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COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY ON
2 CHRONICLES

by Adam Clarke.

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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A COMMENTARY AND CRITICAL NOTES

ON THE

HOLY BIBLE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

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

BY ADAM CLARKE, LL.D., F.S.A., &c.

A NEW EDITION, WITH THE
AUTHOR'S FINAL CORRECTIONS

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.—Rom. 15:4.

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THE SECOND BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES

Chronological Notes relative to this Book

- Year from the Creation, according to the English Bible, 2989.
- Year before the Incarnation, 1015.
- Year before the first Olympiad, 239.
- Year before the building of Rome, according to Varro, 262.
- Year of the Julian period, 3699.
- Year of the Dionysian period, 507.
- Cycle of the Sun, 3.
- Cycle of the Moon, 13.
- Year of Acastus, the second perpetual archon of the Athenians, 31.
- Pyritiades was king over the Assyrians about this time, according to Scaliger and others. He was the *thirty-seventh* monarch, including Belus, according to Africanus; and the *thirty-third* according to Eusebius.
- Year of Alba Sylvius, the sixth king of the Latins, 15.
- Year of Solomon, king of the Hebrews, 1.

CHAPTER 1

Solomon, and the chiefs of the congregation, go to Gibeon, where was the tabernacle of the Lord, and the brazen altar; and there he offers a thousand sacrifices, 1-6. The Lord appears to him in a dream, and gives him permission to ask any gift, 7. He asks wisdom, 8-10, which is granted; and riches, wealth, and honour besides, 11, 12. His kingdom is established, 13. His chariots, horsemen, and horses, 14. His abundant riches, 15. He brings horses, linen yarn, and chariots, at a fixed price, out of Egypt, 16, 17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 1

Verse 1. And Solomon the son of David] The very beginning of this book shows that it is a *continuation* of the preceding, and should not be thus formally separated from it. See the *preface* to the first book. {^{<13010>}**1**
Chronicles 1:1}

The Lord his God was with him] “The WORD of the Lord was his support.”-*Targum*.

Verse 2. Then Solomon spake] This is supposed to have taken place in the *second* year of his reign.

Verse 4. But the ark] The tabernacle and the brazen altar remained still at Gibeon; but David had brought away the ark out of the tabernacle, and placed it in a tent at Jerusalem; ^{<1082>}**2 Samuel 6:2, 17.**

Verse 5. Sought unto it.] Went to seek the Lord there.

Verse 7. In that night] The night following the sacrifice. On Solomon’s *choice*, see the notes on ^{<1086>}**1 Kings 3:5-15.**

Verse 9. Let thy promise] *Ērbd debarcha, thy word; Ēmgtp pithgamach*, Targum. It is very remarkable that when either God or man is represented as having spoken a *word* then the noun *μgtp pithgam* is used by the *Targumist*; but when *word* is used personally, then he employs the noun *armym meymera*, which appears to answer to the *λογος* of St. John, ^{<3010>}**John 1:1**, &c.

Verse 14. He had a thousand and four hundred chariots] For these numbers, see the notes on ^{<1026>}**1 Kings 4:26.**

Verse 15. Made silver and gold] See on ^{<1107>}**1 Kings 10:27, 28.**

Verse 16. Linen yarn] See Clarke’s note on “^{<1108>}**1 Kings 10:28**”, where this subject is particularly examined.

Verse 17. A horse for a hundred and fifty] Suppose we take the shekel at the utmost value at which it has been rated, *three shillings*; then the price of a horse was about *twenty-two pounds ten shillings*.

ON Solomon’s multiplying horses, *Bishop Warburton* has made some judicious remarks:—

“Moses had expressly prohibited the multiplying of *horses*, ^{<61716>}**Deuteronomy 17:16**, by which the future king was forbidden to establish a body of cavalry, because this could not be effected without sending into Egypt, with which people God had forbidden any communication, as this would be dangerous to religion. When Solomon had violated *this law*, and multiplied horses to excess,

<1026> **1 Kings 4:26**, it was soon attended with those fatal consequences that the law foretold: for this wisest of kings having likewise, in violation of *another* law, married Pharaoh's daughter, (the early fruits of this commerce,) and then, by a repetition of the same crime, but a transgression of *another* law, having espoused more strange women, <1110> **1 Kings 11:1**; they first, in defiance of a *fourth* law, persuaded him to build them idol temples for *their use*, and afterwards, against a *fifth* law, brought him to erect other temples for his *own*. Now the original of all this mischief was the forbidden traffic with Egypt for *horses*; for thither were the agents of Solomon sent to mount his cavalry. Nay, this great king even turned factor for the neighbouring monarchs, <4017> **2 Chronicles 1:17**, and this opprobrious commerce was kept up by his successors and attended with the same pernicious consequences. Isaiah denounces the mischiefs of this traffic; and foretells that one of the good effects of leaving it would be the forsaking of their idolatries, <2310> **Isaiah 31:1, 4, 6, 7**."-See *Divine Legation*, vol. iii., p. 289 and *Dr. Dodd's* Notes.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 2

Solomon determines to build a temple, 1. The number of his workmen, 2. Sends to Hiram for artificers and materials, 3-10. Hiram sends him a favourable answer, and makes an agreement with him concerning the labour to be done, and the wages to be paid to his men, 11-16. The number of strangers in the land, and how employed, 17, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 2

Verse 1. A house for the name of the Lord] A temple for the worship of Jehovah.

A house for his kingdom.] A royal palace for his own use as king of Israel.

