and ¹¹put it on the north side of ^cthe altar. 15 And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, ¹²Upon the ¹³great altar burn the ¹⁴morning burnt offering, and the evening meat offering, and the king's burnt sacrifice, and his ^bmeat offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their ^bmeat offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkled upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood of the sacrifice: and the brasen altar shall be for me ¹⁵to enquire by. 16 Thus ¹⁶did Urijah the priest, according to all that king Ahaz commanded. 17 And king Ahaz ¹⁷cut off the borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them; and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were under it, and ¹⁸put it upon a pavement of stones. 18 And the ^d19covert for the

⁷ Offerings in thanks for his prosperous return to Jerusalem.

⁸ On the different offerings, see p. 126.

⁹ Solomon's altar was directly in front of the temple porch, and equal to it in length. Ahaz moves it from this position, and replaces it by his new Assyrian altar.

¹⁰ Urijah had placed the new altar between the brasen altar and the court of the Temple, thus Solomon's altar when Ahaz came back would be between the new altar and the Temple.

¹¹ Solomon's altar is now placed between the new altar and the north wall.

¹² Ahaz orders that the offerings shall no longer be burnt upon the brasen altar erected by Solomon, but on the new altar made after the pattern of the one at Damascus.

¹³ Principal.—There is no idea of relative size. Assyrian altars were small compared with Jewish ones.

¹⁴ On the different offerings, see p. 126.

The meaning of these changes is that Solomon's brasen altar that had hitherto faced the entrance to the Temple, eastwards, was now removed to the north side of the new altar, so that the latter became the principal, if not the sole sacrificial altar.

¹⁵ For further consideration, viz. I will decide later on what shall be done with it, and shall not hereafter enquire of Jehovah.

¹⁶ In obsequious deference to King Ahaz, and in strong contrast with the manner in which Azariah the priest resisted king Azariah (Uzziah) when he attempted to offer incense (2 Chron. xxvi. 17-20).

¹⁷ Ahaz cuts out the bases from the lavers, and the oxen from the great laver called the sea (for description see p. lii.).

Two reasons are assigned—

1. To obtain money to pay the tribute to Assyria.

2. To lower them to accord with the height of the new altar.

The latter is the more probable, for the bases were not taken away till the Babylonian capture of Jerusalem (xv. 15).

The Assyrian altars were smaller than the Jewish altars. Solomon's altar was ascended by steps. Therefore we may assume that Ahaz made the alterations to suit his new altar.

¹⁸ Lowering it to the level of the pavement of the court.

¹⁹ Probably a canopied seat for the king and the royal princes, or some covered way.

sabbath that they had built ²⁰in the house, and the ²¹king's entry without, ^{e22}turned he from the house of the LORD ^{f23}for the king of Assyria. 19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 20 And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son reigned in his stead.

a see R.V. and comment p. 115. b see R.V. and comment p. 115. c see R.V. and comment p. 115. d see R.V. and comment p. 115. e see R.V. and comment p. 115. f see R.V. and comment p. 115.

²⁰The inner court of the Temple.

²¹A private way for the king from the outer court.

²²He removed them into the house of the Lord. According to Chronicles, Ahaz "shut up the doors of the house of Jehovah," and "made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem."

²³Because of the king of Assyria.

NOTE ON VERSE 18. WHAT DID AHAZ DO? WHY DID HE DO IT?

What he did.

He removed "the covert for the sabbath," and "the king's entry without," and placed them in the inner precincts of the Temple.

What were these? We can only conjecture. It is most probable that "the covert of the Sabbath" was a seat or stand with a canopy or covering intended for the use of the king and royal family when attending the Temple services on the Sabbath, and that it looked upon the inner or priest's court of the Temple. It may equally have been a "covered way," as translated in R.V.

The "king's entry from without" may be a private entrance to this seat or stand from or through the outer court.

Why did he do it?

Because of the king of Assyria. That is clear. But was it to clear the inner court of all connected with the worship of Jehovah? This is in agreement with the account in Chronicles that Ahaz "shut up the doors of the house of Jehovah." If this was his intention, it is clear that Ahaz wished to please the king of Assyria, by adopting a worship in conformity to the practices of Assyria. This is what we could well expect from a king who "made altars in every corner of Jerusalem," and erected high places to other gods in every city of Judah. These altars and these gods would be Assyrian altars and Assyrian gods.

Another suggestion that he acted in fear, lest the king of Assyria should demand that these valuable things should be sent to him. This is the explanation, generally given, but there is little confirmation to support this view. Any Assyrian representative in Jerusalem would certainly have known of their existence, and as the bases were not sent, for they were there in the time of Nebuchadnezzar, it is most improbable that Ahaz acted in fear of losing them.

It is better to conclude that Ahaz had definitely abandoned the worship of Jehovah, and closed the Temple.

The Reign of Hoshea. Israel carried away Captive.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

17. In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. 2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, ¹but not

¹See footnote.

as the kings of Israel that were before him. **3** Against him came up ²Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became ³his servant, and ⁴gave him presents. **4** And the king of Assyria ⁵found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to ⁶So king of Egypt, and ⁷brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria ⁸shut him up, and ⁹bound him in prison. **5** Then the king of Assyria ¹⁰came up throughout all the land, and went up to ¹¹Samaria, and besieged it ¹²three years. **6** In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and ¹³carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in ¹⁴Halah and in ¹⁵Habor ^aby the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

^a See R.V. and comment p. 115.

¹⁵Intro. p. xcvi. On Habor the river Gozan, see p. xcvi.

Note of verse 2.

In Chronicles it is recorded that Hezekiah, king of Judah, sent messages throughout the land of Israel, to invite the Ten Tribes to Jerusalem to the Passover (2 Chronicles xxx. 5-11). This would never have been allowed by Jeroboam, Baasha, Abab, Jehu or any other king of Israel, whose policy had been to prevent their subjects from having any religious communion with Jerusalem. The calf worship was specially intended to prevent Israelites going up to Jerusalem for religious ceremonies.

The Sins for which Israel was carried into Captivity.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

7 For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, ¹which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods. **8** And ²walked in the statutes ³of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and ⁴of the kings of Israel, which they had made. **9** And

²Intro. p. lxxxi. The successor of Tiglath-pileser.

³Vassal king.

⁴Paid him tribute.

⁵Detected him intriguing with Egypt against Assyria.

⁶Intro. p. lxxviii. Egypt is the rival of Assyria for supremacy in Asia.

⁷Paid no tribute.

⁸Put him in prison.

⁹He was in chains in the prison.

¹⁰The usual practice of the Assyrians, viz. to reduce all the minor towns first and then to attack the capital.

¹¹Actually taken by Sargon the successor of Shalmaneser, see p. lxxxi.

¹²Samaria held out longer than Jerusalem.

¹³The practice of Assyria was to deport the conquered population, and to re-peopel the country by colonists from other parts.

¹⁴Intro. p. xcvi. On the Tigris, near Nineveh.

¹Mentioned as a reason why Israel should have been faithful to the great God who had delivered them from the Egyptian oppressions.

²This is a reference to the sins of Israel in the days of the Judges.

³Two classes of idolatries.

(1) Those of the heathen nations (see below).

(2) Those introduced by their own kings (see below).

the children of Israel ⁴did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the ⁵tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. 10 And they set them up ⁶images and ⁷groves in every high hill, and under every green tree: 11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did ⁸the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: 12 For they served idols whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. 13 Yet the LORD testified ⁹against Israel, and ⁹against ¹⁰Judah, by ¹¹all the prophets, and by ¹²all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets. 14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their ¹³necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God. 15 And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he had made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed ¹⁴vanity, and became ¹⁵vain, and went after the ¹⁶heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them, that they should not do like them. 16 And they ¹⁷left all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a ¹⁸grove, and worshipped ¹⁹all the host of heaven, and served Baal. 17

⁴ *Lit. covered, i.e. disguised their idolatry with the pretence that it was a worship of Jehovah. This was specially true of the calf-worship.*

⁶ See p. 121. Here mentioned as the smallest and most solitary of human habitations in opposition to a large and fortified city.

= All; both those in the most solitary and those in the most populous places.

⁶ Pillars.

⁷ Asherahs.

⁸ The nations.

⁹ Unto i.e. warned both Israel and Judah.

¹⁰ Though the writer is mainly concerned with the sins of Israel as justifying their punishment by Jehovah, he cautions Judah also, for the sins of Judah were similar to those of Israel and merited a like punishment.

¹¹ Every prophet.

¹² Every seer.

¹³ Neck. Israel is represented as a "stiff-necked" obstinate people.

¹⁴ Worthlessness. Heathen idols were nothing, powerless and worthless.

¹⁵ Their worshippers are like the idols, worthless and powerless.

¹⁶ The nations.

¹⁷ Forsook.

¹⁸ An Asherah.

¹⁹ The heavenly bodies: sun, moon and stars.

And they caused their sons and their daughters ²⁰to pass through the fire, and used ²¹divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. 18 Therefore the LORD was very angry with Israel, and ²²removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. 19 Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. 20 And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of ²³spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. 21 For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made ²⁴Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them ²⁵sin a great sin. 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did, ²⁶they departed not from them; 23 Until the LORD ²⁷removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said ²⁸by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to ²⁹Assyria unto this day.

a see R.V. and comment p. 107. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 114.

Idoltrous practices of heathen nations adopted by Israel.

- (1) High places (verses 9-11).
- (2) Images and groves (verse 10) = the Baalim and the Asherah (verse 10).
- (3) Causing their children to pass through fire to Moloch (verse 17).
- (4) The practice of divination and enchantment (verse 17).

Idoltrous practices introduced by their own kings.

- (1) Forsaking the commandment of Jehovah (v. 16).
- (2) Setting up the calf-worship (verse 16).
- (3) Baal worship, introduced by Ahab (v. 16). This would include the Asherah or worship of Ashtoreth, introduced at the same time, and the worship of the heavenly bodies.

²⁰ A reference to the worship of Moloch.

²¹ See note p. 121.

²² *i.e.* caused them to be deported out of Canaan, God's own land. Thus the phrase is founded upon the idea of local deities (see p. xviii.).

²³ **Plunderers.** Those who took their land, their cities or carried off their wealth.

²⁴ The first spoiler. He caused the ten tribes to reject the rule of the house of David. Between Jeroboam and Assyria came many spoilers.

²⁵ The calf-worship (Intro. p. xxxii.). The strong language here used is only another indication of how grievous was the sin of the calf-worship.

²⁶ Every king of Israel maintained the calf-worship, no matter what religious reform he introduced.

²⁷ Caused Israel to be deported (see verse 18).

²⁸ For the prophets of Israel see pp. xxxv.—xlv.

²⁹ Assyria was the last spoiler.

The New Settlers in Samaria. The Mixed Character of their Worship.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

24 And the ¹king of Assyria brought men from ²Babylon, and from ³Cuthah, and from ⁴Ava, and from ⁵Hamath, and from ⁶Sepharvaim, and ⁷placed them in the cities of Samaria instead ⁸of the children of Israel: and ⁹they possessed Samaria, and ¹⁰dwelt in the cities thereof. 25 And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent ¹¹lions among them, which slew some of them. 26 Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast ¹²removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the ¹³manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, ¹⁴because they know not the manner of the God of the land. 27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, ¹⁵Carry thither ¹⁶one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let ¹⁷them go and dwell there, and let ¹⁸him teach them the ¹⁹manner of the God of the land. 28 Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in ²⁰Beth-el, and ²¹taught them how they should fear the LORD. 29 Howbeit every nation ²²made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the ²³Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they ²⁴dwelt. 30 And the men of Babylon made ²⁵Succoth-

¹ Sargon (see p. lxxxi.).

² Intro. p. lxxviii.

³ Intro. p. xci.

⁴ Intro. p. lxxviii.

⁵ Intro. p. xvi.

⁶ Intro. p. cli.

⁷ Made them to dwell.

⁸ *i.e.* of those deported to Assyria (see verse 5). Some Israelites however would be left behind.

⁹ Esar-haddon added to these colonists (Ezra iv. 2).

¹⁰ The origin of the Samaritans (see p. lxxiii.).

¹¹ Lions and other wild beasts had increased in number owing to the depopulation of the land.

¹² Carried away.

¹³ Worship, *i.e.* the manner in which his worship should be conducted.

¹⁴ The colonists attribute the depredation of the lions to some neglect in the worship of the god of the land.

¹⁵ Cause to go.

¹⁶ He would be one of the priests of the calf-worship.

¹⁷ *i.e.* the priest and those attendant upon him.

¹⁸ The priest would be the teacher.

¹⁹ Worship.

²⁰ The chief seat of the calf-worship. The priest would teach this worship as the only national worship of the Northern Kingdom.

²¹ Was teaching, *i.e.* continued to teach. The work was permanent.

²² The worship of other gods was not abandoned. The colonists merely added the worship of Jehovah as the god of the land to the worship of their own national deities.

²³ The Israelites inhabiting the Northern Kingdom, not the newcomers. The latter found the high places ready for their worship.

²⁴ Were dwelling.

²⁵ Intro. p. l.

benoth, and the men of Cuth made
²⁶Nergal, and the men of Hamath made
²⁷Ashima. 31 And the Avites made
²⁸Nibhaz and ²⁹Tartak, and the Sephar-
vites burnt their children in fire to
³⁰Adrammelech and ³¹Anammelech, the
gods of Sepharvaim. 32 So they feared
the LORD, and ³²made unto themselves
³²of the lowest of them priests of the high
places which sacrificed for them in the
³³houses of the high places. 33 They
feared the LORD, and served their own
gods, after the manner of the nations
³⁴whom they carried away from thence.
34 Unto this day they ³⁵do after the
former manners: they ³⁶fear not the
LORD, neither ³⁷do they after ³⁸their
statutes, or after their ordinances, or
after the law and commandment which
the LORD commanded the children of
Jacob, whom he ³⁹named Israel; 35
With whom the LORD had made a
covenant, and charged them, saying,
Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow
yourselves to them, nor serve them,
nor sacrifice to them: 36 But the
LORD, who brought you up out of the
land of Egypt with great power and
a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear,
and him shall ye worship, and ⁴⁰to him
shall ye do sacrifice. 37 And the
statutes, and the ordinances, and the
law, and the commandment, which he
wrote for you, ye shall observe to do
for evermore; and ye shall not fear
other gods. 38 And the covenant that
I have made with you ye shall not for-
get; neither shall ye fear other gods.
39 But the LORD your God ye shall
fear; and he shall deliver you out of
the hands of all your enemies. 40

²⁶Intro. p. 1.

²⁷Intro. p. 1.

²⁸Intro. p. 1.

²⁹Intro. p. 1.

³⁰Intro. p. 1.

³¹Intro. p. 1.

³²From all ranks, i.e. not confining the priesthood to one particular tribe or family. An indication that it was a restoration of the calf-worship.

³³Not merely altars, but temples erected on the high places.

³⁴From whom they had been carried away.

³⁵They kept up the religious practices of the first colonists.

³⁶The dread of the lions caused them to adopt Jehovah as a god, but they also served their own gods, i.e. made them the principal object of their worship.

³⁷These colonists worshipped Jehovah merely as the local god of the land; they did not receive him as the one and only God.

³⁸i.e. the statutes and ordinances of the children of Jacob.

³⁹See Gen. xxxii. 28.

⁴⁰Unto him ye shall bow yourselves (see verse 35).

Howbeit they did not hearken, but they ⁴¹did after their former manner. 41 So these nations feared the LORD, and served their ⁴²graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they ⁴³unto this day.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 116. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 116.

Accession of Hezekiah. Religious Reform. Success in War.

(2 CHRONICLES XXIX.-XXXI.)

18. Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. 2 Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name also was ¹Abi, the daughter of Zachariah. 3 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, ²according to all that David his father did. 4 He ³removed the high places, and ⁴brake ^athe images, and cut down ^bthe ⁵groves, and brake in pieces the ⁶brassen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called ⁷it Nehushtan. 5 He trusted in the LORD God of Israel, ⁸so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. 6 For he ⁹clave to the LORD, and ¹⁰departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. 7 And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever ¹¹he went forth: and he ¹²rebelled against the king of Assyria, and ¹³served him not.

⁴¹ Were doing, *i.e.* continued to keep up the religious customs of the first colonists.

⁴² For the devices under which the gods mentioned in verse 31 were worshipped (see p. 1.).

⁴³ *i.e.* to the time of writing the Book of Kings. At a later period the Samaritans practised worship of Jehovah, based upon the Pentateuch (see p. lxxiv.).

¹ A contraction of Abijah in Chronicles. The queen-mother.

² Asa, Hezekiah, and Josiah are the only kings thus described.

Object of Reform—the centralization and purification of the worship of Jehovah.

³ No sacrifices were to be offered to Jehovah except at Jerusalem.

⁴ Shattered the pillars.

⁵ The Asherah.

⁶ See p. 125, Num. xxi. 4-9. Now an object of superstitious worship.

⁷ A brazen thing, *i.e.* a mere piece of brass (see p. 125).

⁸ Compare the eulogy on Josiah in xxxiii. 25.

Hezekiah is noted for his trust in Jehovah.

Josiah is remarkable for his strict observance of the Mosaic laws.

⁹ Held fast.

¹⁰ Served Jehovah all his life: Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash and Amaziah fell into sin in the concluding years of their reign. Hezekiah remained firm in his worship of Jehovah to the end of his days.

¹¹ *i.e.* when he went to war. He was successful in his military undertakings.

¹² Refused to pay the annual tribute to Assyria.

¹³ Was no longer a vassal king to Assyria.

8 He smote the ¹⁴Philistines, even unto ¹⁵Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the ¹⁶tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

a see R.V. and comment p. 107. b see R.V. and comment p. 114.

¹⁴ Possibly after the retreat of Sennacherib.

¹⁵ Intro. p. xciv.

¹⁶ All; those in the most solitary and those in the most populous places (see note xvii. 9).

THE RELIGIOUS REFORM OF HEZEKIAH (2 Chronicles xxix.-xxxi.).

1. Reopening and purifying of the Temple which had been shut up by Ahaz.
2. All idolatrous vessels, etc. (*all uncleanness*) removed from the temple and cast into the Kidron.
3. The vessels cast away or cut up by Ahaz were restored.
4. Solemn renewal of the Temple services, with regulations for the musical services.
5. A grand passover-feast to which all Judah and Israel were invited from Beersheba to Dan, posts being sent through the Northern Kingdom to announce the feast. Many in Israel mocked at the invitation, but some from the tribes of Asher, Manasseh and Zebulun came up to the feast. The feast was prolonged for another seven days.
6. After the passover all idolatrous altars and images were broken down in Judah, Benjamin and in Ephraim and Manasseh, *i.e.*, those parts of Israel nearest to Judah.
7. Arrangements were made for proper courses of priests and Levites. The tithes were restored under duly appointed officials.

The Captivity of Israel.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and ¹besieged it. 10 And at the end of three years ²they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. 11 And the king of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria, and put them in ³Halah and in ⁴Habor *aby* the river of ⁵Gozan, and in the ⁶cities of the Medes: 12 Because ⁷they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, and all that Moses ⁸the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.

a see R.V. and comment p. 115.