Verse 3. Solomon sent to Hiram] This man's name is written **מִרְיָ** *Chiram* in Kings; and in Chronicles, **מִרְוִי** *Churam*: there is properly no difference, only a **y** *yod* and a **w** *vau* interchanged. See on ^{<108>}**1 Kings 5:2**.

Verse 6. Seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens] “For the lower heavens, the middle heavens, and the upper heavens cannot contain him, seeing he sustains all things by the arm of his power. Heaven is the throne of his glory, the earth his footstool; the deep, and the whole world, are sustained by the spirit of his WORD, [**הַיְרַמְיָם יְוָרְבָה בְּרֻאֲחַ מַיְמֵרַיִהוּ.**] Who am I, then, that I should build him a house?”-*Targum*.

Save only to burn sacrifice] It is not under the hope that the house shall be able to contain him, but merely for the purpose of burning incense to him, and offering him sacrifice, that I have erected it.

Verse 7. Send me-a man cunning to work] A person of great ingenuity, who is capable of planning and directing, and who may be over the other artists.

Verse 11. Answered in writing] Though correspondence among persons of distinction was, in these early times, carried on by confidential messengers, yet we find that epistolary correspondence did exist, and that kings could *write* and *read* in what were called by the proud and insolent

Greeks and *Romans* barbarous nations. Nearly *two thousand* years after this we find a king on the British throne who could not sign his own name. About the year of our Lord 700, Withred, king of Kent, thus concludes a charter to secure the liberties of the Church: *Ego Wythredus rex Cantiae haec omnia suprascripta et confirmavi, atque, a me dictata propria manu signum sanctae crucis pro ignorantia literarum espressi*; “All the above dictated by myself, I have confirmed; and because I cannot write, I have with my own hand expressed this by putting the sign of the holy cross +.”-See *Wilkins’ Concilta*.

Verse 13. I have sent a conning man] His name appears to have been *Hiram*, or *Hiram Abi*: see the notes on ^{<110713>}**1 Kings 7:13, 14**.

Verse 16. In floats by sea to Joppa] See *Clarke’s* note on “^{<11080>}**1 Kings 5:9**”, and on the parallel places, for other matters contained in this chapter.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 3

Solomon begins to build the temple in the fourth year of his reign on Mount Moriah, 1, 2. Its dimensions, ornaments, and pillars, 3-17.

NOTES ON CHAP. 3

Verse 1. In Mount Moriah] Supposed to be the same place where Abraham was about to offer his son Isaac; so the Targum: “Solomon began to build the house of the sanctuary of the Lord at Jerusalem, in the place where Abraham had prayed and worshipped in the name of the Lord. This is the place of the earth where all generations shall worship the Lord. Here Abraham was about to offer his son Isaac for a burnt-offering; but he was snatched away by the WORD of the Lord, and a ram placed in his stead. Here Jacob prayed when he fled from the face of Esau his brother; and here the angel of the Lord appeared to David, at which time David built an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor which he bought from Araunah the Jebusite.”

Verse 3. The length-after the first measure was threescore cubits] It is supposed that the *first measure* means the cubit used in the time of *Moses*, contradistinguished from that used in *Babylon*, and which the Israelites used after their return from captivity; and, as the books of Chronicles were written after the captivity, it was necessary for the writer to make this remark, lest it should be thought that the measurement was by the Babylonish cubit, which was a *palm* or *one-sixth* shorter than the cubit of *Moses*. See the same distinction observed by Ezekiel, ^{<3405>}**Ezekiel 40:5; 43:13.**

Verse 4. The height was a hundred and twenty] Some think this should be *twenty* only; but if the same building is spoken of as in ^{<1002>}**1 Kings 6:2**, the height was only *thirty cubits*. *Twenty* is the reading of the *Syriac*, the *Arabic*, and the *Septuagint* in the *Codex Alexandrinus*. The MSS. give us no help. There is probably a mistake here, which, from the similarity of the letters, might easily occur. The words, as they now stand in the Hebrew text, are **pyrcaw ham meah veesrim**, *one hundred and twenty*. But probably the letters in **ham mead**, *a hundred*, are transposed for **hma**

ammah, a cubit, if, therefore, the **a** *aleph* be placed after the **m** *mem*, then the word will be **ham** *meah one hundred*; if *before* it the word will be **hma** *ammah, a cubit*; therefore **μyrc** [**hma** *ammah esrim* will be *twenty cubits*; and thus the *Syriac, Arabic, and Septuagint* appear to have read. This will bring it within the proportion of the other measures, but a *hundred and twenty* seems too great a height.

Verse 6. Gold of Parvaim.] We know not what this place was; some think it is the same as *Sepharvaim*, a place in *Armenia* or *Media*, conquered by the king of Assyria, ^{<1724>}**2 Kings 17:24**, &c. Others, that it is *Taprobane*, now the island of *Ceylon*, which *Bochart* derives from *taph*, signifying the border, and *Parvan*, i.e., *the coast of Parvan*. The rabbins say that it was gold of a *blood-red* colour, and had its name from **μyrcp** *parim, heifers*, being like to *bullocks' blood*.

The *Vulgate* translates the passage thus: *Stravit quoque pavementum templi pretiosissimo marmore, decore multo; porro aurum erat probatissimum;* “And he made the pavement of the temple of the most precious marble; and moreover the gold was of the best quality,” &c.

Verse 9. The weight of the nails was **fifty shekels**] *Bolts* must be here intended, as it should be preposterous to suppose *nails* of nearly *two pounds' weight*.

The supper chambers] Probably the *ceiling* is meant.