¹ Intro. p. xcvi.

² Intro. p. xvii., 24, 69.

This passage is another account of the captivity of Israel (see xvii. 5-8).

The writer may have transcribed this section from the chronicles of the kings of Judah, or may have repeated the narrative because of its great importance in the history of the two kingdoms. The insertion in the present place intensifies the contrast between the utter destruction of the more powerful but idolatrous Northern Kingdom, and the preservation of the weaker and smaller Judah. Judah is saved because of Hezekiah's trust in Jehovah.

¹ The siege was commenced by Shalmaneser, but the city was actually taken by Sargon his successor (see p. lxxxii.).

² The Assyrians.

³ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁴ Intro. p. xcvi.

⁷ The last mention of the Ten Northern Tribes.

⁸ The servant of Jehovah.

The Invasion of Sennacherib.

13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did ¹Sennacherib king of Assyria ²come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and ³took them. 14 And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to ⁴Lachish, saying, I have ⁵offended; ⁶return from me: ⁷that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah ⁸three hundred talents of silver and ⁹thirty talents of gold. 15 And Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. 16 At that time did Hezekiah ¹⁰cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the ¹¹pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

a See R. V. and comment p. 116.

¹⁰ Stripped off the gold with which he had plated the doors. This paid the thirty talents of gold.

¹¹ Door posts.

On the invasion of Sennacherib see Intro. p. lxxxiii.

¹ Intro. p. lxxxi. Son and successor of Sargon.

² His object is Egypt, but he must reduce Judah, to make his left flank secure (see p. lx.).

³ The usual custom of Assyrian conquerors to reduce all the minor cities to prevent assistance being sent to the capital. Jerusalem was actually besieged (see below).

⁴ Intro. p. xcix. Which the main army of Assyria was besieging.

⁵ In refusing tribute (verse 7), and in throwing off the yoke of vassalage to Assyria (verse 13).

⁶ Retire from me; withdraw thy troops.

⁷ Will pay what tribute you may assign.

⁸ £112,500, taking a shekel at 2s. 6d. (see p. 131).

⁹ £202,500, taking a talent at £6,750 (see p. 131).

HEZEKIAH'S MEASURES FOR THE DEFENCE OF JERUSALEM.

(2 Chronicles xxxii. 2-8. Isaiah xxii. 8-11.)

1. He stopped "the waters of the fountains which were without the city," in order to deprive the besiegers of water supply.
2. Built up the broken wall, made another wall without, and repaired the Millo.
3. Renewed the supplies of weapons.

The Mission of Rab-shakeh.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXII. 9-12. ISAIAH XXXVI. 2-10.)

17 And the king of Assyria sent ¹Tartan and ²Rabsaris and ³Rab-shakeh from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they

These are all official titles.

¹ Intro. p. cxvi. The Tartan, probably the commander-in-chief.

² Chief of the eunuchs (see p. cxv.).

³ Chief of the cup-bearers (see p. cxv.).

came and stood by the conduit of the ⁴upper pool which is in the highway of the ⁵fuller's field. 18 And when they ⁶had called to the king, there came out to them ⁷Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and ⁸Shebna the scribe, and ⁹Joah the son of Asaph the recorder. 19 And Rabshakeh said unto them, Speak ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith ¹⁰the great king, the king of Assyria, ¹¹What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? ²⁰Thou sayest, (but they are but ¹²vain words,) I have counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou rebellest against me? ²¹Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this ¹³bruised reed, even upon ¹⁴Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is ¹⁵Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. ²²But if ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, ¹⁶whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? ²³Now therefore, I pray thee, ¹⁷give pledges to my lord the king of Assyria, and I will deliver thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set ¹⁸riders upon them. ²⁴How then wilt thou turn away the ¹⁹face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and ²⁰put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? ²⁵Am I now come up without the LORD against this place to destroy it? The LORD said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it.

⁴The upper Gihon on the west of Jerusalem (see p. lxiil).

⁵A trade carried on outside the city, and near the pool for the convenience of the water.

⁶They demanded a parley with the king. Hezekiah sent his three chief ministers.

⁷Intro. p. civ. The controller of the palace.

⁸Intro. p. cxvi. Secretary of state (see p. 129). He had formerly held the office now filled by Eliakim, but had been degraded (Isaiah xxiii. 15-21).

⁹Intro. p. cviii. The chronicler or remembrancer.

¹⁰The favourite title of the kings of Assyria, marking the distinction between themselves and vassal kings.

¹¹Rabshakeh disposes of the only three possible grounds of confidence.

(1) Egypt (v. 21), a false hope, unreliable.

(2) Jehovah. He will not aid them for Hezekiah has destroyed his altars.

(3) The army of Judah, insignificant compared with the forces of Assyria.

¹²A word of the lip, not of the heart, i.e. insincere.

¹³An appropriate figure, taken from the reeds of the Nile.

Cracked or flawed—i.e. splitting when leant upon and piercing the hand.

¹⁴Egypt proved to be an unreliable ally.

¹⁵The Bible name for all kings of Egypt.

¹⁶Evidently Rabshakeh knew of the religious reform instituted by Hezekiah. He would imagine that the removal of the high places would provoke the anger of Jehovah, not secure his favour. Many in Judah would have regarded Hezekiah's reform with disfavour. The allusion is calculated to cause them to waver in their loyalty to Hezekiah.

- ¹⁷ Pledge yourself, i.e. if you will find the men, we will find the horses. I can safely make the offer for there are not 2,000 of your army able to act as cavalry (R.V. in margin renders, "make a wager with").
- ¹⁸ Trained riders, i.e. not 2,000 men in Judah able to serve as cavalry.
- ¹⁹ If you cannot muster 2,000 cavalry, how can you meet in the field a simple inferior captain of Assyria, not to mention the whole of our host.
- ²⁰ What folly to trust to Egypt since you are so weak in cavalry and chariots. Rabshakeh boldly assumes that he is working the will of Jehovah upon Judah. It is possible that he had heard of the prophecies of Isaiah, threatening Judah with desolation by the Assyrians. If the people thought of these prophecies they might well be terrified at this assertion made by Rab-shakeh.

The Insolent Language of Rab-shakeh. His Address to the People on the Wall.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXII. 13-19. ISAIAH XXXVI. 11-22.)

26 Then said Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rab-skakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the ¹Syrian language; for we understand it: and ²talk not with us in the Jews' language in the ears of ³the people that are on the wall. 27 But Rab-shakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? hath he not sent me to the men which sit on the wall, that ⁴they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piss with you? 28 Then Rab-shakeh ⁵stood and cried with ⁶a loud voice in the ⁷Jews' language, and spake, saying, ⁸Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria: 29 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah ⁹deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand: 30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be ¹⁰delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. 31 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, ¹¹Make an agreement with me by a present, and

¹ Aramaic, the language of Assyria. Also the language of commerce and diplomacy of the time, so would be understood by the officials of Hezekiah's court.

² Speak not to us in Hebrew.

⁸ Who had gathered on the wall to hear what was being said.

⁴ Descriptive of the dire straits to which they would be reduced by famine.

⁵ Advanced nearer to the wall.

⁸ That the people might hear. Rab-shakeh desires to weaken their loyalty to Hezekiah.

⁷ Hebrew language.

⁹ Addressing the people.

⁹ Lead you astray, by pretending to be able to defend the city, or by inducing you to rely upon Jehovah.

¹⁰ Yielded up.

¹¹ Make peace with me.

¹²come out to me, and then ¹³eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his ¹⁴cistern: 32 Until I come and ¹⁵take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, ¹⁶that ye may live and ¹⁷not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. 33 Hath any of the gods of the nations ¹⁸delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 34 Where are the gods of ¹⁹Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand? 35 Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the ²⁰LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand? 36 But the people held their peace, and answered him not a word: for the king's commandment was, saying, ²¹Answer him not. 37 Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder to Hezekiah ²²with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rab-shakeh.

a see R.V. and comment p. 116.

¹²Open the gates and surrender yourselves.

¹³Enjoy a time of quiet prosperity. Those who had taken refuge in Jerusalem are invited to return to their farms.

¹⁴The pit or well of the water supply.

¹⁵Surrender carried with it deportation according to the Assyrian practice. A peaceable surrender would ensure good treatment.

¹⁶He promises all this to induce the people to surrender.

¹⁷A stubborn defence meant the starvation of the defenders.

¹⁸Implying the impotence of the gods of other nations to defend their countries against Assyria.

¹⁹These are cities or districts conquered by Assyria. Their populations had been deported as colonists to Samaria (xvii. 24). This fact would be well known in Jerusalem.

²⁰Jehovah is naturally regarded as a local deity by the heathen Rab-shakeh (see p. xlviii.).

²¹For two reasons:—

(1) To prevent Rab-shakeh saying anything further.

(2) To leave him uncertain as to what impression he had made upon the people.

²²In horror at the blasphemous words of Rab-shakeh.

Hezekiah appeals to Isaiah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES. ISAIAH XXVII. 1-7.)

19. And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he ¹rent his clothes, and covered himself with sack-cloth, and ²went into the house of the

¹Signs of humiliation.

²To pray to Jehovah.

LORD. 2 And he ³sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to ⁴Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. 3 And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is ⁵a day of trouble, and ⁶of rebuke, and ⁷blasphemy: ⁸for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. 4 It may be the ⁹LORD thy God will ¹⁰hear all the words of Rab-shakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach ¹¹the living God; and ¹²will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore ¹³lift up thy ¹⁴prayer for ¹⁵the remnant that are left. 5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hath heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. 7 Behold ¹⁶I will ¹⁷send a blast upon him, and he shall hear ¹⁸a rumour, and shall ¹⁹return to his own land; and I will cause him ¹⁹to fall by the sword in his own land.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 116.

¹⁹ Fulfilled by his assassination by his own sons (see verse 37).

³ Hezekiah might have been struck with the claim of Rabshakeh to be under commission from Jehovah. Are the prophecies of Isaiah to be fulfilled? A grave reason why Isaiah should be consulted.

⁴ Who had probably encouraged the king to resistance. Hezekiah now consults the prophet.

⁵ Threatened by the vast forces of Assyria.

⁶ Chastisement for our sins.

⁷ The claim of Rabshakeh to act for Jehovah.

⁸ All our own efforts must prove abortive and useless. The figure denotes extreme danger, and no strength to meet it.

⁹ Jehovah is the only source of refuge left to Hezekiah.

¹⁰ Observe, take notice of.

¹¹ In contrast to the lifeless idols of the heathen.

¹² Will punish Sennacherib for his words.

¹³ *i.e.* to heaven.

¹⁴ The king desires the prayers of the prophet.

¹⁵ Most of the fenced cities of Judah had been taken. Jerusalem is the remnant left.

¹⁶ I will put a spirit in him, *i.e.* of despondency which shall cause him to abandon the expedition.

¹⁷ The report of the approach of the king of Ethiopia.

¹⁸ See verse 36.

The Letter of Sennacherib to Hezekiah.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXII. 17. ISATAH XXXVII. 8-13.)

8 So Rab-shakeh ¹returned, and found the king of Assyria ²warring against ³Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from ⁴Lachish. 9 And when he heard say of ⁵Tirhakah king of ⁶Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to

¹ Making for Lachish.

² Besieging.

³ Intro. p. xcix

⁴ Lachish, a very strong fortress, had resisted the attempt of Sennacherib to reduce it.

⁵ Intro. p. lxxviii. The last king of the Ethiopian dynasty.

⁶ Intro. p. lxxviii. The modern Soudan.

fight against thee: he sent ⁷messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, ¹⁰Thus ⁸shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God in whom thou trustest ⁹deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be ¹⁰delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria. ¹¹Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to ¹¹all lands, by destroying them utterly: and ¹²shalt thou be delivered? ¹²Have the ¹³gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as ¹⁴Gozan, and ¹⁵Haran, and ¹⁶Rezeph, and the children of ¹⁷Eden which were in ¹⁸Thelasar? ¹³Where is the ¹⁹king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?

⁷They now bear a letter. Sennacherib can spare no force to go against Jerusalem.

⁸Verses 10-13 tell the contents of the letter.

⁹Lead you astray.

¹⁰Yielded up.

¹¹An allusion to the uninterrupted successes of Sargon and Sennacherib.

¹²*i.e.* can a small state like Judah hope to make a successful resistance.

¹³Again alluding to the impotence of Jehovah, the local god of Israel, as Sennacherib would regard him.

¹⁴Intro. p. xvi.

¹⁵Intro. p. xvi.

¹⁶Intro. p. ci.

¹⁷Intro. p. xxi.

¹⁸Intro. p. cii.

¹⁹See notes on xvii. 34.

Hezekiah Spreads the Letter before the Lord. His Prayer for Deliverance.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXII. 20. ISAIAH XXXVII. 14-20.)

¹⁴And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the messengers, and read it: and ¹Hezekiah went up into the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. ¹⁵And ²Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD God of Israel, which ³dwestest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. ¹⁶LORD, ⁴bow down thine ear, and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, ⁵which hath sent him to reproach the ⁶living God. ¹⁷⁷Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have ⁸destroyed the nations and their lands,

¹Hezekiah prays to Jehovah for help.

²According to Chronicles Isaiah joined with Hezekiah in the prayer.

³A reference to the *Shechinah* or visible manifestation of the presence of Jehovah, which occasionally appeared and always above the mercy-seat, between the cherubims whose wings were spread over the Ark.

⁴Incline thine ear.

⁵Which he hath sent.

⁶In contrast to the lifeless idols of the heathen.

⁷The boast of Sennacherib is true.

⁸Laid waste.

18 And ⁹have cast their gods into the fire: for they were ¹⁰no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beseech thee, save thou us ¹¹out of his hand, that ¹²all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

¹¹ Out of the hand of Sennacherib.

¹² The challenge of Sennacherib as regards Jehovah, if met by a deliverance wrought by Jehovah for Israel, would be a striking proof to all heathen nations of the might of Jehovah, the God of Israel.

⁹ The usual custom of the Assyrians. Symbolical of the triumph of the gods of Assyria over the gods of the conquered nations. Rab-shakeh might well say "Where are the gods of Hamath?" for the Assyrians had destroyed them.

¹⁰ Merely lifeless images. This is the explanation of the victories of Assyria.

The Reply of Jehovah through Isaiah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES. ISAIAH XXXVII. 21-35.)

20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, ¹That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. 21 This is the word that the LORD hath spoken concerning ²him, ³The ⁴virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; ⁵the daughter of Jerusalem ⁶hath shaken her head at thee. 22 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the ⁷Holy One of Israel. 23 By thy ⁸messengers thou hast reproached the LORD, and ⁹hast said, With the multitude of my ¹⁰chariots I ¹¹am come up to the height of the mountains, ¹²to the sides of ¹³Lebanon, and will cut down the ¹⁴tall cedar trees thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into ¹⁵the lodgings of his borders, and ¹⁶into the forest of his Carmel. 24 I ¹⁷have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my

¹ Whereas.

² Sennacherib.

³ The virgin daughter, Zion.

⁴ Virgin, because it had never been captured.

⁵ Inhabitants of Jerusalem.

⁶ A gesture of scorn.

⁷ A favourite expression of Isaiah. He uses it twenty-seven times whilst it occurs five times only elsewhere in the old Testament.

⁸ Tartan, Rabaris and Rab-shakeh.

⁹ Isaiah puts into words the thoughts of Sennacherib's heart when he wrote the letter.

¹⁰ In which lay the great strength of the Assyrian forces.

¹¹ I have ascended lofty mountains.

¹² To the summits of.

¹³ The mountains of Lebanon are the northern bulwarks of Palestine.

¹⁴ Figurative of the great kings who had fallen before him.

¹⁵ His farthest lodging places, i.e. I will ravage the whole land.

¹⁶ Pleasure garden or park, see p. 116.

Verse 23 pictures the intended desolation of the whole land by Sennacherib.

¹⁷ I have digged wells in the deserts I have crossed,

feet have I dried up all the ¹⁸rivers of *besieged places*. ²⁵Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, ¹⁹that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. ²⁶²⁰Therefore their inhabitants were of ²¹small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were ²²as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the ²³grass on the house tops, and as corn ²⁴blasted before it be grown up. ²⁷But I know thy ²⁵abode, and thy ²⁶going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me. ²⁸Because *thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up* into mine ears, therefore I will ²⁸put my hook in thy nose, and ²⁹my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way ³⁰by which thou camest. ²⁹And this shall be a sign unto ³¹thee, Ye shall eat this year ³²such things as grow of themselves, and in the second year ³³that which springeth of the same; and in the ³⁴third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruits thereof. ³⁰And the ³⁵remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take ³⁶root downward, and bear fruit upward. ³¹For ³⁷out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion :

¹⁸Rivers of Egypt, i.e. have crossed these obstacles as easily as if they had been dry land.

Verses ²³, ²⁴ may be summed up. I (Sennacherib) will pass over mountains, will traverse deserts, will cross rivers.

¹⁹Sennacherib's triumphs are not due to his own might, but to the purpose of Jehovah long decreed that he should be the instrument of His anger upon Israel for their sins.

²⁰i.e. because of my decree, not because of thy power.

²¹Of short hand, i.e. without power to make a successful resistance.

²²Figures of short-lived frailty.

²³Fading quickly because it has no depth of soil.

²⁴Blighted before it makes its stalk.

²⁵Sitting down, i.e. dwelling place.

²⁶All thy actions (see p. 122).

i.e. all is known to Jehovah, viz. his dwelling, his actions, and his motives.

²⁷Thine arrogance.

²⁸As a wild beast is led by a cord attached to a ring in its nose.

From ancient sculptures it would appear that Assyrian conquerors often treated captives in this manner, see p. 123.

²⁹Guiding thee as a horse compelled to follow the directions of his rider.

³⁰Sennacherib had boasted of how he would conquer Egypt. God decrees that he shall return to Assyria and not again invade Judah.

³¹Hozekiah.

²²Though the land had been laid waste sufficient would be produced of itself to sustain the people of the land.

²³The same would happen the second year, i.e. for two years or thereabouts the Assyrians would occupy the land.

²⁴In this year the ordinary methods of husbandry could be resumed, for the Assyrians would have retired. Hence the deliverance of Judah took place some two years after the announcement by Isaiah. (See note on p. 82).

²⁵The remnant of the crops (verse 29), is symbolical of the revival of Judah.

²⁶Just as seed when sown first takes root and then grows up and bears fruit.

²⁷The people in Jerusalem shall go out of the city, reoccupy and restore the land. Many of those inhabiting rural districts had taken refuge in Jerusalem. They would be free to go back to their homes.

³⁸the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall do this. 32 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not ³⁹come into this city, nor ⁴⁰shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a ⁴¹bank against it. 33 By ⁴²the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. 34 For I will ⁴³defend this city, to save it, ⁴⁴for mine own sake, ⁴⁵and for my servant David's sake.

a see R.V. and comment p. 116. *b* see R.V. and comment p. 116. *c* see R.V. and comment p. 117. *d* see R.V. and comment p. 117.

(2) *Nor shoot an arrow, i.e.* There shall be no assault of the walls.

(3) *Nor come before it with a shield, etc., i.e.* The siege shall not even commence. This verse gives a description of how the Assyrians conducted a siege. The archers swept the walls of defenders by means of continual flights of arrows. The archers were protected by large shields placed before them resting on the ground, and managed by a comrade. The arrows of the archers enabled the mounds to be formed in safety. These mounds were commenced some distance from the walls and rose in by a gradual incline till they reached the walls. Thus the battering rams could be used against the higher and comparatively weaker part of the wall.

The Destruction of the Assyrian Host.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxii. 21-22. ISATAH xxxvii. 36-38.)

35 And it came to pass ¹that night, that ²the angel of the LORD ³went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians ⁴an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when ⁵they arose early in the morning, behold, they were ⁶all dead corpses. 36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and ⁷dwelt at ⁸Nineveh. 37 And it ⁹came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of ¹⁰Nisroch his god, that ¹¹Adrammelech and ¹²Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into ¹³the land of ¹⁴Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

¹⁰Intro. p. 11.

¹¹Intro. p. ciii.

¹²Intro. p. cxvi.

¹³*Lit.* "The land of Ararat."

¹⁴Intro. p. lxxxv. A district at that time independent of Assyria. The Assyrian princes would find a safe refuge there.

³⁸Jealousy; for his own honour.

³⁹*i.e.* not capture it.

⁴⁰Nor even lay siege to it.

⁴¹Mound *i.e.* the embankment thrown up by the besiegers (see below).

⁴²*i.e.* along the sea-coast, the low country, and thus not pass through Judaea.

⁴³Cover it as with a shield.

⁴⁴To vindicate mine honour against the blasphemies of Sennacherib.

⁴⁵To keep my promises to David.

Note on verse 32. Four distinct promises to Hezekiah—

(1) *Sennacherib shall not come into the city, i.e.* Jerusalem shall not be taken.

THAT NIGHT. Not the night after the utterance of the prophecy by Isaiah, but about two years after (see verse 29). Otherwise what can the sign in verse 29 mean? The subsistence of the people for two years on the natural growth of the produce of the land could not be a sign of what took place on the following night.

Hezekiah was called upon to exercise faith. The trial of faith lasted two years during which time the people did not plough nor sow the land. But the land brought forth sufficient to sustain them, and this marvellous sustenance was a sign or pledge of the fulfilment of the prophecy uttered against Sennacherib.

Thus "that night" means that *great, terrible, notable* night on which God wrought judgment upon the host of Sennacherib.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB'S HOST. In Herodotus II., 141 is recorded the Egyptian legendary account of the retreat of Sennacherib. The Egyptian king had a vision in the night promising deliverance. Accordingly he marched forward and encamped opposite the Assyrian army. During the night a great host of field mice gnawed the quivers, bowstrings and shield-straps of the Assyrian soldiers, so as to make them useless. The Egyptians pursued the Assyrians and cut them down in thousands.

Sickness of Hezekiah. Prolongation of his Life.

(2. CHRONICLES xxxii. 24. ISAIAH xxxviii. 1-22.)

20. ¹In those days was Hezekiah ²sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, ³Set thine house in order; for ⁴thou shalt die, and not live. 2 Then ⁵he turned his face ⁶to the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, 3 I beseech thee, O LORD, ⁷remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah ⁸wept sore. 4 And it came to pass, ⁹before Isaiah was ¹⁰gone out into ^athe middle court, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the ¹¹captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go ¹²up into the house of the LORD. 6 And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee

¹ During the Assyrian invasion (see p. xxv.).

² Sick of a disease which must prove fatal.

³ Arrange for the succession. Hezekiah had no heir at the time.

⁴ Thy sickness is to death.

⁵ So Ahab (1 Kings xxi. 4).

⁶ In order to pray undisturbed by those standing near the royal bed.

⁷ Hezekiah appeals (1) to his own individual piety (2) to his maintenance of the provisions of the law of Moses.

⁸ Because his own life was to be cut short, and because there was no heir to the throne (Manasseh was born three years later). He was troubled for himself, and for his country, threatened by Assyria.

⁹ Before.

¹⁰ Isaiah is bidden to return ere he had left the palace.

Court = castle, i.e. the central part of the palace.

¹¹ Prince.

¹² i.e. completely cured.

and this city out ¹⁸of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. 7 And Isaiah said, Take a ¹⁴lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the ¹⁵boil, and he recovered. 8 And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, ¹⁶What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the LORD the third day? 9 And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow ^bgo forward ten ¹⁷degrees, or go back ten ¹⁸degrees? 10 And Hezekiah answered, ¹⁹It is a light thing for the shadow ^bto ²⁰go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten ¹⁷degrees. 11 And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten ¹⁷degrees backward, ²¹by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 117. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 117.

¹⁸So the Assyrians were still in the south on their expedition against Egypt.

¹⁴Cake.

¹⁵Some abscess or ulcer ordinarily fatal to life.

¹⁶The king asks for a sign.

¹⁷Steps.

¹⁸To decline.

¹⁹Hezekiah asks for what would be contrary to nature. The shadow might go forward, but it was impossible for it to go back. Compare the sign of the fleece given to Gideon (Judges vi. 36-40).

²⁰To decline.

²¹Sun dial (see p. 120). Probably visible to Hezekiah as he lay on his bed.

Isaiah records Hezekiah's song of thanksgiving for his recovery (Isaiah xxxviii. 9-20).

FOUR POINTS IN ISAIAH'S MESSAGE.

- (1) Hezekiah should recover.
- (2) On the third day he should go into the house of the Lord.
- (3) His life should be prolonged fifteen years.
- (4) Judah should be delivered from the Assyrian invasion.

The fulfilment of the first two was a pledge of the subsequent fulfilment of the last two.

Ambassadors from Babylon visit Jerusalem.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxii. 31. ISAIAH xxxix. 1-8.)

12 At that time ¹Berodach-baladan, the son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and ^{2a}a present unto Hezekiah: for he ³had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. 13 And had reached as far as Babylon. It was made the pretext for an embassy.

¹Intro. p. lxxxiii., or Mero-dach-baladan (Isaiah xxxix. 1).

²i.e. with the object of making alliance with Judah.

³The news of the wonderful recovery of Hezekiah

Hezekiah ⁴hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. 14 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, ⁵What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, ⁶They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. 15 And he said, What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah answered, All the things that are in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. 16 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, ⁷Hear the word of the LORD. 17 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the LORD. 18 And of ⁸thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they ⁹shall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. 19 Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, ¹⁰Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. And he said, ¹¹Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?

⁹ As Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego.

¹⁰ Hezekiah bows submissively to the will of Jehovah.

¹¹ He asks, however, that there may be peace and prosperity in his own days. We may note Hezekiah's pious resignation to the will of God, and compare his acquiescence in Jehovah's decree with the similar conduct of Eli. "*It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*" (1 Sam. iii, 18).

There are denunciations of evil on Judah in the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, both of them pious kings, but in each case the evil does not come upon the kingdom in their days.

⁴ Merodach-baladan was a rebel against Assyria (see p. lxxxiii.). His ambassadors sound Hezekiah on the subject of an alliance. Hezekiah, anxious to secure an ally against Assyria, shows the Babylonians his treasures to prove that he can furnish substantial aid to Babylon against Nineveh.

He is actuated by two motives.

(1) Desire to prove that he will be a valuable ally.

(2) Pride in his riches.

⁵ What was their object in coming?

⁶ Hezekiah is unwilling to disclose the real object of the Babylonian embassy, for he well knew that Jehovah would look with disfavour upon an alliance with a heathen sovereign.

⁷ A wonderful prophecy of the Babylonish captivity. At the time Babylon was subject to Assyria. But under divine inspiration Isaiah foresees the future might of Babylon, speaks of the captivity as a certainty and encourages the people with sure hopes of return (Isaiah xl.-lxvi.). Other prophets follow his example, and from this time point out Babylon as the great object to be feared by the nation.

⁸ Thy descendants. Though Manasseh, Hezekiah's son was carried captive to Babylon, he was taken there by the Assyrians, not by the Babylonians.

Close of Hezekiah's Reign.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxii. 30-32.)

20 And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made ¹a pool, and ²a conduit, and ³brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 21 And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

- ¹ The pool see p. lv.
² The conduit see p. lv.
³ He provided for the water supply of the city in case of a siege.

NOTE ON THE BURIAL OF THE LATER KINGS.

The sepulchre or catacomb of David appears to have been full for we find—

1. Ahaz buried in Jerusalem but not in the sepulchres of the kings (2 Chron. xxviii. 27).
 2. Hezekiah was buried "*in the chiefest of the sepulchres of the sons of David*" (2 Chron. xxxii. 33).
 "Chiefest" = *highest*, so some commentators regard Hezekiah as being buried on a higher level than the other kings, but the majority agree that his tomb was "on the ascent to the sepulchres."
 3. Manasseh and Amon were buried in the "*garden of Uzza*" (xxi. 18; xxi. 26).
 4. Josiah was buried in his own sepulchre, probably that made in the garden of Uzza (compare 2 Kings xxtii. 30 with 2 Chron. xxxiv. 24).
- Of the last four kings Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah died in foreign lands. Jehoahaz in Egypt, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah in Babylon. Jehoiakim had a nameless burial (see p. xxix).

Accession of Manasseh. His Idolatries.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxiii. 1-9.)

21. Manasseh was ¹twelve years old when he began to reign, and reigned ²fifty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was ³Hephzi-bah. 2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the ⁴abominations of the ⁵heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. 3 For he ⁶built up again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal, and made ⁷a grove, as did ⁸Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the ⁹host of heaven, and served them. 4 And he built altars ¹⁰in the house of the

- ¹ Hezekiah married after his recovery from his sickness. Manasseh was born three years after the recovery of Hezekiah.
² The longest reign of any king of Judah and Israel. Intro. p. cvii. The queen-mother.
⁴ Abominable idolatrous rites.
⁵ The native nations of Canaan dispossessed of the land by Joshua.
⁶ Probably influenced by the chief nobles, who always favoured idolatry. These nobles had also led Josiah astray after the death of Jehoiada (2 Chron. xxiv. 17-18).
⁷ An Asherah.

⁸ Who, under the influence of Jezebel, introduced the worship of Baal and Ashteroth.

⁹ The heavenly bodies.

¹⁰ In the courts of the Temple.

LORD, of which the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. 5 And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the ¹¹two courts of the house of the LORD. 6 And he made his son ¹²pass through the fire, ¹³and ¹³observed times, and used ¹⁴enchantments, and dealt with ¹⁵familiar spirits and wizards: he wrought much wickedness in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. 7 And he set ¹⁶a graven image of the grove that he had made ¹⁷in the house, of which the LORD said to David, and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever: 8 Neither will I ¹⁸make the feet of Israel ¹⁹move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only ²⁰if they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. 9 But they hearkened not: and Manasseh ²¹seduced them to do ²²more evil than did the nations whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 117.

The Prophets foretell the Punishment for Manasseh's Idolatry

(2 CHRONICLES XXXIII. 10.)

10 And the LORD ¹spake by his servants the prophets, saying, 11 Because Manasseh king of Judah hath done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that ²the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: 12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon

¹¹ The inner court of the priests, and the outer court for general worshippers.

¹² The worship of Moloch.

¹³ Practised augury.

¹⁴ Magical charms or spells; incantations; sorcery.

¹⁵ With them that had familiar spirits (see p. 121).

¹⁶ Carved image of wood.

¹⁷ Manasseh placed it in the Temple. It was removed by Josiah.

¹⁸ A reference to the migration of Jacob and his family from Canaan to Egypt.

¹⁹ To wander.

²⁰ The terms laid down by Jehovah as a condition of the permanent occupation of Canaan.

²¹ Led the nation astray.

²² The idolatry of Judah was worse than that of the Canaanites, because the latter sinned against knowledge. The people of Judah abandoned Jehovah for the idols of the heathen.

¹ The warning was delivered to both king and people (Chronicles).

² The original inhabitants of Canaan in the time of Joshua (see p. lxxvii.).

Jerusalem and Judah that ³whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. 13 And I will stretch over Jerusalem ⁴the line of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and ⁵I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down. 14 And I will forsake the remnant of mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all their enemies; 15 Because they have done that which was evil in my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.

³ Descriptive of some terrible judgment that had never been heard of before, striking the hearer with terror and alarm. The same expression is used of the judgment on the house of Eli (1 Sam. iii. 11).

⁴ The builder's line and plummet (see below). Here applied to the work of destruction.

⁵ A metaphor descriptive of something finished and done with completely. Jerusalem is to be destroyed as a man entirely removes everything from a dish by first wiping it and then turning it upside down, so that every particle of food may fall out of it.

NOTE ON VERSE 13.

The line = the builder's measuring line.

The plummet = the leaden weight by which the builder tests the vertical line of the wall, i.e. keeps the wall even.

Jehovah will apply the same measure and rule (i.e. lines of judgment to Samaria and Jerusalem alike).

The line of Samaria = the judgment dealt out to Samaria.

The plummet of Ahab = the extermination of the house of Ahab.

The meaning then is that Jehovah will destroy Jerusalem as he had destroyed Samaria, and will exterminate the royal house as he had exterminated the family of Ahab.

Further Iniquities of Manasseh. His Death.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXIII. 18-20.)

16 Moreover Manasseh ¹shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD. 17 Now the rest of the acts of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 18 And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and was buried, ²in the garden of his own house, ³in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.

¹ A reference to the religious persecution of the reign, in which Isaiah is said to have perished. Tradition says that he was sawn in pieces.

² Jotham was the last king buried in the sepulchre of David.

³ See p. lxx.

ADDITIONAL FACTS IN THE REIGN OF MANASSEH (2 Chronicles xxxiii.).

1. His capture by the captains of the host of the king of Assyria.
2. His removal to Babylon in fetters.
3. His repentance and return to Judah.
4. The religious reforms conducted by him on his return, and his prayer to Jehovah.
5. Building works completed by him on his return, v. 3.
 - (a) A new north wall from the valley of Gihon to the fishgate at the north-east corner of the city.
 - (b) Fortified Ophel (see p. lxxiii.).
6. Placed captains of war in the fortified cities of Judah.

The Reign of Amon.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXIII. 21-25.)

19 ¹Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Meshullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of ²Jotbah. 20 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his father Manasseh did. 21 And he walked in all the way that his father walked in, ³and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them: 22 And he ⁴forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD. 23 And the ⁵servants of Amon conspired against him, and slew the king in his own house. 24 And ⁶the people of the land ⁷slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the ⁸people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead. 25 Now the rest of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 26 And he was buried in his sepulchre in the ⁹garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

¹ Manasseh seems to have named his son after the Egyptian god Amon.

² Intro. p. xcviil.

³ The idolatrous party in the state appear to have regained the upperhand, and to have influenced the king to restore the idol worship of the early years of Manasseh.

⁴ *Trespassed more and more* (Chron.)

⁵ The court officials. No reason is given for the conspiracy.

⁶ The general population.

⁷ So the murderers of Joash were put to death by Amaziah (xiv. 5).

⁸ Perhaps the conspirators meditated a change of dynasty. The people secured the throne to the house of David, by putting the murderers of Amon to death, and placing Josiah, a boy only eight years old, on the throne.

⁹ See p. lxxiii.

Accession of Josiah. The Temple Repaired.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxiv. 1-18.)

22. Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of ¹Boscath. 2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and ²turned not aside to the right hand or to the left. 3 And it came to pass in the ³eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent ⁴Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, ⁵the scribe, to the house of the LORD, saying, 4 Go up to ⁶Hilkiah the high priest, that he may ⁷sum the ⁸silver ⁹which is brought into the house of the LORD, which ¹⁰the keepers of the door have gathered of the people: 5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the ¹¹doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to ¹²the doers of the work which is in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house, 6 Unto ¹³carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house. 7 Howbeit ¹⁴there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt ¹⁵faithfully.

¹Intro. p. xc.²An expression implying undeviating obedience, and unwavering adherence to the law of Jehovah. Josiah is the only king of whom this is said.³See note below.⁴Intro. p. cxvi. father of Ahikam (Jer. xxvi. 24), grandfather of Gedaliah (xxv. 22).⁵Secretary of state.⁶Intro. p. cvii.⁷Ascertain the amount of.⁸Money.⁹Josiah had already commenced to gather money for the repair of the Temple. He sent Shaphan to ascertain how much had been collected.¹⁰The doorkeepers received the money and placed it in a chest (see xii. 9).¹¹The workmen, i.e. those who had the oversight of the work.¹²The workmen (overseers).¹³The actual workmen.¹⁴These overseers were trusted to lay out the money to the best advantage.¹⁵Honestly. Their names are given in 2 Chron. xxxiv. 12.

NOTE ON VERSE 3. The eighteenth year of the reign was the date of the finding the copy of the law. Josiah began his religious reforms in the twelfth year of his reign (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3). In the eighteenth year he took account of the money that had been collected for the repair of the Temple and then came across the book of the law. The narrator is so interested in this event that he gives the eighteenth year as the date. In this manner we are led to the mistake of imagining that the reform began in the eighteenth year and not the twelfth as in Chronicles.

Discovery of the Book of the Law. (2 CHRONICLES XXXIV. 8-18.)

8 And Hilkiab the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found ¹the book of the law in the house of the LORD. And Hilkiab ²gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it. 9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and ³brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants ⁴have ^agathered the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of ⁵them that do the work, that have the oversight of the house of the LORD. 10 And Shaphan the scribe shewed the king, saying, Hilkiab the priest hath delivered me a book. And Shaphan ⁶read it before the king. 11 And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that ⁷he rent his clothes. 12 And the king commanded Hilkiab the priest, and ⁸Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and ⁹Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and ¹⁰Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying. 13 Go ye, ¹¹enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, ¹²concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers ¹³have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. 14 So Hilkiab the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asahiah, went unto ¹⁴Huldah the ¹⁵prophetess, the wife of ¹⁶Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, ¹⁷keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem ^bin the ¹⁸college;) and they communed with her.

¹ The well known book, the copy deposited in the Temple. It had escaped destruction (see p. 131).

² Delivered.

³ Gave his report of the result of the commission given him (see verse 9).

⁴ Have poured out, i.e. from the chest into bags. The money had been some years in collecting.

⁵ The workmen, i.e. the overseers.

⁶ Read in it, i.e. he read certain passages from the book.

⁷ In his alarm at the denunciations contained in the book against the sin of idolatry.

⁸ Intro. p. civ.

⁹ Intro. p. civ.

¹⁰ Intro. p. civ. Some high official is intended by the word "servant."

¹¹ Consult some prophet.

¹² To see what means should be taken to avert the wrath of Jehovah.

¹³ The reigns of Manasseh and Amon were characterized by gross idolatry.

¹⁴ Intro. p. cvii.

¹⁵ Miriam (Ex. xv. 20) and Deborah (Judges iv. 4) are instances of prophetesses, also the wife of Isaiah (Is. viii. 3). So Anna in the New Testament (St. Luke ii. 36).

¹⁶ Intro p. cxv.

¹⁷ Caretaker of the vestry where the priestly garments were stored, or of the King's wardrobe in which dresses of honour were kept.