Verse 17. He reared up the pillars] “The name of that on the right hand was *Jachin*, because the kingdom of the house of David was *established*; and the name of the left was *Boaz*, from the name of *Boaz* the patriarch of the family of Judah, from whom all the kings of the house of Judah have descended.”-*Targum*. See on ^{<1072>}**1 Kings 7:21**; and see the parallel places for other matters contained in this chapter.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 4

The brazen altar, 1. Molten sea, and its supporters, 2-5. The ten lavers, 6. Ten golden candlesticks, 7. Ten tables, the hundred golden basons, and the priests' court, 8-10. The works which Hiram performed, 11-17. Solomon finishes the temple, and its utensils, 18-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 4

Verse 3. Under it was the similitude of oxen] In ^{<1072>}1 Kings 7:24, instead of *oxen*, **μyṛqb** *bekarim*, we have *knops*, **μy[qp** *pekaim*; and this last is supposed by able critics to be the reading which ought to be received here. What we call *knops* may signify *grapes*, *mushrooms*, *apples*, or some such ornaments placed round about under the turned over lip or brim of this caldron. It is possible that **μyṛqb** *bekarim*, *oxen*, may be a corruption of **μy[qp** *pekaim*, *grapes*, as the **p** *pe* might be mistaken for a **b** *beth*, to which in ancient MSS. it has often a great resemblance, the dot under the top being often faint and indistinct; and the **[** *ain*, on the same account might be mistaken for a **r** *resh*. Thus *grapes* might be turned into *oxen*. *Houbigant* contends that the words in both places are right; but that **rqb** *bakar* does not signify *ox* here, but a large kind of *grape*, according to its meaning in Arabic: and thus both places will agree. But I do not find that [Arabic] *bakar*, or [Arabic] *bakarat*, has any such meaning in Arabic. He was probably misled by the following, in the Arabic Lexicon, *Camus*, inserted under [Arabic] *bakara*, both by *Giggeius* and *Golius*, [Arabic] *aino albikri*, *ox-eye*, which is interpreted *Genus uvæ nigræ ac præprandis, incredibilis dulcedinis. In Palæstina autem pro prunis absolute usurpatur.* “A species of black grape, very large, and of incredible sweetness. It is used in Palestine for *prune* or *plum*.” What is called the *Damascene plum* is doubtless meant; but **μyṛqb** *bekarim*, in the text, can never have this meaning, unless indeed we found it associated with **ʿy[** *ayin*, *eye*, and then **μyṛqb yny[** *eyney bekarim* might, according to the Arabic, be translated *plums*, *grapes*, *sloes*, or such eye like, especially those of the largest kind, which in size resemble the *eye of an ox*. But the criticism of this great man is not solid. The likeliest method of reconciling the two places is supposing

a change in the letters, as specified above. The reader will at once see that what are called the *oxen*, ^{<401B>} **2 Chronicles 4:3**, said to be round about the brim, are widely different from those ^{<4004>} **2 Chronicles 4:4**, by which this molten sea was supported.

Verse 5. It-held three thousand baths.] In ^{<10725>} **1 Kings 7:26**, it is said to hold only *two thousand baths*. As this book was written *after* the Babylonish captivity, it is very possible that reference is here made to the Babylonish *bath* which might have been *less* than the Jewish. We have already seen that the *cubit* of Moses, or of the ancient Hebrews, was *longer* than the Babylonish by *one palm*; see on ^{<401B>} **2 Chronicles 3:3**. It might be the same with the measures of capacity; so that *two thousand* of the *ancient Jewish baths* might have been equal to *three thousand* of those used *after the captivity*. The *Targum* cuts the knot by saying, “It received *three thousand* baths of dry measure, and held *two thousand* of liquid measure.”

Verse 6. He made also ten lavers] The lavers served to wash the different parts of the victims in; and the molten sea was for the use of the priests. In this they bathed, or drew water from it for their personal purification.

Verse 8. A hundred basons of gold] These were doubtless a sort of *patera* or sacrificial spoons, with which they made *libations*.

Verse 9. He made the court of the priests] This was the *inner* court.

And the great court] This was the *outer* court, or place for the assembling of the people.

Verse 16. Hiram his father] *ba ab, father*, is often used in Hebrew to signify a *master, inventor, chief operator*, and is very probably used here in the former sense by the Chaldee: *All these Chiram his master made for King Solomon*; or *Chiram Abi*, or rather *Hiram*, made for the king.

Verse 17. In the clay ground] See on ^{<10746>} **1 Kings 7:46**. Some suppose that he did not actually cast those instruments at those places, but that he brought the *clay* from that quarter, as being the most proper for making moulds to cast in.

Verse 21. And the flowers, and the lamps] Probably each branch of the chandelier was made like *a plant in flower*, and the opening of the flower was either the *lamp*, or served to support it.

Verse 22. The doors-were of gold.] That is, were overlaid with *golden plates*, the thickness of which we do not know.

THAT every thing in the tabernacle and temple was *typical* or *representative* of some excellence of the Gospel dispensation may be readily credited, without going into all the detail produced by the pious author of *Solomon's Temple Spiritualized*. We can see the general reference and the principles of the great design, though we may not be able to make a particular application of the *knops*, the *flowers*, the *pomegranates*, the *tongs*, and the *snuffers*, to some Gospel doctrines: such spiritualizing is in most cases weak, silly, religious trifling; being ill calculated to produce respect for Divine revelation.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 5

Solomon having finished the temple, brings in the things which his father had consecrated, 1. He assembles the elders and chiefs of Israel and the Levites, in order to bring up the ark from the city of David, 2, 3. They bring it and its vessels; and having offered innumerable sacrifices, place it in the temple, under the wings of the cherubim, 4-10. The Levites, singers, and trumpeters praise God; and his glory descends and fills the house, so that the priests cannot stand to minister, 11-14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 5

Verse 1. Brought in all the things] See Clarke note on “^{<1075>}1 Kings 7:51”.