¹⁸ The second part of the city (see p. 117).

^a see R.V. and comment p. 117.

^b see R.V. and comment p. 117.

Huldah's Reply.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXIV. 19-28.)

15 And she said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Tell ¹the man that sent you to me, 16 Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even ²all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read; 17 Because ³they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger ⁴with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be ⁵kindled against this place, and shall not be ⁶quenched. 18 But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, ⁷Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, As touching the words which thou hast heard; 19 Because thine heart was ⁸tender, and thou hast ⁹humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and ¹⁰a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me, ¹¹I ¹²also have heard thee, saith the LORD. 20 Behold therefore, ¹³I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; ¹⁴and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

¹⁵ Josiah was the last king to be buried in Jerusalem.

¹⁴ The evils shall not come upon the land in the reign of Josiah. The desolation of Judah came from Babylon, and not in Josiah's reign. He met his death in battle at Megiddo against Pharaoh-necho, king of Egypt. This disaster is not in contradiction with this prophecy, which clearly refers to Babylon only.

¹ We may take this word as referring to the matter of the enquiry, and to include both King and people. It is not intended as a rude reference to the king, to whom she sent a special message of comfort (see verses 18-20).

² The punishments mentioned in the book.

³ Huldah adopts the words of Deut. xxix. 25-27, thus referring the king to the book he had just read.

⁴ With the idols they had made for themselves (1 Kings xvi. 7).

⁵ As a fire is lighted.

⁶ The fire of God's wrath shall not be put out. The decree is final. The sins of Manasseh had filled up the cup of Judah's iniquity. There can be no pardon now for the guilty city.

⁷ A special message of mercy for the king in person.

⁸ Softened in repentance.

⁹ So Ahab had humbled himself and the evil had been postponed to his son's days (1 Kings xxi. 27). If Jehovah could shew mercy to a wicked king, much more would he be tender with the pious Josiah.

¹⁰ i.e. that one in uttering a curse may refer to Jerusalem and say "may your fate be as that of Jerusalem."

¹¹ Favourably listened to thee.

¹² Also i.e. because Josiah had paid heed to the words of the law.

Josiah makes a Covenant with Jehovah. Eradication of Idolatry.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXIV. 3-7; 29-33.)

23. And the king sent, and ¹they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. 2 And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and ²all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both ³small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. 3 And the king stood by ⁴a pillar, and made ⁵a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and ⁶to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all their heart and all their soul, to ⁷perform the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people ⁸stood to the covenant. 4 And the king ⁹commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests ¹⁰of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out ¹¹of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the ¹²grove, and for all ¹³the host of heaven: and he burned them ¹⁴without Jerusalem in the ¹⁵fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto ¹⁶Beth-el. 5 And he ¹⁷put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ¹⁵ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the ¹⁸places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto ²⁰Baal, to the sun, and ²¹to the moon, and to ²²the planets, and to ²³all the host of heaven. 6 And he brought out the ²⁴grove from the house

¹ A solemn assembly for the covenant.

² All classes (1) elders; (2) priests; (3) prophets; (4) the people.

³ Poor and rich.

⁴ The pillar (see p. 167).

⁵ The covenant, i.e. renewed the covenant with Jehovah.

⁶ See Deut. xiii. 4. Josiah follows the words of the law.

⁷ Confirm.

⁸ Accepted, gave their acquiescence.

⁹ Verses 4-20 must refer to the earlier reforms of Josiah (see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3-7).

¹⁰ Those next in rank to the high priest.

¹¹ The courts of the Temple. The Asherah appears to have been in the Temple itself (see verse 6).

¹² The Asherah.

¹³ The heavenly bodies.

¹⁴ That the city might not be defiled even by the slightest remains of the idols.

¹⁵ The valley of Kidron (see p. lxi.).

¹⁶ Intro. p. lxxxix. Where Jeroboam had inaugurated the calf-worship.

¹⁷ Made them desist from their idolatrous worship.

¹⁸ These priests were not of the tribe of Levi. It would appear that Manasseh had followed the example of the king: of Israel in this respect (1 Kings xii. 31).

¹⁹ They are mentioned in verse 13.

²⁰ To Baal, the sun-god.

²¹ To Astarte, the moon goddess.

²² The twelve signs or constellations of the Zodiac.

²³ The heavenly bodies.

²⁴ The Asherah set up by Manasseh in the Temple (xxi. 3-7), removed by him in his repentance, and restored by Amon.

of the LORD, ²⁵without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and ²⁶stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of ^{the} ²⁷children of the people. 7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were ²⁸by the house of the LORD, where ²⁹the women wove hangings for ^{the} ³⁰agrove. 8 And he brought ³¹all the priests out of the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from ³²Geba to ³³Beer-sheba, and brake down the ³⁴high places of the gates that were in the ³⁵entering in of ^{the} ³⁶gate of ³⁷Joshua the governor of the city, which were on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. 9 Nevertheless ³⁸the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread ³⁹among their brethren. 10 And he defiled ⁴⁰Topheth, which is in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to ⁴¹Molech. 11 And he took away the ⁴²horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun, ⁴³at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the ⁴⁴chamber of ⁴⁵Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was ⁴⁶in the ^{the} ^{suburbs}, and burned the chariots of the sun with fire. 12 And the altars that ⁴⁷were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the ⁴⁸altars which Manasseh had made in

²⁵ Outside Jerusalem.

²⁶ As Moses had reduced the calf made by Aaron.

²⁷ The common people. Chronicles states that it was "on the graves of them that had sacrificed."

²⁸ In the house of the Lord.

²⁹ Probably the priestesses of Astarte.

³⁰ The Asherah.

³¹ Those who officiated at the high places, probably officiating in the worship of Jehovah there. The original signifies that they wore black robes.

³² Intro. p. xciv. On the northern border of Benjamin.

³³ Intro. p. lxxxix. In the extreme south of Judah. The phrase means throughout all Judah from north to south (see p. lxxxix.).

³⁴ High places erected in the open spaces near the gates.

³⁵ See p. lxxv.

³⁶ On these gates (see p. lxxv.).

³⁷ Intro. p. lxxv.

³⁸ The priests of verse 8. When they came to Jerusalem they were not allowed to officiate in the Temple, but were permitted to share in the gifts intended for the priests.

³⁹ At home in the family, not in the Temple.

⁴⁰ Intro. p. lxxiv. Defiled so as to put an end to the worship of Molech in the valley of Hinnom.

⁴¹ Intro. p. xlix.

⁴² The horses that drew the chariots of the sun in the procession in honour of the sun-god.

⁴³ At the outer court near the Temple.

⁴⁴ One of the Temple chambers, probably turned into a stall for the horses.

⁴⁵ Intro. p. cxiv. He may have had charge of the horses and chariots.

⁴⁶ In the cloisters or portico of the Temple (see p. 118).

⁴⁷ Built upon the roof of an upper chamber in a court of the Temple.

⁴⁸ See xxi. 5.

the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. 13 And the ⁴⁹high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the ⁵⁰mount of corruption, which ⁵¹Solomon the king of Israel had builded for ⁵²Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for ⁵³Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and for ⁵⁴Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. 14 And he brake in pieces ⁵⁵the ^aimages, and cut down the ⁵⁶groves, and filled ⁵⁷their places ⁵⁸with the bones of men.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 118. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 118.

⁴⁹ High places for the worship of Ashtoreth, Chemosh and Milcom.

⁵⁰ Intro. p. lxxv. The southern height of the Mount of Olives.

⁵¹ Solomon had allowed his wives to erect these places for their own worship (1 Kings xi. 7).

⁵² Intro. p. xlix.

⁵³ Intro. p. xlix.

⁵⁴ Intro. p. xlix.

⁵⁵ Pillars.

⁵⁶ Asherah.

⁵⁷ Their place or station.

⁵⁸ Polluting the spot, rendering it unfit for worship of any kind.

Extermination of Idolatry in Bethel and Samaria.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES.)

15 ¹Moreover the ²altar that was at Beth-el, and the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, ³who made Israel to sin, had made, both that altar and the high place he brake down, and burned the high place, and stamped it small to powder, and burned ⁴the ^bgrove. 16 And as Josiah ⁵turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in ⁶the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres and burned them upon the altar, and ⁷polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the ⁸man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words. 17 Then he said, ^cWhat ⁹title is that that I see? And the men of the city told him, It is ¹⁰the sepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed

¹ Josiah now proceeds to root out idolatry from the northern kingdom.

² See 1 Kings xii. 28-29.

³ Wherewith he made.

⁴ The Asherah.

⁵ And thus caught sight of the tombs on the opposite hill.

⁶ The opposite hill, not the hill of Jeroboam's altar.

⁷ Defiled it.

⁸ Intro. p. 27, also p. 125. See 1 Kings xiii. 2.

⁹ Monument.

¹⁰ The man of God from Judah was buried at Bethel by the old prophet who had deceived him.

these things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el. 18 And he said, ¹¹Let him alone; let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone, with the bones of ¹²the prophet that came out of Samaria. 19 And all the houses also of the high places that were ¹³in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the LORD to anger, Josiah took away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el. 20 And he ¹⁴slew all the priests of the high places that were there ¹⁵upon the altars, and ¹⁶burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 114. ^c see R.V. and comment p. 118.

¹¹ Let him be, *i.e.* let his bones rest.

¹² The prophet of Bethel who had deceived the man of God from Judah. He was interred in the same grave. He was a resident at Bethel.

¹³ Josiah went as far as Naphtali (2 Chron. xxxiv. 6).

¹⁴ Slaughtered; fulfilling the prophecy of 1 Kings xiii. 2-32.

¹⁵ Thus offering them up, as predicted in 1 Kings xiii. 2.

¹⁶ A defilement which would desecrate the place for ever. No worship could be offered there again.

The Passover kept. Suppression of Superstitious Practices.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXV. 1-19.)

21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, ¹Keep the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written ²in the book of this covenant. 22 Surely there was not ³holden ⁴such a passover from the ⁵days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; 23 But in the ⁶eighteenth year of king Josiah, wherein this passover was ⁷holden to the LORD in Jerusalem. 24 ⁸Moreover the workers with ⁹familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the ¹⁰images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were ¹¹spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might ¹²perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the

¹ A full account of this passover is given in Chronicles.

² In this book of the covenant, *i.e.* the book found in the Temple (verse 2).

³ Kept.

⁴ Superior to other passovers in—(1) The numbers attending.

(2) The exact compliance with the provisions of the Law.

⁵ *i.e.* since the days of Samuel.

⁶ The passover was kept at the conclusion of the religious reform.

⁷ Kept.

⁸ Josiah removes all private superstitious practices. He had already put down the public worship of idols.

⁹ See p. 130.

¹⁰ The Teraphim (see p. 130), a kind of household gods.

¹¹ Discovered in private houses.

¹² Fully establish the law.

house of the LORD. 25 And ¹³like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, ¹⁴according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 107.

¹³ Compare the eulogy on Hezekiah (xviii. 5-6) (see note there).

¹⁴ Josiah is specially commended for exact compliance with the Law of Moses.

SPECIAL OBSERVANCES OF THE PASSOVER.

- (1) By Moses in the second year after the Exodus (Numb. ix. 5).
- (2) By Joshua at Gilgal after circumcising of the people on their entrance into Canaan (Josh. v. 10).
- (3) By Hezekiah after the purification of the Temple (2 Chron. xxx.).
- (4) By Josiah after his religious reformation (2 Kings xxiii. 22).
- (5) By Zerubbabel and Joshua after the dedication of the Second Temple (Ezra vi. 19).

Conclusion of Josiah's reign. His defeat and death at Megiddo.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXV. 20-36.)

26 Notwithstanding the LORD ¹turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the ²provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal. 27 And the LORD said, I will ³remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. 28 Now the ⁴rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 29 In his days ⁵Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt ⁶went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates; and ⁷king Josiah went against him; and he ⁸slew him at Megiddo, when he ⁹had seen him. 30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from ¹⁰Megiddo, and brought him to ¹¹Jerusalem, and

¹ True repentance would have saved the people. We must conclude that the mass of the nation were so corrupt that the reforms of Josiah had not converted the nation permanently.

² An expressive term for the idolatrous practices of Manasseh.

³ Judah will be deported as Israel had been.

⁴ He lived 13 years after the great passover.

⁵ Intro. p. lxxviii.

⁶ On the relative strength of Assyria and Egypt at this time, see p. lxxvi.

⁷ On the motives that induced Josiah see p. lxxv.

⁸ He was wounded at Megiddo.

⁹ Met him in battle.

¹⁰ Intro. p. xcix. Josiah was wounded at Megiddo by an arrow.

¹¹ The last king to be buried in Jerusalem.

buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took ¹²Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

¹² Or Shallum (see Intro. p.c.v.). He was the fourth or youngest son of Josiah, but appears to have been the choice of the people.

Additional details from 2 Chronicles xxxv. 20-27.

- (1) Necho was advancing towards the fords of the Euphrates at Carchemish. His object was to attack Assyria. He would follow the usual coast route. Josiah blocked his way by occupying the hills at Megiddo, thus preventing the Egyptian army from debouching into the plain of Esdraelon.
- (2) The Egyptian king sent ambassadors to Josiah, requesting him not to hinder his march. He declared that he had no intention of attacking Judah, and that Assyria was his objective. Josiah persisted in barring the march of the Egyptians.
- (3) Josiah disguised himself when he went into the battle, as Ahab had done at Ramoth-gilead.
- (4) The battle took place not in the pass, but in the valley.
- (5) Josiah was wounded by the archers as Ahab had been at Ramoth-gilead.
- (6) His attendants bore him from the battle in his second chariot, *i.e.* took him out of his heavy war chariot and conveyed him to Jerusalem in the lighter chariot which he would use for ordinary travelling.
- (7) Josiah's death was mourned over by all Judah and Jerusalem. Jeremiah made special lament for him.

The Reign of Jehoahaz.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXVI. 1-4.)

31 Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was ¹Hamutal, the daughter of ²Jeremiah of Libnah. 32 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. 33 And Pharaoh-nechoh ³put him in ⁴bands at ⁵Riblah in the land of ⁶Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and ⁷put the land to a tribute of an ⁸hundred talents of silver, and a ⁹talent of gold. 34 And Pharaoh-nechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king ¹⁰in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to ¹¹Jehoiakim, and ¹²took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died

¹ Also the mother of Zedekiah (xxiv. 18).

² Not the prophet Jeremiah, whose native place was Anathoth.

³ Pharaoh summoned Jehoahaz to come from Jerusalem to Riblah.

⁴ Bonds, fetters.

⁵ Intro. p. c. On the Orontes, and subsequently the headquarters of Nebuchadnezzar (xxv. 21).

⁶ Intro. p. xvi.

⁷ Set a tribute on the land.

⁸ £37,500.

⁹ £8,750.

¹⁰ In place of Josiah, not Jehoahaz. Thus Necho did not recognize Jehoahaz as having been king. He had been crowned without his permission.

¹¹ To indicate that he was the nominee of Egypt.

¹² His fate had been foretold by Jeremiah (Jer. xxii. 10-12) (see p. xxviii.).

there. 35 And Jehoiakim ¹³gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he ¹⁴taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaoh-nechoh. 36 Jehoiakim was ¹⁵twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of ¹⁶Rumah. 37 And he did ¹⁷that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

¹³ Consented to be tributary king to Egypt.

¹⁴ Laid a general tax upon the people as Menahem had done (xv. 22).

¹⁵ He was two years older than Jehoahaz, his half-brother (see verse 31).

¹⁶ Arumah, near Shechem. An indirect confirmation that the rule of Josiah extended over Samaria.

¹⁷ He murdered a prophet Urijah (Jer. xxvi. 20-23).

The Reign of Jehoiakim.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXVI. 5-8.)

24. In ¹his days ²Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became ³his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. 2 And the LORD sent against him ⁴bands of the ⁵Chaldees, and ⁶bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servants ⁷the prophets. 3 Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; 4 And also for the ⁸innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon. 5

¹ In the fifth or sixth year of his reign.

² Intro. p. lxxxiii. He defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xli. 2). Nebuchadnezzar was forced to return to Babylon to establish his power there on the death of his father Nabopolassar. He then returned to Judah and made Jehoiakim submit to Babylon. Daniel and his companions were carried to Babylon at this time.

³ Tributary to Babylon. Jehoiakim was bound and it appears (2 Chron. xxxvi. 6) that Nebuchadnezzar at first intended to take him to Babylon, but changed his purpose (see p. xxix).

⁴ Marauding bands.

⁵ The inhabitants of Babylon.

⁶ These districts had been subdued by Nebuchadnezzar.

⁷ Who had predicted this visitation since the time of Ahaz.

⁸ Refers to the religious persecution instituted by Manasseh (xxi. 16).

Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? 6 So Jehoiakim ⁹slept with his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead. 7 And the king of Egypt ¹⁰came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken ¹¹from the ^ariver of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

^a see R. V. and comment p. 118.

may have suffered an ignominious death at the order of Nebuchadnezzar (see p. xxix).

¹⁰ The power of Egypt was completely broken by the defeat at Carchemish.

¹¹ Not the Nile, but the *Wady El Arish*, a torrent on the north border of Egypt.

⁹ There is no notice of the burial of Jehoiakim. Jeremiah prophesied "He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem" (Jer. xxii.). He probably perished with all his followers in some encounter with the marauding bands (verse 2), and his body left to decay where he fell, or he

The Reign of Jehoiachin.

(2 CHRONICLES xxxvi. 9-10.)

8 ¹Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months. And his mother's name was Nehushta, the daughter of ²El-nathan of Jerusalem. 9 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. 10 At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up against Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. 11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants ³did besiege it. 12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah ⁴went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his ⁵mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the ⁶eighth year of his reign. 13 And he carried out thence all ⁷the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and

¹ On the prophecies of Jeremiah see p. xlvii. Also known as Coniah or Jeconiah.

² Intro. p. cv.

³ Were besieging. Nebuchadnezzar arrived during the progress of the siege.

⁴ Came out from the city and surrendered at discretion.

⁵ The queen-mother.

⁶ i.e. of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

⁷ Some of the vessels had been carried away in the reign of Jehoiakim (2 Chron. xxxvi. 7). Nebuchadnezzar put them in the house of his god at Babylon (Dan. i. 2).

cut in pieces all the vessels of ⁸gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said. 14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and ⁹all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. 15 And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babel, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and ¹⁰his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babel. 16 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babel brought captive to Babel.

⁸ Brass only was left and this was carried away in the reign of Zedekiah (xxv. 13-17).

⁹ Thus removing all who could organize a revolt against Babylon. 10,000 were deported. The total population of the ancient city has been calculated at 15,000. So about 5,000 or 6,000 of the poorest were left.

¹⁰ Three classes are deported:

- (1) The royal family and princes about 2,000.
- (2) The military forces "men of valour" about 7,000.
- (3) The artisan class, "the craftsmen and smiths," about 1,000.

The Reign of Zedekiah.

17 And the king of Babylon made ¹Mattaniah his father's ²brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah. 18 Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was ³Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. 19 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. 20 For through the anger of the LORD it came to pass in Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

For prophecies of Jeremiah with respect to Zedekiah see p. xxx.