Verse 3. The feast] “That is, the feast of tabernacles, which was held in the seventh month.”-*Targum*. See ^{<1082>}1 Kings 8:2.

Verse 9. They drew out the staves] As the ark was no longer to be carried about, these were unnecessary.

Verse 10. There was nothing in the ark save] The Chaldee paraphrases thus: “There was nothing put in the ark but the two tables which Moses placed there, after the first had been broken on account of the calf which they made in Horeb, and the two other tables had been confirmed which were written with writing expressed in the TEN WORDS.”

Verse 11. When the priests were come out] After having carried the ark into the holy of holies, before the sacred service had commenced.

Verse 12. A hundred and twenty priests] Cymbals, psalteries, and harps, of any kind, in union with *a hundred and twenty trumpets* or *horns*, could not produce much *harmony*; as to *melody*, that must have been impossible, as the *noise* was too great.

Verse 13. For he is good] This was either the whole of the song, or the *burden* of each verse. The Hebrew is very short:—

וּדְשֵׁי מִלְּוַל יָקָר בְּרַחֲמֵי יְיָ

Ki tob, ki leolam chasdo.

For he is good; for his mercy is endless.

Verse 14. The priests could not stand] What a proof of the being of God, and of the Divine presence! What must those holy men have felt at this time!

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 6

Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1-42.

NOTES ON CHAP. 6

Verse 1. The Lord hath said that he would dwell] Solomon, seeing the cloud descend and fill the house, immediately took for granted that the Lord had accepted the place, and was now present. What occurred now was precisely the same with what took place when Moses reared the tabernacle in the wilderness; see ^{<1043>}**Exodus 40:34, 35:** *A cloud covered the tent-and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent-because the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*

The *Chaldee* paraphrases thus: “Then said Solomon, It has pleased God to place his majesty in the city of Jerusalem, in the house of the sanctuary which I have built to the name of his WORD, and he hath placed a dark cloud before him.”

Verse 10. For the name of the Lord] “For the name of the WORD of the Lord God of Israel.”-*Targum*.

Verse 14. That walk before thee with all their hearts] “With all the will of their souls and with all the affection of their hearts.”-*Targum*.

Verse 18. But will God in very deed dwell with men] “But who could have imagined, who could have thought it credible, that God should place his majesty among men dwelling upon earth? Behold, the highest heavens, the middle heavens, and the lowest heavens, cannot bear the glory of thy majesty, (for thou art the God who sustainest all the heavens, and the earth, and the deep, and all that is in them,) nor can this house which I have built contain Thee.”-*Targum*.

Verse 22. If a man sin against his neighbour] For the SEVEN cases put here by Solomon in his prayer, see the notes on ^{<1083>}**1 Kings 8:31-46**.

Verse 36. For there is no man which sinneth not] See this case largely considered in **Clarke's note on** ^{<1086>}**1 Kings 8:46**”.

Verse 37. If they bethink themselves] “If thy fear should return into their hearts.”-*Targum*.

The whole of this prayer is amply considered in the parallel place, ^{<1082>}**1 Kings 8:22-53**, where see the notes.

Verse 41. Let thy saints rejoice in goodness] “In the abundance of the tithes and other goods which shall be given to the Levites, as their reward for keeping the ark, and singing before it.”-*Jarchi*.

Verse 42. Turn not away the face of thine anointed] “At least do me good; and if not for *my sake*, do it for *thy own sake*.”-*Jarchi*.

These two last verses are not in the parallel place in ^{<1082>}**1 Kings 8:22-53**. There are other differences between the two places in this prayer, but they are not of much consequence.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 7

Solomon having ended his prayer, the fire of the Lord comes down from heaven and consumes the offerings, 1. The people and the priests see this, and glorify God, and offer sacrifices, 2-4. Solomon offers twenty-two thousand oxen, and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep; and the priests and Levites attend in their offices, 5, 6. He keeps the feast seven days, and the dedication of the altar seven days, and dismisses the people, 7-11. The Lord appears unto him by night, and assures him that he has heard his prayer, 12-16; promises him and his posterity a perpetual government, if they be obedient, 17, 18; but utter destruction should they disobey, and become idolaters, 19-22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 7

Verse 1. The fire came down] The *cloud* had come down before, now the *fire* consumes the sacrifice, showing that both the *house* and the *sacrifices* were accepted by the Lord.

Verse 4. The king and all the people offered sacrifices] They presented the victims to the priests, and they and the Levites slew them, and sprinkled the blood: or perhaps the people themselves slew them; and, having caught the blood, collected the fat, &c., presented them to the priests to be offered as the law required.

Verse 5. Twenty and two thousand oxen, &c.] The amount of all the victims that had been offered during the *seven* days of the feast of tabernacles, and the seven days of the feast of the *dedication*.

Verse 8. The entering in of Hamath] “From the entrance of Antioch to the Nile of Egypt.”-*Targum*.

Verse 10. On the three and twentieth day] This was the *ninth* day of the dedication of the temple; but in ^{<1086>}**1 Kings 8:66** it is called the *eighth* day. “The meaning is this,” says *Jarchi*: “he gave them liberty to return on the *eighth* day, and many of them did then return: and he dismissed the remainder on the *ninth*, what is called here the *twenty-third*, reckoning the *fourteen* days for the duration of the *two feasts*; in all, *twenty-three*.”

The *Targum* paraphrases this verse thus: “The people departed with a glad heart, for all the good which God had done to David his servant, on whose

account the doors of the sanctuary were open and for Solomon his son, because God had heard his prayer, and the majesty of the Lord had rested on the house of the sanctuary and for Israel, his people, because God had favourably accepted their oblations, and the heavenly fire had descended, and, burning on the altar, had devoured their sacrifices.”

Verse 12. The Lord appeared to Solomon] This was a *second* manifestation; see ^{<1002>}1 Kings 9:2-9, and the notes there. The *Targum* says, “The WORD of the Lord appeared to Solomon.”

Verse 13. Or if I send pestilence] “The angel of death.”-*Targum*.

Verse 15. Now mine eyes shall be open] It shall be pleasing to me in the *sight* of my WORD, that I should incline mine ear,” &c.-*Targum*.

Verse 18. There shall not fail thee a man] This *promise* was not fulfilled, because the *condition* was not fulfilled; they forsook God, and he cut *them* off, and the *throne* also.

Verse 20. Then will I pluck them up by the roots] How completely has this been fulfilled! not only all the *branches* of the Jewish political tree have been cut off, but the very *roots* have been plucked up; so that the day of the Lord’s anger has left them neither *root* nor *branch*.

Verse 21. Shall be an astonishment] The *manner* in which these disobedient people have been destroyed is truly *astonishing*: no nation was ever so highly favoured, and none ever so severely and signally punished.

Verse 22. Because they forsook the Lord] While they cleaved to God, the most powerful enemy could make no impression on them; but when they forsook him, then the weakest and most inconsiderable of their foes harassed, oppressed, and reduced them to bondage and misery. It was by no personal prowess, genuine heroism, or supereminent military tactics, that the Jews were enabled to resist and overcome their enemies; it was by the Divine power alone; for, destitute of this, they were even worse than other men.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 8

Solomon's buildings, conquests, and officers, 1-10. He brings Pharaoh's daughter to his new-built palace, 11. His various sacrifices, and arrangement of the priests, Levites, and porters, 12-16. He sends a fleet to Ophir, 17, 18.

NOTES ON CHAP. 8

Verse 1. At the end of twenty years] He employed *seven* years and a *half* in building the temple, and *twelve* and a *half*, or *thirteen*, in building his own house.-Compare this with ^{<1070>}**1 Kings 7:1**.

Verse 2. The cities which Hiram had restored] See Clarke's note on "^{<1091>}**1 Kings 9:11**".

Verse 3. Hamath-zobah] "Emessa, on the river Orontes."-*Calmet*.

Verse 4. Tadmor] *Palmyra*. See Clarke's note on "^{<1098>}**1 Kings 9:18**", for an account of this superb city.

Verse 6. All the store cities] See Clarke's note on "^{<1099>}**1 Kings 9:19**".

Verse 9. But of the children of Israel] See Clarke's note on "^{<1021>}**1 Kings 9:21**".

Verse 11. The daughter of Pharaoh] "And Bithiah, the daughter of Pharaoh, Solomon brought up from the city of David to the palace which he had built for her."-*T*.

Because the places are **holy]** Is not this a proof that he considered his wife to be a *heathen*, and not proper to dwell in a place which had been sanctified? Solomon had not yet departed from the true God.

Verse 13. Three times in the year] These were the *three* great annual feasts.

Verse 15. The commandment of the king] The institutions of David.

Verse 17. Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber] See the notes on ^{<1025>}**1 Kings 9:26-28**, for conjectures concerning *Ezion-geber* and *Ophir*.

Verse 18. Knowledge of the sea] Skilful sailors. Solomon probably bore the expenses and his friend, the Tyrian king, furnished him with expert sailors; for the Jews, at no period of their history, had any skill in maritime affairs, their navigation being confined to the lakes of their own country, from which they could never acquire any nautical skill. The Tyrians, on the contrary, lived on and in the sea.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 9

The queen of Sheba visits Solomon, and is sumptuously entertained by him, 1-12. His great riches, 13, 14. He makes targets and shields of beaten gold, and a magnificent ivory throne, and various utensils of gold, 15-20. His navigation to Tarshish, and the commodities brought thence, 21. His magnificence and political connections, 22-28. The writers of his life, 29. He reigns forty years, and is succeeded by his son Rehoboam, 30, 31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 9

Verse 1. The queen of Sheba] See all the particulars of this royal visit distinctly marked and explained in the notes on ^{<1100>}1 Kings 10:1-10. The *Targum* calls her *queen of Zemargad*.

Verse 12. Beside that which she had brought unto the king] In ^{<1103>}1 Kings 10:13 it is stated that Solomon gave her all she asked, *besides that which he gave her of his royal bounty*. It is not at all likely that he gave her back the *presents* which she brought to him, and which he had accepted. She had, no doubt, asked for several things which were *peculiar* to the land of Judea, and would be curiosities in her own kingdom; and besides these, he gave her other valuable presents.

Verse 14. The kings of Arabia] “The kings of Sistevantha.”-*Targum*.

Verse 15. And King Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold] For a more correct valuation of these targets and shields than that in ^{<1107>}1 Kings 10:17, see at the end of the chapter. See Clarke “^{<1029>}2 Chronicles 9:29”.