¹ The third son of Josiah.

² Brother of Jehoahaz.

³ The mother of Jehoahaz. Zedekiah appears to have thought early in his reign that Nebuchadnezzar might be induced to allow the exiles at Babylon to return to Judah. He sent an embassy to Babylon (Jer. xxix. 3), and visited Babylon himself (Jer. lii. 31) for the purpose of obtaining their release. He also desired the restoration of the holy vessels.

Failing to attain his requests he commenced to plot a rebellion on his return to Judah.

The book of Jeremiah gives details concerning the intrigues of Zedekiah with Egypt (see p. xxx.).

Capture of Jerusalem.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXVI. 11-12. JEREMIAH XXXIX. 1-7; LII. 1-11.)

25. And it came to pass ¹in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his host, against Jerusalem, and ²pitched against it: and they built ³forts against it round about. ² And the city ⁴was besieged unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. ³ And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine ⁵prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for ⁶the people of the land. ⁴ *And the city ⁷was broken up*, and all the men of war fled by night by the way of the ⁸gate between two walls, which is by the ⁹king's garden: (now the Chaldees were against the city round about:) and the king went the way ¹⁰toward ¹⁰the plain. ⁵ And the army of the Chaldees ¹¹pursued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army ¹²were scattered from him. ⁶ So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to ¹³Riblah; and they ¹⁴gave judgment upon him. ⁷ And they slew the ¹⁵sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and ¹⁶put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to ¹⁷Babylon.

^a see R.V. and comment p. 118. ^b see R.V. and comment p. 118.

gathered again under their officers later (see verse 23).

¹⁸ Intro. p. c. Where Nebuchadnezzar had his headquarters. He was conducting the siege of Tyre.

¹⁴ Condemned him for having broken his oath of allegiance.

¹⁵ To prevent any revolt under a successor to Zedekiah.

¹⁶ Lit. "Dug out."

¹⁷ "And put him in prison till the day of his death" (Jer. lii. 10).

Thus the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel though seeming contradictory were fulfilled.

"His (Zedekiah's) eyes shall behold his (Nebuchadnezzar's) eyes" (Jer. xxxii. 42).
 "Yet he shall not see it (Babylon) though he shall die there" (Ez. xii. 13).

¹ Verses 1-3 give the duration of the siege.

From the tenth month of ninth year.

To the fourth month of tenth year.

Or eighteen months.

Zedekiah reigned from B.C. 599 to B.C. 588.

² Encamped.

³ Movable towers.

⁴ The Chaldeans were at the time attacking Lachish and Azekah. Only a portion of the army was besieging Jerusalem. At one time the siege was so far relaxed that Jeremiah attempted to leave the city, but was stopped at the gate of Benjamin by Irijah.

⁵ Was sore. The city yielded because of the famine.

⁶ The people of the surrounding villages, mostly poor, who had taken refuge in the city.

⁷ i.e. a breach was made in the walls. The Babylonians attacked the north-east corner (see map) the vulnerable part of the defences.

⁸ See map and p. lxiiv.

⁹ Site uncertain (see map). Most probably at the junction of the Kidron and Hinnom valleys.

¹⁰ The Arabah. The king attempted to escape towards Jericho, to cross the Jordan and thus gain the mountains of Gilead.

¹¹ The Chaldeans pursue him and overtake him before he can cross the river.

¹² Dispersed and concealed themselves. They

From Jeremiah (xxxix. 2-4) we gather what actually took place.

The Chaldeans had pressed the siege at the north-west corner of the city, the weakest part of the defences. The garrison weakened by famine were unable to prevent this wall being breached. So the Chaldeans burst into the northern part of the city. They had still to capture the upper city (see map, p. lxi). They encamped between the north wall of the city and the north wall of the upper city, previous to making an attack upon the latter. In the night Zedekiah and the remnant of the garrison made their way down the Tyropæon valley, left the city by the gate at the south-east, crossed the valley of the Kidron, and directed their course by the Jericho road, over the Mount of Olives making for the Jordan.

Fate of the City.

(2 CHRONICLES XXXVI. 11-21. JEREMIAH LII. 1-11.)

8 And in the ¹fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, ²captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: 9 And he ³burnt the house of the LORD, and ⁴the king's house, and all the houses in Jerusalem, and ⁵every great man's house burnt he with fire. 10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, ⁶brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. 11 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that ⁷fell away to the king of Babylon, ⁸with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away. 12 But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen. 13 And the ⁹pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and ¹⁰the bases, and the ¹¹brasen sea that was in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldees ¹²break in pieces, and carried the brass of them to Babylon. 14 And the pots, and the ¹³shovels, and the snuffers, and the ¹⁴spoons, and all the vessels of

¹ Given as seventh in Jeremiah.

² Chief of the executioners. Commander of the king's bodyguard.

³ Destroyed the Temple.

⁴ And the king's palace.

⁵ The principal houses of the city. The poorer class of house was left for the common people.

⁶ Completely razed the defences of the city. The wall was not rebuilt till the time of Nehemiah.

⁷ Deserted Zedekiah and went over to the king of Babylon.

⁸ The deserters were carried away with the others, either

(1) Distrusted by the Babylonians, or (2) Themselves fearing ill-treatment at the hands of their fellow-countrymen.

⁹ The pillars, Jachin and Boaz (see p. lii.).

¹⁰ The supports of the lavers (see p. lii.).

¹¹ The great laver (see p. lii.).

¹² Too large to be carried away whole, so were broken up.

¹³ For carrying away the ashes after sacrifice.

¹⁴ Incense cups.

brass wherewith they ministered, took they away. 15 And the ¹⁵firepans, and the ¹⁶bowls, and such things as were of gold, in gold, and of silver, in silver, the captain of the guard took away. 16 The ¹⁷two pillars, ¹⁸one sea, and the bases which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD; the brass of all these vessels ¹⁹was without weight. 17 The ²⁰height of the one pillar was eighteen ²¹cubits, and the ²²chapter upon it was brass: and the height of the chapter three cubits; and the ²³wreathen work, and ²⁴pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had the second pillar with wreathen work.

Chronicles xxxvi. 20-21 adds that the captivity lasted till "the reign of the king of Persia. To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years."

List of the Chiefs of Judah put to Death by Nebuchadnezzar.

18 And the captain of the guard took ¹Seraiah the chief priest, and ²Zephaniah the second priest, and the ³three keepers of the door; 19 And ⁴out of the city he took an ⁵officer that was set over the men of war, and ⁶five men of them that ⁷were in the king's presence, which were found in the city, and ⁸the principal scribe of the host, which ⁹mustered the people of the land, and ¹⁰threescore men of the people of the land that were found in the city: 20 And Nebuzardan captain of the guard took these, and brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah: 21 And the king of Babylon smote them, and slew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away out of their land.

a see R.V. and comment p. 118.

¹⁵ Snuff dishes.

¹⁶ Basins.

All these vessels were connected with the Temple worship.

¹⁷ Jachin and Boaz.

¹⁸ The great laver.

¹⁹ Exceedingly heavy, impossible to calculate their weight.

²⁰ Height of pillar = 27 feet.

²¹ Cubit = 18 inches.

²² Chapter = a capital. Five cubits according to 1 Kings vii. 16.

²³ Network (1 Kings vii. 18).

²⁴ Pomegranates, i.e. carved representations of the pomegranate tree or its fruit; a common ornament in decorating buildings.

¹ Intro. p. cxv.

² Intro. p. cxvii. The next in rank to the high priest.

³ See p. 124.

⁴ So Seraiah and the others in verse 18 were taken out of the Temple.

⁵ A royal officer commanding the garrison of Jerusalem.

⁶ Five, the number is given as seven in Jeremiah.

⁷ Lit. saw the king's face, i.e. constant in personal attendance on the king.

⁸ The scribe of the captain of the host, i.e. the secretary of the commander-in-chief, or the scribe, the captain of the host, i.e. the secretary for war.

⁹ Enrolled the names of those liable for military service.

¹⁰ Probably the ringleaders of the rebellion, or men prominent in the defence of the city (KITTO).

The Governorship of Gedaliah.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES. JEREMIAH XL. AND XLI.)

22 And as for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made ²Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, ³ruler. 23 And when all the ⁴captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, there came to Gedaliah to ⁵Mizpah, even ⁶Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and ⁷Johanan the son of Careah, and ⁸Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and ⁹Jaazaniah the son of a Maachathite, they and their men. 24 And Gedaliah ¹⁰swore to them, and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not ¹¹to be ¹²the servants of the Chaldees: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon; and it shall be well with you. 25 But it came to pass in the ¹³seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, ¹⁴of the seed royal, ¹⁵came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and ¹⁶the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah. 26 And all the people, both small and great, and the captains of the armies, arose, and ¹⁷came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.

¹ Were left.² Intro. p. cv.³ Governor (see verse 22).⁴ Officers of the troops who had fled with Zedekiah (verse 4).⁵ Intro. p. c. About six miles north of Jerusalem.⁶ Intro. p. cviii.⁷ Intro. p. cxii. He avenged the murder of Gedaliah.⁸ Intro. p. cxv.⁹ Intro. p. cviii.¹⁰ Pledged himself for their safety. As having fought in the siege they might expect that their lives were forfeited to the Chaldeans.¹¹ Because of.¹² The Chaldean soldiers forming Gedaliah's retinue.¹³ Jerusalem was dismantled in the fifth month, so within two months Gedaliah was murdered.¹⁴ A member of the royal family.¹⁵ The details of this treacherous act are given in Jer. xli. (see p. cviii.).¹⁶ The bodyguard of Gedaliah given him by Nebuchadnezzar to support his authority.¹⁷ For details see Jeremiah xliii. 1-7. They feared the vengeance of the Chaldeans because of the murder of Gedaliah. They took Jeremiah with them to Egypt.

From Jeremiah we learn that they settled at Migdol, and at Noph or Memphis (the modern Cairo) (Jer. xli. 1).

These refugees fled to Egypt contrary to the advice of Jeremiah, who exhorted them to remain in the land and not to be afraid of the vengeance of the Chaldeans.

They refused to follow the prophet's advice; whereupon Jeremiah foretold their fate in Egypt, prophesying that but few of them should ever return to their own land (Jer. xli. xlii.).

The Last Mention of Jehoiachin.

(NOT IN CHRONICLES. JEREMIAH LII. 31-34.)

27 And it came to pass in ¹the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that ²Evil-merodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did ³lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; 28 And he ⁴spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon; 29 And changed his prison garments: and he ⁵did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life. 30 And his allowance was ⁶a continual allowance given him of the king, ⁷a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.

¹ B.C. 562 dating from B.C. 599 the year of Jehoiachin's captivity.

² Son of Nebuchadnezzar (see p.lxxxiv.). He reigned only two years and was murdered by his brother Neriglissar, who succeeded him. It is said that Jehoiachin shared the same fate.

³ See Gen. xl. 13 = took him out of prison, and restored him to royal honours.

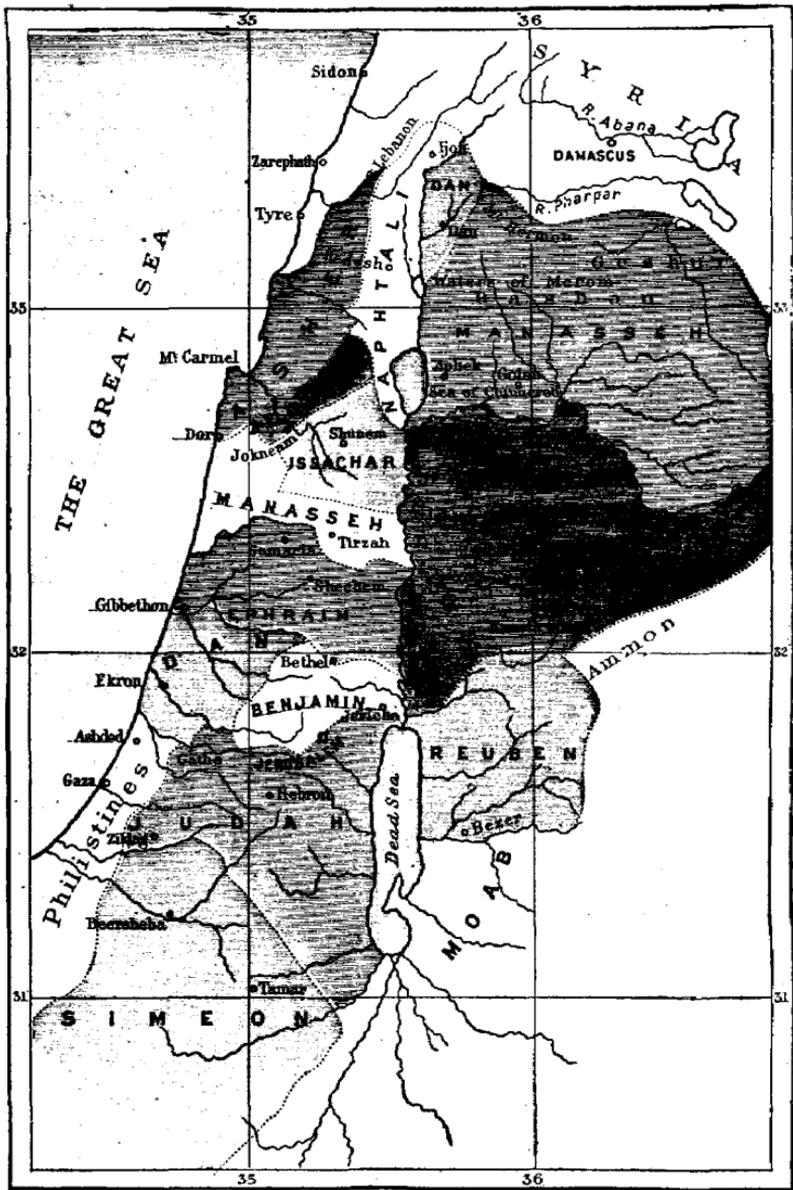
⁴ Paid him more honour than to the other subject kings at Babylon, i.e. Jehoiachin now took precedence of all other subject kings.

⁵ He was admitted to the king's table.

⁶ A suitable provision was made for his maintenance.

⁷ Every day a portion (Jer. lii. 34).

We may note that the Second Book of Kings ends with a cheering passage on the condition of the captive monarch at Babylon. The restoration of Jehoiachin to kingly state seems to prelude the restoration of the people to their own land, whilst the kindly feeling of the Babylonian king towards the imprisoned Jehoiachin seems to foreshadow the favour shown to the captives by the Persian monarchs.



CANAAN AMONG THE TRIBES.

COMMENTS
ON THE
REVISED VERSION.

- “*Stood to view afar off.*” (ii. 7.)
R.V. **Over against.** (see also ii. 15.)
The sons of the prophets had ascended the hills at the back of Jericho opposite the route taken by Elijah and Elisha over the fords of Jericho, and thus had a full view of each of the crossings.
- “*The water is naught and the ground barren.*” (ii. 19.)
Barren. (see also ii. 21.)
R.V. **Miscarrieth.**
The stream was considered to be the cause of the many untimely births amongst the people of Jericho, and their cattle.
- “*He put away the image of Baal.*” (iii. 2, and passim.)
Image.
R.V. **Pillar.**
A pillar or obelisk, not a statue of the god. Some particular pillar near the king's palace.
Its destruction denoted state abandonment of Baal worship.
- “*And he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord.*” (iii. 2, and passim.)
R.V. **And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord.**
The phrase is continually used of those kings who practised idolatry.
- “*Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin.*” (iii. 3.)
Which.
R.V. **Wherewith.**
The change is important. *The sin*, not the person committing the sin, is the emphatic point. Note that the *chief* object of the introduction of the calf-worship was to prevent the people returning to their allegiance to the house of David.
Thus the point to be marked is the **Act of Schism** by Jeroboam.
- “*And he rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams with the wool.*” (iii. 4.)
R.V. **The wool of an hundred thousand lambs, and of an hundred thousand rams.**
The R.V. makes it quite clear that the tribute was paid in fleeces only.
- “*And numbered all Israel.*” (iii. 6.)
Numbered.
R.V. **Mustered.**
Jehoram made a formal review or inspection of his forces, which “*mustered*” exactly describes.

"They fetched a compass."

(iii. 9.)

R.V. **They made a circuit.**

"To fetch a compass" was a phrase formerly common to express "making a circuit," "going around." The R.V. supplies the modern equivalent. The three kings made a circuit around the southern shores of the Dead Sea, through Edom, and attacked Moab from the south.

"Make this valley full of ditches."

(iii. 16.)

Ditches.

R.V. **Trenches.**

The valley was a wady, or torrent-bed. Any sudden rainfall would cause a rush of water down the torrent-bed, quickly passing away. The trenches were for the purpose of catching this water. Trench is a better word than ditch, for it implies the dam of raised earth which would help to arrest the rush of water. The overflow would rush down the lower part of the torrent-bed. The rainfall was some distance away, and there was no indication of it by a sudden rise in the wind. The rain fell in the night; the overflow would pass quickly away, and in the morning there would be nothing to tell the Moabites of the fall of rain.

"When the meat offering was offered."

(iii. 20.)

R.V. **About the time of offering the oblation.**

There was no flesh offered. The offering consisted of flour, oil, and frankincense. Elsewhere "meat offering" is rendered "meal offering" in the R.V. The time of the offering was immediately after daybreak.

"And he said to a lad."

(iv. 19.)

A lad.

R.V. **To his servant.**

The article is definite. The lad, i.e. some particular man-servant specially entrusted with waiting upon his master, in order to carry out his orders. The R.V. brings this out clearly.

"Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me."

(iv. 24.)

Slack not thy riding for me.

R.V. **Slacken me not the riding.**

The A.V. gives the impression either that the man was on another ass, and the woman sent him forward before herself, or that the woman was riding on the ass behind the man. Neither impression is the correct one. The man was a runner on foot, a driver of the ass, and an attendant or protector of the woman. The woman bids the man urge on the ass to its utmost speed.

"Full ears of corn in the husk thereof."

(iv. 42.)

R.V. **Fresh ears of corn in his sack.**

1. **Fresh.** The original implies the idea of newness. It was the corn just gathered, fresh and new.
2. **Sack** = scrip or wallet, The same as David's shepherd's scrip. It does not convey the idea of a large sack of corn.

"The Lord had given deliverance unto Syria." (v. 1.)

Deliverance.

R.V. Victory.

With the Israelites a victory over their enemies would be regarded as a deliverance wrought by Jehovah. The heathen Syrians would have no such idea. Hence the change.

"And the Syrians had gone out by companies." (v. 2.)

By companies,

R.V. In bands.

There was peace between the kings of Syria and Israel, but the raiding warfare on the borders would still go on. The maid was carried away captive by one of these raiding bands. Compare the border warfare between England and Scotland, even when the two kingdoms were at peace.

"Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot." (v. 9.)

Chariot.

R.V. Chariots.

The original conveys the idea of more than one chariot. The R.V. gives a more vivid description of the number and importance of Naaman's retinue.

"Call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place." (v. 11.)

Strike.

R.V. Wave.