Verse 17. Made a great throne of ivory] For a very curious description of the *throne of Solomon*, see at the end of the chapter. See Clarke “^{<1029>}2 Chronicles 9:29”.

Verse 21. The king’s ships went to Tarshish] “Went to *Africa*.”-*Targum*.

Verse 25. Four thousand stalls for horses] See Clarke’s note on “^{<1025>}1 Kings 4:26”, where the *different numbers* in these two books are

considered. The *Targum*, instead of *four thousand*, has **ham** [*bra arba meah, four hundred*].

Verse 29. Nathan the prophet] These books are all lost. See the account of Solomon, his character, and a review of his works, at the end of ^{<11143>}**1 Kings 11:43**.

I. By the kindness of a learned friend, who has made this kind of subjects his particular study, I am able to give a more correct view of the value of the talent of gold and the talent of silver than that which I have quoted ^{<11017>}**1 Kings 10:17**, from Mr. Reynold's *State of the Greatest King*.

1. To find the equivalent in British standard to an ounce troy of pure gold, valued at *eighty* shillings, and to a talent of the same which weighs *one thousand eight hundred* ounces troy.

The ounce contains *four hundred and eighty* grains, and the guinea weighs *one hundred and twenty-nine* grains, or *five* pennyweights and *nine* grains.

(1) As 129 grains : 21 shillings :: 480, the number of grains in an ounce : 78.1395348s. or *3l. 18s. 1d. 2.69767q.*; the equivalent in our silver coin to *one ounce* of standard gold.

(2) As 78.1395348 shillings, the value of an ounce of *standard gold*, : 80 shillings, the value of an ounce troy of *pure gold*, :: 80 shillings : 81.9047619 shillings, the equivalent in *British standard* to *one ounce* of pure gold.

Instead of the preceding, the following proportions may be used:—

(1) As 21.5 shillings : 21 shillings :: 80 shillings : 78.1395348 shillings. This multiplied by 1800, the number of troy ounces in a Hebrew talent, gives 140651.16264s. or *7032l. 11s. 1d. 3.8q.*, the equivalent to one talent of *standard* gold.

(2) As 21 standard : 21.5 pure :: 80 pure : 81.9047619 standard. This multiplied by 1800 gives 147428.67142s. or *7371l. 8s. 6d. 3.4q.*, the equivalent to one talent of *pure* gold.

2. To find the equivalent in British standard to a talent of pure silver, which is valued at *four hundred and fifty pounds* sterling, or *five shillings* the ounce troy.

The pound troy is 240 pennyweights; and our silver coin has 18 pennyweights of alloy in the pound. From 240 pennyweights take 18, and there will remain 222 pennyweights, the pure silver in the pound.

Now as 240 pennyweights : 222 pennyweights :: 20 pennyweights, the weight of a crown piece, : 18 1/2 pennyweights, the weight of the pure silver in the crown.

Then, as 18.5 pennyweights : 6 shillings :: 36000, the number of dwts. in a talent, : 9729.729729729729 shillings, or £486 9s. 8 3/4d., the equivalent in our coin to a talent of pure silver.

Example 1. To find the equivalent in British standard to the *one hundred and twenty* talents of gold which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon, ~~400~~ **2 Chronicles 9:9**.

147428.57142s. — equivalent to one talent of pure gold,
120 — number of talents [as found above.

17691428.5704 — = £884,571 8s. 6 3/4d., the equivalent to 120 talents.

Example 2. To find the equivalent in British standard to Solomon's *two hundred* targets of beaten gold, each *six hundred* shekels; and to his *three hundred* shields, each *three hundred* shekels, ~~4015~~ **2 Chronicles 9:15, 16**.

A talent is *three thousand* shekels; therefore *six hundred* shekels are *one-fifth*, and *three hundred* are *one-tenth* of a talent.

5)147428.57142s. — equivalent to one talent.

29485.71428 — equivalent to one target.
200 — the number of targets.

2|0)589714|2.856

£294,857 2s. 10 1/4d. — equivalent to 200 targets.

One-tenth of a talent is — 14742.857142 = one shield.

300 — number of shields.

2|0)442285|7.1426

£221,142 17s. 1 1/2d. — = 300 shields.

Example 3. To find the equivalent in British standard to the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year, independently of what the chapmen and merchants brought him.

147428.57142s. — = one talent.
666 — number of talents.

88457142852
88457142852
88457142852

2|0)9818742|8.56572

£4,909,371 8s. 6 3/4d. — equivalent to 666 talents.

Example 4. To find the equivalent in British standard to the *hundred thousand* talents of gold, and to the *million* of talents of silver, which were prepared by David for the temple, ^{<13214>}**1 Chronicles 22:14.**

THE GOLD

147428.57142s. — = one talent.
100000 — number of talents.

2|0)1474285714|2

£737,142,857 2s. — the equivalent.

Or, *seven hundred and thirty-seven millions, one hundred and forty-two thousand, eight hundred and fifty-seven pounds, two shillings* sterling, for the gold.

THE SILVER

9729.729729729s. — = one talent.
1000000 — number of talents.

2|0)97297297219.729

£486,486,486 9s. 8 1/2d. — the equivalent.