The original means a waving of the hands, as in performing the wave-offering. The phrase may be taken as equivalent to "make passes in the air" like a modern conjuror. Elisha would not touch the leprous sore. The R.V. makes this clear.

"Now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing of thy servant." (v. 15.)

Blessing.

R.V. Present.

So Jacob terms his "present" to Esau a "blessing"

(Gen. xxxiii. 10-11.)

Achsah, the daughter of Caleb, asks for a "blessing" = a present, and receives the land containing springs of water (Judges i. 15.)

Abigail brought a "blessing" = a present, to appease David's anger (1 Sam. xxv. 27).

"When Naaman saw him running after him." (v. 21.)

Him.

R.V. One.

At the distance Naaman would not recognize Gehazi, though he would know that the runner was desirous of coming up with him. Naaman halted, and then, when he recognized Gehazi as the latter drew nearer, got down from his chariot, to pay honour to Elisha in the person of his servant. The R.V. represents what actually took place.

"There be come to me from mount Ephraim." (v. 22.)

Mount Ephraim.

R.V. The hill country of Ephraim.

By "Mount Ephraim" we must understand not a single mountain, but the hilly and fertile region of the highland of Central Palestine, extending from the plain of Jezreel on the north to Benjamin on the south.

Hill country is a more accurate description than **mountain**.

"And when he came to the tower." (v. 24.)

R.V. Hill.

The R.V. correctly translates the original Hebrew. What hill? Probably some well-known hill near the house of Elisha. It has been suggested that this hill lay between Elisha's house and the route taken by Naaman. Hence the transaction would be hidden from the view of anyone in the house. Gehazi dismissed the servants of Naaman when they came to the hill, and thus hoped to hide his doings from his master. This suggestion gives a probable explanation of the details of Gehazi's action.

"Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee." (vi. 1.)

We dwell with thee.

R.V. We dwell before thee.

The A.V. conveys the idea that Elisha dwelt with the sons of the prophets.

The R.V. correctly describes his custom. It was the place where they sat before Elisha, i.e. the common hall or lecture room in which they sat to receive his instruction.

"And the iron did swim." (vi. 6.)

R.V. And made the iron to swim.

The iron axe-head rose to the surface and remained there. The stick cast in was a sign that the iron would float like wood, just as the salt at Gilgal was symbolical of the purification of the spring (ii. 19), and the meal at Jericho symbolical of the wholesomeness of the pottage (iv. 41). The idea put forward by some commentators that Elisha thrust a long piece of wood into the water, and brought up the axe-head by it, is absolutely inconsistent with the words, "cast in" the stick, and "made the iron to swim."

"Shut the door and hold him fast at the door." (vi. 32.)

Hold him fast at the door.

R.V. Hold the door fast against him.

Literally "Press or thrust on him with the door." If the door opened inwards it is clear that the elders held the door against the messenger. If the door opened outwards, as the doors of Eastern houses generally do, it would mean a sudden thrust, pushing the messenger backwards.

"When they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria." (vii. 5.)
 Uttermost.

R.V. Outmost.

Uttermost conveys the idea that it was that part of the camp furthest from Samaria. **Outmost** would signify the extreme boundary of the camp, *i.e.* furthest from the centre, and thus would mean the extreme edge of the Syrian camp nearest the city. "Uttermost" formerly had this meaning, so the R.V. replaces it by the modern equivalent.

Edersheim suggests that the lepers made a detour over the hills and struck the Syrian camp in the rear.

"Some mischief will come upon us." (vii. 10.)

R.V. Punishment will overtake us.

The lepers did not dread misfortune, but feared that the king might punish them.

"They took therefore two chariot horses." (vii. 14.)

Two chariot horses.

R.V. Two chariots with horses.

The A.V. is a mistranslation. The R.V. is correct. Two chariots were sent with their proper complement of horses.

"Go, say unto him, Thou mayest certainly recover." (viii. 10.)

Thou mayest certainly recover.

R.V. Thou shalt surely recover.

We must guard against the idea that Elisha suggested to Hazael, the murder of Benhadad. Hazael had already formed the plan of removing his master, so that his question to Elisha was all hypocrisy. How could the king recover when Hazael had planned his murder? Elisha answers his hypocrisy, and unmasks it. He replies, Go, tell your master (as you intend to do) that he will recover, but you know the message is false, for he will surely die because you intend to murder him.

"But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?"

R.V. But what is thy servant, which is but a dog, that he should do this great thing? (viii. 13.)

The A.V. reads:—Do you really think that I am such a wretch as to have conceived so base a plot against my sick master?

The R.V. reads:—Is it possible that so humble a person as I can hope to rise to such greatness? *i.e.* not only to be king of Syria, but also to be so successful in war against Israel.

The R.V. gives the true thought of Hazael, and effectually removes any impression which might otherwise be given by the wording of the A.V., that Hazael was prompted to his murderous design by the veiled suggestions of Elisha.

"That he took a thick cloth." (viii. 15.)

Thick cloth.

R.V. The coverlet.

The Hebrew word means something *plaited* or *interwoven*. The article indicates that it was something usually found in a sick

room, and that there was only one thing of its kind. Either the pillow, or the coverlet of the bed, or the cloth or mat at the head of the bed would answer Hazael's purpose (s.c.).

"*Him that is shut up and left in Israel.*" (ix. 8.)

Left.

R.V. **Left at large.**

Shut up = confined, under some restraint.

Left at large = free, not under control. So the phrase includes everyone; bond and free, young and old; the young being under control, those grown up being free from restraint.

"*Ye know the man and his communication.*" (ix. ii.)

His communication.

R.V. **What his talk was.**

The R.V. seems to connect the manner of the man and his words, *i.e.* a mad fellow, and his words the raving of a madman.

But Jehu probably meant, you know the man from his garb must have been one of the prophets, and you must therefore know that he has delivered a message from Jehovah. You know all about it, and possibly he came at your instigation.

"*And she painted her face.*" (ix. 30.)

Face.

Eyes.

Painted her eyes with a pigment of antimony and zinc (Arabic *Kohl*). The practice is still common amongst Eastern women. The effect of the dark border is to give unusual brilliancy to the eye, making it appear larger.

"*Had Zimri peace who slew his master?*" (ix. 31.)

R.V. **Is it peace, thou Zimri, thy master's murderer?**

According to R.V. Jezebel distinctly calls Jehu a second Zimri, and threatens him with the fate of the latter. Zimri's reign lasted but a short time (see p. cxvii.).

"*All his great men, and his kinsfolk, and his priests.*" (x. 11.)

Kinsfolk.

R.V. **Familiar friends.**

The original means "his known ones," *i.e.* his close friends and adherents.

"*And he was at the shearing house in the way.*" (x. 12.)

Shearing house.

R.V. **Shearing house of the shepherds.** (*Margin* "the house of the gathering").

Lit. "the house of binding of the shepherds," and so generally supposed to be the spot where the sheep were bound preparatory to being shorn.

But the idea of binding can be easily construed into a gathering together of the shepherds, so that the marginal reading of the R.V. may be the correct rendering, *i.e.* the house where shepherds were in the habit of meeting to shear their sheep.

"Proclaim a solemn assembly for Baal: And they proclaimed it."
Proclaim. (x. 20.)

R.V. Sanctify.

Sanctify = to prepare for the solemn service by purification. The original is a different word from that translated "proclaimed," in the latter part of the verse. The latter word means a public proclamation.

"All the coasts of Israel." (x. 32 and passim.)
Coasts.

R.V. Borders.

Coast originally meant a border. The word is now generally applied to the sea coast only. The R.V. replaces it by a word of modern meaning, to avoid ambiguity.

"The rulers over hundreds, with the captains and the guard." (xi. 4.)

R.V. The captains over hundreds, of the Carites and of the guard. Three separate sets of captains—

(1) The centurions of the ordinary military forces.

(2) The commanders of the Carites.

(3) The commanders of the royal "runners" or body-guard.

Carites, some foreign mercenaries forming part of the body-guard of the monarch, somewhat as the Cherethites and Pelethites of David's reign. **Carites** may be Carians (Stanley), who were much inclined to take foreign service.

The R.V. supports the conclusion that Jehoiada consulted the captains only, and that the royal guard generally was not won over (see note, p. 44).

"So shall ye keep the watch of the house, that it be not broken down."
That it be not broken down. (xi. 6.)

R.V. And be a barrier.

The R.V. again supports the conclusion that there was no occupation of the palace, but that the guards placed by Jehoiada were to be a defence to the Temple, and bar the approach of a hostile force (see note, p. 44).

"The king stood by a pillar." (xi. 14.)
A pillar.

R.V. The pillar. [His pillar, 2 Chron. xxiii. 13.]

The best rendering is "upon his standing place," i.e. upon the raised platform used for the coronation of the kings of Judah.

"Have her forth without the ranges." (xi. 15.)
Without the ranges.

R.V. Between the ranks.

Lead her out from the Temple between the two ranks of the guard. A triple purpose (1) to put her to death outside the Temple; (2) to prevent rescue; (3) to guard against the incensed people putting her to death within the Temple.

"And they laid hands on her." (xi. 16.)

R.V. So they made way for her.

They made a clear space for her to walk out of the Temple.

- "The money of every one that passeth the account." (xii. 4.)
R.V. In current money.
 The A.V. describes the person as passing the census, and so denotes this money as the half-shekel paid yearly by each adult, for religious purposes.
 The R.V. describes the money as passing the account, and so denotes current money. The currency of the period consisted of pieces of silver of fixed weight.
 The rendering of the A.V. seems much preferable.
- "The money that every man is set at." (xii. 4.)
The money of the persons for whom each man is rated.
 This includes every kind of redemption money, which was assessed by the priests according to the age or sex of the person paying (Lev. xxvii. 2-8).
- "Into the hand of Hazael King of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad, the son of Hazael, all their days." (xiii. 3.)
All their days.
R.V. Continually.
 The A.V. would make it appear that Syria oppressed Israel during the reigns of Hazael and Benhadad without intermission. Such was not the case. Joash, the successor of Jehoahaz, regained the cities his father lost, whilst his son Jeroboam II. recovered the country east of Jordan.
 The R.V. translates correctly, and shows that the Syrian oppression continued during the whole reign of Jehoahaz, but in that reign only.
- "There remained the grove also in Samaria." (xiii. 6.)
The grove.
R.V. The Asherah.
 The "Grove" does not adequately convey the meaning of the original. A grove of trees is not intended, but the asherah or wooden image of the Phœnician goddess, Ashtoreth.
- "Made them like the dust by threshing." (xiii. 7.)
By threshing.
R.V. In threshing. (*Margin*, dust to trample on).
 As dust is made in the process of threshing. Threshing was done by oxen treading the corn. So the expression is figurative of the miserable state of the land, downtrodden under the Syrians.
- "From the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain." (xiv. 25.)
The entering of Hamath. The sea of the plain.
R.V. The entering in of Hamath. The sea of the Arabah.
The entering in of Hamath. The correct term. It describes the pass leading to Hamath, the northern boundary of Israel.
The sea of the Arabah. "The plain" is a misleading description of the extraordinary depression in the land through which the Jordan flows, and which ends in the Dead Sea. This gorge was known as the Arabah (see Intro., p. lx.).

"Smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house." (xv. 25.)
 Palace.

R.V. **Castle.**

Lit. The tower of the king's house, *i.e.* some strong part of the king's palace—the keep or citadel, loftier and stronger than the rest of the palace. The R.V. makes this clear.

"And saw an altar that was at Damascus." (xvi. 10.)
 An altar.

R.V. **The altar.**

The R.V. makes it clear that it was the principal altar at Damascus. Possibly the altar in the house of Rimmon (see v. 18).

Meat offering. (xvi. 13 and *passim.*)

R.V. **Meal offering.**

Taking the modern sense of "meat"=flesh food, the A.V. would appear to describe some offering of the flesh of some animal. But the old English sense of "meat" is something to eat. In fact the offering consisted of fine flour and salt, mixed with oil and frankincense, but without leaven. It contained no flesh at all. The R.V. rendering "meal offering" conveys the true idea of its character.

"Put it on the north side of the altar." (xvi. 14.)
 The altar. R.V. **His altar.**

The brazen altar of Solomon was removed, and placed on the north side of the altar made for Ahaz—*his* altar. The R.V. removes all chance of misconception.

"And the covert for the Sabbath." (xvi. 18.)
 Covert for the Sabbath.

R.V. **Covered way for the Sabbath** (*margin, covered place*).

Some covered place, either a covered way or colonnade, or else a seat or stand with a canopy, for the use of the King and Court, on the Sabbath is intended. It is not clear what it actually was.

"Turned he from the house of the Lord for the King of Assyria."
 1. from. 2. for. (xvi. 18.)

R.V. **Unto. Because of.**

(1) The "covert" and "entry" were removed into the house of the Lord.

(2) **Because of.** The reason for their removal is clear. It was "because of" the King of Assyria, either to please him by a total abandonment of the worship of Jehovah, or in fear lest he should require Ahaz to deliver to him these richly-worked and valuable pieces of art.

"And in Habor by the river of Gozan." (xvii. 6.)
 By. R.V. **On.**

Both A.V. and R.V. are misleading. Gozan is a district, not a river. Habor is a river, not a district, and waters the district of Gozan. Translate "On Habor, the river of Gozan." The river of Gozan is grammatically in apposition to Habor, and descriptive of it. There is no connecting preposition in the original.

"*Made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places.*"

Of the lowest of them. (xvii. 32.)

R.V. **From among themselves.**

Lit. **From all ranks.** The priests were selected indiscriminately from all tribes, families or classes, and were not confined to the single tribe of Levi.

"*After the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.*"

Whom they carried away from thence. (xvii. 33.)

R.V. **From among whom they had been carried away.**

The new colonists served their own gods in Israel after the manner of their own fellow countrymen at home.

"*And from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid.*"

Pillars. (xviii. 16.)

R.V. (margin). **Door posts.**

Lit. The supporters, *i.e.* the framework of the doors, or the door posts.

"*Make an agreement with me by a present.*" (xviii. 31.)

R.V. **Make your peace with me.**

Lit. "Make with me a blessing"; hence, peace, since peace would be concluded with expressions of mutual goodwill.

"*Behold, I will send a blast upon him.*" (xix. 7.)

Send a blast upon him.

R.V. **Put a spirit in him.**

There is no reference to the destruction of the Assyrian army (verse 35). The R.V. conveys the correct meaning, *viz.* that Sennacherib should be so disheartened that he should return home.

"*I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.*"

The lodgings of his borders. (xix. 23.)

R.V. **His furthest lodging place.**

Sennacherib would advance from Lebanon to Judah and Jerusalem in the far south, and leave no corner of the land free from invasion. The R.V. makes this clear.

Into the forest of his Carmel.

R.V. **The forest of his fruitful field.**

Carmel is not a proper name here. It does not signify the region of Mount Carmel. The name signifies "a fruitful field," *i.e.* that Sennacherib would lay waste every fertile spot.

"*Have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places?*" (xix. 24.)

R.V. **Will I dry up all the rivers of Egypt.**

Sennacherib is boasting that no natural obstacles can impede his onward march. The Nile, the great river of Egypt, cannot stop his army. He will cross it as easily as if it were dried up before him.

"Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears."

Rage. Thy tumult. (xix. 28.)

R.V. **Raging. Thine arrogance.**

The R.V. brings out clearly that Sennacherib is to be punished for his blasphemous challenge to Jehovah.

"Afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court." (xx. 4.)

The middle court.

R.V. **The middle part of the city.**

The R.V. follows another reading. If city means "the city itself" we must understand Zion, the central part of the city to be intended. But "city" more probably means the citadel of the king's palace. Compare "*the city of the house of Baal*" (see note x. 25). This interpretation agrees with A.V., and makes it clear that Isaiah had not gone further than the middle court of the palace before the Lord bade him return to the King.

"Shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?"

Go forward. Degrees. (xx. 9.)

R.V. **Decline. Steps.**

The dial was most probably some obelisk, or pillar, on steps (see p. 120). The shadow of the obelisk would fall on the steps, and the hour could be told by counting the steps. The dial would not mark degrees. Though the shadow would lengthen as the sun went down, it would give the appearance of descending the steps. Hence the change in the R.V., which correctly describes what took place.

"And observed times." (xxi. 6.)

R.V. **And practised augury.**

In later times the Roman augurs decided by omens, (such as the flight of birds, etc.), whether or no the day or time would be propitious. Hence the A.V. "observed times." The R.V. gives the full sense of the original word.

"Thy servants have gathered the money that was found in the house."

Gathered. (xxii. 9.)

R.V. **Emptied out (margin Poured out).**

The collection had gone on for some time. The people brought their offerings to the doorkeepers of the Temple, who placed them in a large chest within the Temple. This chest was now emptied and the money counted.

"She dwelt in Jerusalem in the college." (xxii. 14.)

In the college.

R.V. **In the second quarter.**

Huldah dwelt in what is known as the second town. It is called Maktesh, lit. "*the mortar*" (Zeph. i. 10-11), as being in the hollow of the valley, surrounded by higher ground. Probably it was added to the old city in the reign of Solomon, to accommodate the increasing population. It lay in the Tyropeon Valley, west of the Temple, and was the chief business quarter (see Map p. lxii.).

- "*Upon the graves of the children of the people.*" (xxiii. 6.)
 The children of the people.
 R.V. **The common people.**
 Jeremiah (xxvi. 23) records that Urijah's body was cast "*into the graves of the common people.*" Thus there was some general cemetery for those who could not afford private sepulchres. These graves were probably sunk in the ground, not hewn in the rock. The act of throwing the ashes of the Asherah of Manasseh on these graves was intended to defile even these ashes. No one would attempt to gather them, because for a Jew to touch a grave was to commit an act of ceremonial defilement.
- "*The chamber of Nathan-melech which was in the suburbs.*" (xxiii. 11.)
 Suburbs. R.V. **Precincts.**
 The A.V. would convey the idea that the horses and chariots were kept in the suburbs of Jerusalem. The R.V. correctly describes them as kept outside the Temple but close at hand; i.e. "*near the entering in of the house of the Lord.*" They were stalled in a suburb of the Temple, not in a suburb of the city. Precincts exactly expresses the locality of the stalls.
- "*What title is that that I see?*" (xxiii. 17.)
 Title. R.V. **Monument.**
 Josiah saw a sepulchral monument, probably a stone erected to mark the grave.
- "*The wizards, and the images, and the idols, etc.*" (xxiii. 24.)
 Images.
 R.V. **The teraphim.**
 The penates or household gods worshipped by private families (see p. 130).
- "*From the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates.*" (xxiv. 7.)
 River of Egypt.
 R.V. **Torrent of Egypt.**
 The R.V. clearly distinguishes this stream from the Nile. The stream was the *Wady-el-Arish*, a torrent stream flowing into the Mediterranean, marking the northern boundary of Egypt.
- "*And the city was broken up.*" (xxv. 4.)
 R.V. **Then a breach was made in the city.**
 The Chaldean army made a breach in the northern wall by means of their battering rams (see p. 101).
- "*The way toward the plain.*" (xxv. 4.)
 R.V. **By the way of the Arabah.**
 For the Arabah see Intro. p. lx.
- "*The principal scribe of the host.*" (xxv. 19.)
 R.V. **The scribe, the captain of the host.**
 The A.V. describes the chief scribe attached to the army, and thus most commentators explain the passage as alluding to the secretary attendant upon the commander-in-chief. The R.V. describes an official somewhat similar to our modern Secretary for War. The duties of the official are stated. He "*mustered the people of the land,*" i.e. enrolled those liable to be called upon for military service.