Or, *four hundred and eighty-six millions, four hundred and eighty-six thousand, four hundred and eighty-six pounds, nine shillings, and eightpence halfpenny sterling, for the silver.*

II. I have referred, in the note on ^{<140917>}**2 Chronicles 9:17**, to a curious account of Solomon's throne, taken from a Persian MS. entitled [Persian] *beet al mukuddus, the Holy House, or Jerusalem*. It has already been remarked, in the account of Solomon at the end of ^{<11143>}**1 Kings 11:43**, article 12, that among the oriental writers Solomon is considered, not only as the wisest of all men, but as having supreme command over *demons* and *genii* of all kinds; and that he knew the language of beasts and birds, &c.; and therefore the reader need not be surprised if he find, in the following account, Solomon employing preternatural agency in the construction of this celebrated *throne*.

“This famous throne was the work of the *Deev Sukhur*; it was called *Koukab al Jinna*. The beauty of this throne has never been sufficiently described; the following are the particulars:-

“The *sides* of it were pure gold; the *feet*, of emeralds and pearls, intermixed with other pearls, each of which was as large as the egg of an ostrich.

“The *throne* had SEVEN *steps*; on each side were delineated *orchards* full of trees, the branches of which were composed of precious stones, representing ripe and unripe fruits.

“On the tops of the trees were to be seen *fowls* of the most beautiful plumage; particularly the *peacock*, the *etaub*, and the *kurgus*; all these birds were artificially hollowed within, so as occasionally to utter a thousand melodious notes, such as the ears of mortals had never before heard.

“On the FIRST *step* were delineated *vine-branches*, having bunches of *grapes*, composed of various sorts of precious stones; fashioned in such a manner as to represent the different colours of *purple*, *violet*, *green*, and *red*, so as to exhibit the appearance of *real fruit*.

“On the SECOND *step*, on each side of the *throne*, were *two lions*, of massive gold, of terrible aspect, and as large as life.

“The property of this throne was such, that when the prophet Solomon placed his foot upon the *FIRST step*, all the *birds* spread their wings, and made a fluttering noise in the air.

“On his touching the *SECOND step*, the two *lions* expanded their claws.

“On his reaching the *THIRD step*, the whole assembly of *deevs, peris, and men*, repeated the praises of the Deity.

“When he arrived at the *FOURTH step*, voices were heard addressing him in the following manner: *Son of David be grateful for the blessings which the Almighty has bestowed upon thee.*

“The same was repeated on his reaching the *FIFTH step*.

“On his touching the *SIXTH step*, all the *children* sang praises.

“On his arrival at the *SEVENTH step*, the whole *throne*, with all the *birds* and other *animals*, became in motion, and ceased not till he had placed himself in the royal seat; and then the *birds, lions, and other animals*, by secret springs, discharged a shower of the *most precious musk* upon the prophet; after which two of the *kurguses*, descending placed a *golden crown* upon his head.

“Before the *throne* was a *column of burnished gold*; on the top of which was placed a *golden dove*, which had in its beak a *roll* bound in silver. In this *roll* were written the *Psalms* of the prophet *David*, and the dove having presented the *roll* to King Solomon, he read a portion of it to the children of Israel.

“It is farther related that, on the approach of *wicked* persons to this throne for judgment, the *lions* were wont to set up a terrible roaring, and to lash their tails about with violence; the *birds* also began to erect their feathers; and the whole *assembly of deeves and genii* uttered such loud cries, that for fear of them no person would dare to be guilty of falsehood, but instantly confess his crimes.

“Such was the *throne* of Solomon, the son of David.”

Supposing even this splendid description to be *literally* true, there is nothing here that could not have been performed by *ingenuity* and *art*; nothing that needed the aid of *supernatural* influence.

In another MS., on which I cannot now lay my hand, the whole value of this throne, and its ornaments, is computed in *lacs* of *rupees*! The above description is founded in the main on the account given here, ^{<14917>}**2**

Chronicles 9:17-19. The *SIX steps*, and the *footstool* of the sacred writer, make the *SEVEN steps*, in the above description. The *twelve lions* are not *distinguished* by the Mohammedan writer. Other matters are added from *tradition*.

This profusion of gold and precious stones was not beyond the reach of Solomon, when we consider the many millions left by his father; no less a sum than *one thousand two hundred and twenty-three millions, six hundred and twenty-nine thousand, three hundred and forty-three pounds, eleven shillings, and eight pence halfpenny*, besides what Solomon himself furnished.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 10

The people apply to Rehoboam to ease them of their burdens, 1-4. Rejecting the advice of the aged counsellors, and following that of the young men, he gives them an ungracious answer, 5-14. The people are discouraged, and ten tribes revolt, 15-17. They stone Hadoram, who went to collect the tribute; and Rehoboam but barely escapes, 18, 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 10

Verse 1. Rehoboam went to Shechem] This chapter is almost word for word the same as ^{<1123>}1 Kings 12:1-19, to the notes on which the reader is referred.

Verse 10. By little finger shall be thicker] “My weakness shall be stronger than the might of my father.”-*Targum*.

Verse 15. For the cause was of God] “For there was an occasion Divinely given.”-*Targum*.

Verse 16. To your tents, O Israel] “To your cities, O Israel.”-*Targum*.

Now, David, see to thine own house.] “Now, David, rule over the men of thy own house.”-*Targum*.

Verse 18. Stoned him] When he endeavoured to collect the tribute which Solomon had imposed on them.-*Jarchi*.

Verse 19. Israel rebelled] A few soft words, and the removal of a part of the oppressive taxes, (for they said, *Ease thou SOMEWHAT the grievous servitude,*) would have secured this people to the state, and prevented the shedding of a sea of human blood, which was the consequence of the separation of this kingdom. Rehoboam was a fool; and through his folly he lost his kingdom. He is not the only example on record: the *Stuarts* lost the realm of England much in the same way; and, by a different mode of treatment, the House of Brunswick continues to fill the British throne. May the *thread* of its fortune, woven by the hand of God, never be undone! and may the current of its *power glide on* to the latest posterity!