WORDS AND PHRASES EXPLAINED.

Abomination. A term applied to idolatry generally. The worship of heathen idols was often accompanied by rites of the foulest description. Hence the appellation.

Asherah (rendered "grove" in A.V.). Ashtoreth seems to have been the name of the Phœnician goddess (see p. xlix), whilst Asherah was the name of her image or symbol.

Burden. "*The Lord laid this burden upon him*" (ix. 25). An expression used by Jehu when commanding Bidkar to cast the body of Joram into the field of Naboth.

The word "burden" here means a "prophetic denunciation of woe" against a person, city or nation. The R.V. translates in the margin "*uttered this oracle against him.*"

Compare the description of the death of Joash king of Judah in Chronicles, "*Now concerning his sons and the greatness of the burdens laid upon him*" (2 Chron. xxiv. 27), i.e. the many severe prophetic denunciations uttered against him in consequence of his many wicked deeds.

Coast=border region. From Latin *costa*=rib or side, through French *coste*. Formerly, a "border" generally, though now applied to the sea-coast only.

Compass = circuit, circumference. "*They fetched a compass of seven days' journey*" (iii. 9) = to make a circuitous march of seven days' duration.

Custom of putting to death the male members of a Royal house by a usurper of the throne. This is by no means an unusual practice in the East. It effectually prevents the chance of a successful rising on the part of the adherents of the late dynasty, and also removes any possible avenger of blood. If any male member survived, it would be his duty to avenge the murder of his father.

Instances are:—

- (1) Baasha destroyed all the house of Jeroboam when he murdered Nadab, and came to the throne (1 Kings xv. 29).
- (2) Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha (1 Kings xvi. 11), also all his kinsfolk and friends.
- (3) Jehu effectually put an end not only to the dynasty of Ahab, but to all connected with his family, also his adherents and the worshippers of Baal who might later have conspired against his own rule (ix.-x.).
- (4) Athaliah destroyed all the seed royal with the exception of Joash, who was saved from the massacre by Jehoiada and Jehosheba (xi. i.).

Dial of Ahaz. Some contrivance for the measuring of time, most probably consisting of a set of steps or stairs with an obelisk, or a staff or pole, fixed upon the top casting a shadow upon the steps. Such shadow would ascend or descend the steps according as the sun rose higher in the heavens or went down.

"Ten degrees" (xx. 9) should be translated "*ten steps*," which is the literal rendering of the original.

The dial was probably placed in the courtyard of the palace, and appears to have been visible to the king from the window of the chamber in which he lay sick.

Hezekiah chose as the sign that the shadow should go backward, *i.e.* ascend the steps again after it had begun to descend them, a phenomenon contrary to all experience; whereas a sudden lengthening of the shadow, *i.e.* an advance in the same direction as it was already going, would not have been so striking an occurrence.

Sun-dials proper were invented by the Babylonians as recorded by Herodotus, and it is therefore probable that some such instrument for measuring time had been already invented by that nation. Ahaz may have heard of the invention, or probably have seen such an instrument on his visit to Tiglath-pileser at Damascus (xvi. 7-10).

Dogs. The wild street dogs of the East are regarded as unclean animals, and are only useful as scavengers in clearing away refuse and offal. So the dogs ate Jezebel in the streets of Jezreel (ix. 33-36). Such an end would be considered terribly disgraceful. It was threatened to the descendants of Jeroboam (1 Kings xiv. 11), of Baasha (1 Kings xvi. 4), to Ahab and to Jezebel and to their descendants (1 Kings xxi. 19-24).

The terms *dog*, *dead dog*, *dog's head* were used as terms of reproach; so Hazael says to Elisha, when Elisha prophesied that he would put Benhadad to death, ascend the throne of Syria, and oppress Israel, "*Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?*" meaning, Is it possible for one in so humble a position to rise to such a pitch of greatness? (see p. 111).

Double portion. Among the rights of the first-born was a double portion of the father's inheritance, but not of the mother's, "*giving him a double portion of all that he hath*" (Deut. xxi. 17).

Jacob made Joseph his heir as regards this privilege of the first-born; thus there is no tribe bearing Joseph's name, but he is represented by the two tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

When Elisha asks for a double portion of Elijah's spirit, he is asking that he may be allowed the honour of being the successor of the great prophet, and of continuing his work as if he were his first-born. It is not a request for twice the spirit or power of the departing prophet.

Elders, or old men, were the representatives of the people.

They are first mentioned as acting in concert as a political body at the time of the Exodus.

"*And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel*" (Exodus iv. 29).

They retained their position under all the political changes the Jews went through, viz. :—

- (a) Under Joshua. "Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel" (Josh. xxiv. 1).
- (b) Under the Judges. "When the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said," etc. (1 Sam. iv. 3).
- (c) Under the kings. "And the saying pleased Absalom well, and all the elders of Israel" (2 Sam. xvii. 4).
- (d) During the Captivity. "The letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem unto the residue of the elders which were carried away captive" (Jer. xxix. 1).
- (e) After the return. "But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, that they could not cause them to cease" (Ezra v. 5).

In 2 Kings they are mentioned on the following occasions :—

- (1) They are found sitting with Elisha in his house during the siege of Samaria. Their intervention saved Elisha till the king came in person (vi. 32-33).
- (2) Jehu wrote to the "rulers of Jezreel, to the elders, and to them that brought up Ahab's children" (x. 1, also x. 5).

Familiar spirit. (Lat. *famulus*, a servant). A spirit or devil who was supposed to be in attendance upon the old necromancers, obey their commands, and discharge their commissions like servants. "A woman that hath a familiar spirit" (1 Sam. xxviii. 7). *Lit.* a woman, mistress or owner of ob. The word ob means a skin-bottle, and is always rendered *ventriloquist* in the Septuagint, and hence appears to mean the distended belly of the ventriloquist (s.c.).

"From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city" (xvii. 9; xviii. 8). There were two kinds of watch towers—

- (1) The tower of the watchman at the gate of the city at which the sentry stood to give warning of the approach of strangers.
- (2) The tower of the watchmen in the lone, deserted places of the land guarding the flocks and crops. These would somewhat be equivalent to the Scotch "Peels" in the Border warfare.

It is these latter towers that are meant, and so the expression is proverbial. "From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city" is equivalent to "from the most solitary to the most populous place in the land."

In xvii. 9 it indicates how widespread was the idolatry, and in xviii. 8 it indicates how thoroughly Hezekiah had overrun the land of the Philistines.

Gate. There appears to have been some open space set apart near the gate of a city where important matters were transacted, where a market seems to have been held, and where kings and magistrates sat and administered justice.

Over the gate were chambers. David went "up to the chamber over the gate" (2 Sam. xviii. 33) to weep for Absalom.

There was an outer and an inner gate. The space between these gates is known as "in the midst of the gate." Here Joab assassinated Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27).

Notices in 2 Kings.

1. The four lepers sat "at the entering in of the gate" during the siege of Samaria in the reign of Joram (vii. 3).
2. The incredulous lord who disbelieved the prediction of plenty by Elisha, was trodden to death at the gate (vii. 20), which the king had placed under his charge (vii. 17).
3. Joab caused the heads of the seventy sons of Ahab to be placed in two heaps at "the entering in of the gate" of Jezreel (x. 8).
4. Josiah "brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entering in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city" (xxiii. 8). The open places near the gates would be convenient places for the erection of shrines for the worship of false gods.

Girding up the loins. The Easterns wear a long tunic fastened at the waist by a girdle. This tunic is tucked into the girdle when men desire to move quickly or to work hard. So the expression "*gird up thy loins*" describes this action of tucking in the long skirt of the tunic.

Thus Elisha when he bids Gehazi "*gird up thy loins*," as he sends him to the house of the Shunammite (iv. 29), and when he tells the young man "*Gird up thy loins*," as he bids him go and anoint Jehu (ix. 1), means that they are to despatch their errands with all haste.

Go out and come in. A proverbial expression for the manner of leading one's life, especially in the active conduct of affairs (see xix. 27).

Grove (see Asherah, p. 119).

Hangings = curtains. "*Hangings for the grove*" (xxiii. 7). Curtains for the tents or tabernacles of the Asherah.

High places. These were of two kinds—

- (1) Places of sacrifices to false gods.
- (2) Unauthorized sanctuaries of Jehovah.

The former were, of course, absolute abominations, like the high places of the Canaanites denounced in Deut. xii. 2-3.

We see examples of the two kinds in the Second Book of Kings.

- (1) The high places in the cities of Samaria destroyed by Josiah (xxiii. 19). These would be high places for idolatrous worship.
- (2) The high places allowed to be continued by Joash with the sanction of Jehoiada (xii. 3). These would be high places for the worship of Jehovah.

Many of the pious kings of Judah, whilst destroying idol worship, were too weak, or not sufficiently enlightened, to remove the high places consecrated to Jehovah.

Hezekiah removed these high places consecrated to Jehovah (xviii. 4-22).

The good work commenced by Hezekiah was completed by Josiah (xxiii.).

After the time of Josiah there is no mention of high places devoted to the worship of Jehovah.

The existence of these high places can be traced from the earliest times, for it was the custom of all nations to erect altars and places of worship on lofty and conspicuous places.

The erection of *high places* was forbidden by the law of Moses (Deut. xii. 11-14), where we find the strictest injunction to destroy these places consecrated to Canaanitish idolatry.

But *high places* existed for the worship of God in the times of the Judges.

Gideon and Manasseh built altars at Divine command (Judges vi. 25, 26; xiii. 16-23).

Samuel erected an altar at Mizpah, and one at Bethlehem (1 Sam. vii. 10; xvi. 5).

Saul sacrificed at Gilgal (1 Sam. xiii. 9).

Elijah repaired the altar, and sacrificed at Mount Carmel (1 Kings xviii. 30).

The excuse for the existence of these high places is found in 1 Kings iii. 2, "*Only the people sacrificed in high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord, until those days,*" i.e. the days of Solomon.

When the Temple had been built, what had previously been tacitly sanctioned must now be removed for the following reasons:—

- (1) To guard against all local corruptions of God's worship, e.g. the calf worship at Beth-el.
- (2) To preserve the inviolability of national unity, by preventing the congregation of separate tribes round local sanctuaries.
- (3) To promote the spiritual worship of the invisible God without the aid of local and visible emblems of his presence.

"Hook in thy nose" (xix. 23). Hook=ring, and refers to the practice of leading wild animals by a cord attached to a ring in the nose.

From Assyrian sculptures we find that Assyrian and Babylonian kings were in the habit of actually passing a ring through the nose or lower lip of their greatest prisoners, and of leading them about with a thong or rope attached to the ring.

Houses. The Jewish houses are built in quadrangular shape, surrounding a courtyard. The windows looked upon the courtyard. The stairs are outside the building, and go up from the courtyard to the roof. The roof is flat, and is used for various purposes, and can be reached from the outside by a staircase. The entrance is through a porch into the court, whence access is made to the house.

"*Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber*" (i. 2). The window would be closed by a lattice of interlaced wood, opening outwards. Ahaziah probably leaned against the lattice which, being insecurely fastened, flew open, and the king fell into the courtyard below.

The Shunammite woman made "*a little chamber on the wall*" for Elisha's use. This might have been either a room projecting like a balcony from the lower storey, or a building on the roof supported

by its walls. In any case it could be reached from the outside without the necessity of entering the house, and thus Elisha could come and go without interfering with the household, and also being himself private and apart from them.

The structure of the Jewish house also explains the anointing of Jehu as king.

Jehu and the captains were sitting in the court, probably holding a council of war.

The young prophet enters hurriedly through the porch, singles out Jehu, and takes him aside into the house, where he anoints Jehu unseen by the captains, and delivers his message.

The prophet then makes his way in haste out of the house through the court, passing through the captains.

Jehu comes out of the house, and, when pressed, discloses the nature of the prophet's errand.

The captains make a cushion of their cloaks, placing them under Jehu at the top of the staircase, which was outside the building. Thus Jehu sat on a kind of extemporised throne at the top of the stairs, whilst the captains in the court below hailed him as king.

Keepers of the Door. Officers of the Temple. They were three in number (xxv. 18), and officials of high rank, and seem to have been next in office to the high priest, and the second or deputy priest (xxv. 18). They had charge of the outer and inner courts of the Temple, and the entrance to the Temple itself, hence the number three.

They were entrusted with the care of the money contributed for the repair of the Temple in the reign of Joash (xii. 9), and also of the contributions made for a similar purpose in the reign of Josiah (xxii. 4).

These officers in the reign of Zedekiah were put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (xxv. 18-21).

Leprosy. Leprosy was a living death, a dissolution little by little of the whole body, and, as such, a special type of sin. The laws concerning leprosy are framed with the object of symbolically teaching the loathsomeness of sin.

	Leprosy.	Parallel.	Sin.
	"A living death."		"The wages of sin is death."
	The leper was unclean.		"Without holiness no man shall see God."
	Separated from the congregation.		"There shall in no wise enter into it, (i.e. the New Jerusalem), anything that defileth, etc." (Rev. xxi. 27).
	Incurable.		"There is none other name (i.e. Jesus under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12).
	The priest alone could legally pronounce a leper clean.		Jesus our great high priest (see Heb. viii. 1).

Lepers in the Old Testament are:—

1. **Miriam.** Stricken with leprosy for speaking against Moses (Numb. xii. 10), but healed at the prayer of Moses (verses 13-16).
2. **Naaman.** Captain of the Syrians, healed by Elisha (v. 1-14).
3. **Gehazi.** Servant of Elisha. Smitten for his deceit, with the leprosy of Naaman (v. 20-27).
4. **King Uzziah or Azariah.** Smitten with leprosy for presuming to offer incense before the Lord (2 Chron. xxvi. 16-23).
5. **The four Lepers** outside the gate of Samaria, who were the first to learn the flight of the Syrians (vii. 3-11).

It is clear that the strongest regulations of the Law of Moses as regards the separation of lepers were not in force in Syria. Naaman leads the army in war, is in attendance on the king in the house of Rimmon, and lives with his family at home.

Man of God. A name that appears to have been the ordinary designation of a prophet. It is a title frequently assigned to Elijah and Elisha.

The appellation first appears with reference to the angel who appeared to Manoah and his wife, announcing the birth of Samson (Judges xiii. 6).

Nehushtan. The words mean "a piece of brass," or "something made of brass." It was applied by Hezekiah to the Brazen Serpent made by Moses (Numb. xxi. 9). Apparently, it had been preserved since the time of Moses, and had become an object of worship, incense being offered to it (xviii. 4).

It might have been piously and appropriately preserved as a memorial of the cures in the wilderness, but now that it had become an idol Hezekiah breaks it in pieces and gives it the name "Nehushtan," piece of brass, an appellation which as an idol it deserved.

* (1) The circumstances under which the serpent was made are as follows:—

The people were bitten in the wilderness by fiery serpents, sent by the Lord, and many died from the bites; but on the repentance of the people God commanded Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole. Every one, that had been bitten who looked up at the serpent, was cured of the bite.

(2) The preferable reading of original text is "And it was called Nehushtan" (so R. V. margin), i.e. that it was the name generally given to it. The people did not call it "the serpent" but "the brass." They may have had objections to call it the serpent on account of the aversion with which that reptile was regarded.

(3) The lifting up of the serpent was regarded as a type of Jesus raised upon the cross (St. John iii. 14-15).

New moon. The first day of the lunar month, and always observed as a holy day. Special sacrifices were offered on that day, and trumpets were blown at the offering of these special sacrifices. It was also a day of rest, there being a cessation of all trade and handicraft.

The husband of the Shunammite woman expresses surprise at his wife's determination to visit Elisha. "It is neither new moon, nor sabbath" (iv. 23), i.e. no day set apart for particular worship.

Offerings. Broadly speaking, the offerings may be divided into three classes, if the offering of incense be excluded, and they were offered in the following order, viz.:

1. **The Sin-offering: the trespass offering.** This was expiatory, and varied with the different offences against the law. The shedding of blood was an essential part of the sin-offering, which represented the covenant as broken by man, and as knit together again by God's appointment, through "*the shedding of blood.*"
2. **The Burnt-offering.** The main idea was "self-dedication." The blood was sprinkled round about the altar, continuing the idea of expiation, but the main idea was the offering of the whole victim to God, representing (as the laying of the hand on the head shows) the devotion of the sacrificer, body and soul, to Him. The victim was wholly consumed.
3. **The Thank-offering.** The main idea was the offering to God of His own best gifts as a sign of thankful homage, and as a means of maintaining His service and His servants.
 - (a) *Unbloody*, called the *meat-offering*, consisting not of "meat" in the modern sense, but solely of corn, flour and oil (see p. 115).
 - (b) *Bloody*, called the *peace-offering*. The offering consisted of three parts. The worshipper brought to the priest the fat of the victim, together with the breast and shoulder.
 - (1) The fat was burnt upon the altar as an offering to God (Lev. iii. 3-5).
 - (2) The breast and shoulder were "waved" and "heaved" before the Lord, and after being thus dedicated to Jehovah, became the priest's portion.
 - (3) The worshipper received the rest of the victim, and partook of it with his family and friends as a sacrificial feast.

It will be seen from the above that the characteristic ceremony in the peace-offering was the eating of the flesh by the sacrificer. It betokened the enjoyment of Communion with God (see Bible Dictionary).

There are five offerings in money mentioned in the Second Book of Kings, viz.:

1. **Redemption money**—"the money of every one that passeth the account" (xii. 4).
This was the half-shekel, required by the Law to be paid by every one above twenty years of age when he passed the numbering (Exodus xxx. 12-15).
2. **Money payments connected with vows**—"the money that every man is set at" (xii. 4), or as in the R.V. "*the money of the persons at which each man is rated.*"
"The Law itself valued those who had made vows at certain rates, according to age or sex. If a man was too poor to pay at the rate thus fixed, the priest was to value him" (Lev. xxvii. 2-8) (s.c.).

3. Freewill offerings—"the money that cometh into any man's heart to bring" (xii. 4).

All the above classes of offerings were devoted to the repair of the Temple, and to the replacing of the sacred vessels in the reign of Joash.

4. Trespass-money (xii. 16). In case of injury to a man's person or property, the offender was bound by the law to make compensation according to the valuation of the priest, with the addition of one-fifth in money (Numb. v. 8). This was assigned to the priests if the sufferer died and left no kinsman. All trespasses against Jehovah were to be compensated in a similar way, and this money was assigned to the priests.

5. Sin-money (xii. 16). In the case of sin-offerings the priests received no money according to the Law, nor could sin-offerings be made in money (see sin-offering above).

These gifts, here styled "sin-money," must be voluntary gifts by the sacrificer to the priest over and above the victim of the sin-offering.

Neither the trespass-money nor the sin-money was paid to the fund devoted to the repair of the Temple by Joash. These gifts were the portion of the priests, and paid to them (xii. 16).

Over the household. This phrase describes an important officer of state. The office may be described as "Comptroller of the Household" or "Prefect of the Palace."

In the days of Solomon the office was a subordinate one, but under the later kings the Comptroller appears to have been the chief minister of state.

From Isaiah it would appear that he wore a distinguishing robe and girdle, and carried a key upon his shoulder as a badge of his office (Is. xxii. 21-22).

Pouring Water. Elisha is described as having "*poured water on the hands of Elijah*" (iii. 11). This signifies personal ministration and attendance.

Ablutions were thus performed after the daily meal, which is still the custom.

"After the meals a pitcher and ewer are brought, and a servant, with a napkin over his shoulder, pours on your hands" (Thompson, p. 128).

"The Orientals have a scruple against washing in any water that is *not running*; hence they do not usually wash in a basin, but employ someone to pour water on to their hands into a basin, with a pierced false bottom" (KITTO).

Queen-Mother. As one of the results of polygamy the female who takes the highest position in an Oriental Court is not one of the queens, *i.e.* the wives of the reigning monarch, but his mother. Thus we find the Queen-mother to be a person of great importance.

A singular illustration occurs in the case of Bath-sheba.

As *the wife of David* she approaches the king with reverence; she "*bowed and did obeisance to the king*" (1 Kings i. 16).

As the mother of Solomon she was received with honour, "the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat (i.e. a throne) to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand" (1 Kings ii. 19.)

This dignity of the Queen-mother in the state, explains why the accession of each king is accompanied by the name of his mother, as indicating the person occupying the position of Queen-mother.

Queen-mothers specially noticeable are:—

Athaliah, daughter of Jezebel, and wife of Jehoram king of Judah, and thus Queen-mother in the reign of her son, Ahaziah. Her position enabled her to destroy nearly all the seed royal and to usurp the throne (xi. 1).

Maachah, the mother of Abijam, king of Judah. She had authority during the reign of her grandson, Asa, and was the leader of the idol worship. Asa found it necessary to remove Maachah from her position, and thus deprive her of her influence, when he determined to put down idolatrous worship (1 Kings xv. 10-13).

Jezebel, the wife of Ahab. As Queen-mother, after the death of Ahab, she wielded great influence in the court of her son Joram. This is evident from the conduct of Jehu, who declared that there could not be peace as long as Jezebel was in power to exert her influence. It is probable that in her desire to put down the worship of Jehovah, she also influenced Athaliah in the attempt of the latter to extirpate the royal house of David.

Recorder, an officer of high rank. His duties appear to have been twofold:—(1) Annalist, i.e. as keeping a record of events.

(2) Chancellor or president of the privy council.

Joah, the son of Asaph, was the recorder in the reign of Hezekiah (see p. cviii.).

Rending the clothes. Sign of mourning, horror, alarm or indignation.

1. Elisha rent his clothes in grief at the loss of Elijah (ii. 12).
2. The king of Israel rent his clothes in alarm on reading the letter from the king of Syria with respect to Naaman's leprosy (v. 7).
3. The king rent his clothes in horror at the story told him by the woman of the eating of her son in the famine during the siege of Samaria (vi. 30).
4. Eliakim, Shebna and Joah rent their clothes in horror at the blasphemy of Rabshakeh (xviii. 37). So did Hezekiah in horror, and as a sign of mourning (xix. 1).
5. Josiah rent his clothes in horror and grief when he heard the denunciation against sin as read to him in the Book of the Law (xxii. 11).

Runners, i.e. the running footmen before the chariots of great men were employed in a double capacity.

(1) As guard of honour to the king.

Thus Absalom and Adonijah when they had "fifty men to run before them" (2 Sam. xv. 1. and 1 Kings i. 5), were assuming royal state.

When Elijah ran before Ahab from Carmel to Jezreel, it was no doubt as a royal runner in front of the chariot to do honour to the king (1 Kings xviii. 46).

(2) *As guards and executioners.*

The "guard" mentioned as protecting Joash in the Temple (xi. 6) are these "runners." They put Athaliah to death at the command of Jehoiada (xi. 15-16).

Nebuzar-adan, the captain of the guard of Nebuchadnezzar, was thus the official whose duty it would be to see to the execution of persons condemned to death for offences against the king and state.

Sackcloth. The wearing of sackcloth was a sign of grief, humiliation and repentance.

(1) When Joram rent his clothes on the wall of Samaria the people saw that he wore sackcloth next his flesh (vi. 30). This indicated sorrow and repentance.

(2) Hezekiah "rent his clothes and put on sackcloth," the first in horror at the blasphemy of Rabshakeh, and the second in humiliation and prayer to Jehovah (xix. 1).

Scribe. The scribe of the Old Testament in the reigns of the kings was a "Secretary of State," and must not be confounded with the "scribes" of later days and of the New Testament, whose duties were to write, study, and interpret the law.

Second Priest. The priest next in rank to the high priest = deputy high priest. Zephaniah, the second priest in the reign of Zedekiah, was amongst those put to death by Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah (xxv. 18-21).

Siege. In ancient warfare a siege was often a blockade, by which the defenders of the beleaguered town were compelled to surrender through famine.

The Assyrian practice was to occupy the country, take all minor places, and then invest the capital, knowing that a blockade must eventuate in its surrender when all help from outside was cut off. Samaria fell from famine after a siege of three years. The Chaldeans broke into Jerusalem when the defenders were weakened by long privation.

If active operations were undertaken the besiegers approached the city by erecting a mound of earth, and carrying it on till it reached the walls of the city. The upper or weaker part of the wall was then battered with the ram till an assault was feasible.

The workers on the mound were protected by archers, who cleared the walls by discharging their arrows. These archers worked under the shelter of huge shields planted in front of them, and worked by comrades.

Other incidents in Oriental warfare are:—

1. **Felling good trees, i.e. fruit trees** (see iii. 19). This was forbidden to the Israelites (see Deut. xx. 19). So it is thought that Elisha was transgressing the law when he bade

the destruction of the fruit trees of Moab. But it must be remembered that the passage in Deuteronomy:—

- (1) Refers to fruit trees cut down for the purpose of a siege.
- (2) Has reference to the land of Canaan only, in which the Israelites were intending to settle, "*for thou mayest eat of them,*" *i.e.* they would be cutting down what might be useful in the future.

So the injunction in Deuteronomy has no bearing on the cutting down of trees in a foreign country like Moab.

2. **Stopping wells of water**, *i.e.* filling them up so that the work of digging would have to be done over again. This is a common practice in Eastern warfare, as particularly embarrassing to the movements of an enemy.

Stand before. An expression that is taken from the Oriental custom of having a servant or official continually in attendance, only quitting their master's presence to execute an order given to them.

Gehazi "*went in and stood before his master*" (v. 25), *i.e.* resumed his position of duty to hide his temporary absence when he had gone after Naaman.

So David is said to "stand before" Saul (1 Sam. xvi. 21-22).

Tell = to number, to count. They "*told the money that was found in the house of the Lord*" (xii. 10). They weighed the amount and returned the number of shekels by weight.

Teraphim (used only in the plural). These were images connected with magic and divination rather than worship, and were most probably of the nature of a fetish. By some they have been considered as similar to the Penates of the Romans, *i.e.* household gods, securing domestic happiness and prosperity. They were images in human form, either the whole figure, or the head and shoulders only.

Instances are—

- (1) Michal put an image (teraphim) in David's bed to deceive the messengers of Saul (1 Sam. xix. 13).
- (2) Rachel stole the *teraphim* from her father Laban's house, when Jacob left Padan-aram (Gen. xxxi. 19).
- (3) Micah made *teraphim* for his house in Mount Ephraim (Judges xvii. 5).
- (4) When Josiah put down the familiar spirits and wizards he is said to have destroyed images, etc. These images were "the *teraphim*," and the word is thus translated in the R.V. (xxiii. 24).

The laws of debt. The law of Moses while not establishing the custom of servitude for debt allowed it, but under certain limitations.

The creditor could seize the debtor and his sons, and compel their forced service till the debt was repaid. But the debtor must be released from this semi-slavery at the year of Jubilee.

In the case of the woman (iv. 1) it would appear that the creditor had not claimed his right over the sons as long as her husband lived, but on his death claimed the sons as bond-servants.

Threshing. The threshing floor was a level space in the open, with the earth beaten down hard and flat.

The threshing was done in three ways—

- (1) By oxen, by simply treading the corn.
- (2) By dragging a rude apparatus of logs over the threshing floor by which the grain was crushed out and the straw broken.
- (3) By the flail, used only for small seeds, or by poor persons.

Wild Beasts. There are several instances of the prevalence of wild beasts in Palestine, even in the vicinity of cities.

- (1) David slew a lion and a bear when in charge of his father's flock (1 Sam. xvii. 36).
- (2) Benaiah slew a lion in the midst of a pit in the time of snow, *i.e.* in the cistern or tank of some village (2 Sam. xxiii. 20).
- (3) The disobedient prophet was slain by a lion in the neighbourhood of Beth-el (1 Kings xiii. 24).
- (4) Two she bears came out of the wood near Beth-el and tare forty-two young men who had mocked Elisha (ii. 24).
- (5) The wild beasts increased in the land after its devastation and depopulation by the Assyrians. Many of the new colonists were killed by lions (2 Kings xvii. 26).

The Book of the Law (xxii. 8).

This must mean the authoritative copy of the Law. No surprise need be experienced at the ignorance shewn by Josiah of its existence. For nearly sixty years, during the idolatrous reigns of Manasseh and Amos, there had been an utter neglect of the Temple and its services. We may note there is no surprise expressed by either Hilkiah or Shaphan. "*I have found the book of the Law*" says Hilkiah, meaning the well-known copy that had been missing for so long a time.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

Bath. A Jewish liquid measure. According to Josephus, it held more than eight gallons. The Rabbinitists make it about half that measure.

Cubit (Jewish *Amah*). A measure of length, the distance from the elbow to the extremity of the middle finger. It is very difficult to arrive at its exact dimensions, as there is mention of several kinds of cubits. The greatest estimate is between nineteen and twenty inches, and the least rather less than a foot. For the purpose of calculation, eighteen inches is the length agreed upon.

Kab. A Jewish measure of capacity mentioned only in vi. 25. It is said to have been about a sixth of a seah, and therefore about two quarts.

Seah. A Jewish measure of capacity=one-third of an ephah, and estimated at about three gallons. It is this measure that Elisha refers to when he says "*a measure of fine flour shall be sold for a shekel*" (vii. 1).

Shekel. A Jewish standard of value by weight. A shekel of silver was equivalent to about 2s. 6d. of our money; 3,000 shekels made a talent.

Talent. A standard of value by weight. A talent was equivalent to 3,000 shekels. A talent of silver=£375. A talent of gold=£6,750.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS FROM
REIGN OF AHAB TO THE CAPTIVITY (after Kiel).

Years from the division of the Kingdom.	Kings of Judah.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Judah	Kings of Israel.	Year of the reign of the Kings of Israel	Contemporary Monarchs.	Year before the birth of Christ.
57 61	Jehoshaphat r. 25 yrs.	38	Ahab r. 23 yrs.	4	Eth-baal, king of the Zidonians	918 914
78 79	Joram regent 2 yrs.	17 18	Ahaziah r. 2 yrs. Joram r. 12 yrs.	5	Benhadad II, Syria	897 896 891
86	Jehosaphat Joram reigned 6 years more	(23)		(7)		889
91	Ahaziah r. 1 yr.		End of the Omri dynasty	12	Hazael, Syria	884
92 98	Athaliah r. 6 yrs. Joash r. 40 yrs.		Jehu r. 28 yrs.	7		883 877
119 135		23 37	Jehoahaz r. 17 yrs. Jehoash r. 16 yrs.		Benhadad III.	866 840
137 151	Amaziah r. 29 yrs.	15	Jeroboam II. r. 41 yrs.	2		838 824
165	Azariah (Uzziah) r. 52 yrs.			27		810
192		27	Jeroboam anarchy 11 years			783
203		38	Zachariah r. 6 months End of the Jehu dynasty			772
204		39	Shallum r. 1 month			771
204		39	Menahem r. 10 yrs.		Pul, Assyria	771
215		50	Pekahiah r. 2 yrs.			760
216 217	Jotham r. 16 yrs.	52	Pekah r. 20 yrs.	2		759 758
233 236	Ahaz r. 16 yrs.	4	Anarchy 8 years	17	Building of Rome	753 742 739
245 248 253	Hezekiah r. 29 yrs.	12 6	Hosea r. 9 years Destruction of the Kingdom	3	Tiglath-pileser Assyria So, Egypt Shalmaneser, Assyria	730 721

Years from the division of the Kingdom.	Kings of Judah.	Contemporary Events.	Year before the birth of Christ.
261		Sennacherib, King of Assyria, besieges Jerusalem	714
		Merodach-Baladan's Embassy	
277	Manasseh <i>r.</i> 55 yrs.	Esar-haddon sends colonists to Samaria	698
332	Amon <i>r.</i> 2 yrs.		643
334	Josiah <i>r.</i> 31 yrs.		641
865	Jehoaahaz <i>r.</i> 3 months	Nabopolassar, King of Babylon	626
		Battle at Megiddo with Pharaoh-Necho	610
365	Jehoiakim <i>r.</i> 11 yrs.		610
369	Beginning of the Captivity	Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Egyptians at Carchemish. Conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar	606
376	Jehoiachin <i>r.</i> 3 months	Second Conquest of Jerusalem and Deportation	599
376	Zedekiah <i>r.</i> 11 yrs.	Pharaoh-Hophrah, King of Egypt	599
387	Destruction of Jerusalem		588
	Jehoiachin released	Evil-Merodach, King of Babylon	562
	End of the Captivity	Cyrus, King of Persia	536

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTES.

Regnal Years. In calculating the length of reign of a king the Jews reckoned from the month Nisan to the month Nisan, and with such precision that even a day before or after Nisan is accounted as equal to a year.

Thus, if a king ascended the throne before the month Nisan and died immediately after it, it would have been stated that he reigned two years.

They make the same inclusive reckoning in days. Our Lord was buried before sunset on the Friday, and rose early on the Sunday morning. This, according to Jewish reckoning, would be termed three days, though the actual time could not have much exceeded thirty-six hours.

These regnal years will explain certain discrepancies in the chronology.

Accession of Azariah (Uzziah) king of Judah. Said to be in the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam II. (xv. 1-2). This must be an error, for

- (1) Amaziah began to reign in the second year of Joash (xiv. 1).
- (2) Joash reigned sixteen years (xiii. 10).
- (3) Amaziah reigned twenty-nine years (xiv. 2).
- (4) He survived Joash by fifteen years (xiv. 17).

All these statements agree in assigning the accession of Azariah to the fifteenth, not the twenty-seventh year of Jeroboam II.

Ahaziah of Judah began to reign " *In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel*" (viii. 25). But in ix. 29 he is said to have begun to reign " *In the eleventh year of Joram.*"

This discrepancy can be explained by the *regnal year*.

Jehoahaz king of Israel. The reign of Jehoahaz is seventeen years, from the 23rd to the 37th year of Joash king of Judah, a space of fourteen years only.

The reign of Joash, the successor of Jehoahaz is sixteen years, from the thirty-seventh year of Joash of Judah, who reigned forty years, to the fifteenth year of Amaziah, a space of eighteen years.

Noting that the deficiency of years in the first instance is counter-balanced by an excess of two years, in the second instance the totals agree. *Regnal years* may explain the discrepancies.

Jeroboam II. He reigned forty-one years, ascending the throne in the fifteenth year of Amaziah, who reigned twenty-nine years. Zachariah, his son, ascended the throne in the thirty-eighth year of Azariah (Uzziah) the successor of Amaziah. Fourteen years of Amaziah's reign added to thirty-eight years of Azariah's reign gives fifty-two years in Judah, whilst Jeroboam's reign is only forty-one years.

All chronologists agree that Zachariah did not immediately succeed his father Jeroboam, and that there was an interregnum of about eleven years. The only other possible suggestion is that Jeroboam reigned not forty-one, but fifty-one years.

Pekah. Here we have great confusion. We have the following statements:—

- (1) Pekah began to reign in the fifty-second year of Azariah, and reigned twenty years (xv. 27).
- (2) Jotham began to reign in the second year of Pekah, and reigned sixteen years (xv. 32-33).
- (3) Hoshea's conspiracy was in the twentieth year of Jotham (xv. 30).
- (4) Hoshea began to reign in the twelfth year of Ahaz (xvii. 1).

As Jotham reigned only sixteen years, Hoshea could not have conspired against Pekah in the twentieth year of Jotham.

The generally-received explanation of the discrepancies is that Hoshea murdered Pekah in the fourth year of Ahaz (*i.e.* fourth year after Jotham's death), and was not acknowledged as king till the twelfth year of the reign of Ahaz, *i.e.* eight years after the death of Pekah.

It will be noticed that we assign two interregnums amounting in all to about 19-20 years.

1. About eleven years between the death of Jeroboam II. and the accession of Zachariah.
2. About eight years between the death of Pekah and the accession of Hoshea.

Adding the years of the reigns from Jehu to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel we get 143 years. Taking the same period in the kings of Judah we get 165 years. The actual duration is 163 years. Allowing for regnal years in Judah, it will be seen that we have to account for 143 years in Israel, according to the lengths of the reigns, as against 163 years of actual time.

The two (suggested) interregnums satisfactorily fill this gap of about twenty years.

Jehoram king of Israel and Jehoram king of Judah.

We have three statements as regards the accessions of Jehoram king of Israel and Jehoram king of Judah.

1. "*Jehoram reigned in his stead in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah*" (i. 17).
2. "*Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years*" (iii. 1).
3. "*And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel, Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign*" (viii. 16).

Jehoshaphat, we know, reigned twenty-five years (see 1 Kings xxii. 42). Therefore, Jehoram king of Israel (see iii. 1) began to reign seven years before Jehoshaphat died.

Unless the text be corrupt the only satisfactory solution of the apparent discrepancies in the above passages is that Jehoshaphat associated his son Jehoram with himself as king on two occasions.

- (a) Made him viceroy at Jerusalem in the seventeenth year of his reign, when he himself went up with Ahab against Ramoth-Gilead. This was only partial and temporary during his absence on the campaign.
- (b) Made him actually joint king with himself in the twenty-third year of his reign.

Thus according to (a) Jehoram of Israel beginning to reign in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (iii. 1) would commence his reign in the second year of Jehoram of Judah (i. 18).

Whilst according to (b) Jehoram of Judah, being fully joint king with his father Jehoshaphat in the twenty-third year of the latter's reign, would ascend the throne of Judah in the fifth year of Jehoram king of Israel (viii. 16), who had come to the throne in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat (iii. 1).

The death of Jehoram king of Israel. Adding the lengths of the different reigns from Jeroboam I. to the accession of Jehu we get ninety-eight years for the kings of Israel, and ninety-five for the kings of Judah. The actual number of years is ninety-one. Thus there were *four regnal years* in Judah, and *seven regnal years* in Israel. Six kings in Judah against ten in Israel will readily account for the difference.

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