Talia secla, suis dixerunt, *currite*, fuis
 Concordes *stabili fatorum numine Parcæ*.
VIRG. Ecl. iv., ver. 46.

*“God’s firm decree, by which this web was spun,
 Shall ever bless the clue, and bid it smoothly run.”*

Labitur, et labetur in omne volubilis Ævum.
HORAT. Epist., l. i., c. 2, v. 43.

“Still glides the river, and shall ever glide.”

Amen! Amen!

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 11

Rehoboam raises an array, purposing to reduce the ten tribes; but is prevented by Shemaiah the prophet, 1-4. He builds several cities of defense, and fortifies others, 5-12. The priests and Levites being turned out by Jeroboam, come to Rehoboam, 13, 14. Jeroboam's gross idolatry, 15. The pious of the land join with Judah, and strengthen the kingdom of Rehoboam, 16, 17. His wives, concubines, and numerous issue, 18-21. He places his own sons for governors in the different provinces, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 11

Verse 1. Gathered of the house of Judah] See this account ^{<1121>}**1 Kings 12:21-24**, and the notes there.

Verse 5. And built cities for defense in Judah.] He was obliged to strengthen his frontiers against the encroachments of the men of Israel; and Jeroboam did the same thing on his part to prevent the inroads of Judah. See ^{<1125>}**1 Kings 12:25**.

Verse 11. Store of victual] In these places he laid up stores of provisions, not only to enable *them* to endure a siege; but also that they might be able, from their situation, to supply desolate places.

Verse 14. The Levites left their suburbs] They and the priests were expelled from their offices by Jeroboam, lest they should turn the hearts of the people to the true God, and then they would revolt to Judah, ^{<1126>}**1 Kings 12:26**; and therefore he established a new worship, and made new gods.

Verse 15. And he ordained him priests-for the devils] **μυρρ[** *c seirim*, the *hairy ones*; probably *goats*: for as the *golden calves*, or *oxen*, were in imitation of the Egyptian *ox-god, Apis*; so they no doubt paid Divine honours to the *goat*, which we know was an object of religious veneration in Egypt.

Verse 16. Such as set their hearts to seek the Lord] All the truly pious joined him out of every tribe, and the whole tribe of Levi, being deprived of their functions, joined him also. Thus he had *Judah, Benjamin, and Levi*,

and probably a part of *Simeon*; for he had *Etam*, which was in that tribe, and the truly religious out of all the other tribes, for they could not bear Jeroboam's idolatry.

Verse 17. For three years they walked in the way of David] During this time he prospered; but for *fourteen* years after this he and the people were unfaithful to the Lord, except at such intervals as the hand of God's judgments was upon them.

Verse 18. Took him Mahalath] By marrying thus in the family of David, he strengthened his right to the Jewish throne.

Verse 20. Maachah the daughter of Absalom] See Clarke's note on "^{<11510>}**1 Kings 15:10**". She is called *Michaiah, the daughter of Uriel*, ^{<4132>}**2 Chronicles 13:2**. For this the *Targum* gives the following reason: "Abijah reigned *three* years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Michaiah, daughter of Uriel of Gibeatha. She is the same as Michah, the daughter of Absalom; but, because she was an upright woman, her name was changed into the more excellent name Michaiah, and her fathers name into that of Uriel of Gibeatha, that the name of Absalom might not be remembered."

Verse 21. Eighteen wives and threescore concubines] Bad enough, but not so abandoned as his father. Of these marriages and concubinage the issue was *twenty-eight* sons and *sixty* daughters; *eighty-eight* children in the whole, to the education of the whole of whom he could pay but little attention. Numerous families are often neglected; and children by *different women*, must be yet in a worse state.

Verse 22. Made Abijah-the chief] Abijah certainly was not the *first-born* of Rehoboam; but as he loved Maachah more than any of his wives, so he preferred her son, probably through his mother's influence. In ^{<62116>}**Deuteronomy 21:16**, this sort of preference is forbidden; but Rehoboam had a sort of precedent in the preference shown by David to Solomon.

Verse 23. He dealt wisely] It was true policy to disperse his own sons through the different provinces who were not likely to form any league with Jeroboam against their father.

He desired many wives.] He was much addicted to women; yet we do not find that he formed any heathenish alliances of this nature. And as no particulars are given, we do not know how far he indulged himself in this

propensity. He probably strengthened his political connections by these means.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 12

Rehoboam and his subjects, forsaking the Lord, are delivered into the hands of Shishak, king of Egypt, 1-4. Shemaiah the prophet remonstrates with them, and they humble themselves, and Jerusalem is not destroyed; but Shishak takes away all the treasures, and the golden shields, instead of which Rehoboam makes shields of brass, 5-12. He reigns badly seventeen years, dies, and is succeeded by his son Abijah, 13-16.

NOTES ON CHAP. 12

Verse 1. He forsook the law of the Lord] This was after the *three* years mentioned ^{<4117>} **2 Chronicles 11:17.**

Verse 2. Shishak king of Egypt] Concerning this man, and the motive which led him to attack the Jews, see the note on ^{<1145>} **1 Kings 14:31.**

Transgressed against the Lord] “Against the WORD of the Lord.”-*Targum.*

Verse 3. The Lubims] Supposed to be a people of *Libya*, adjoining to Egypt; sometimes called *Phut* in Scripture, as the people are called *Lehabim* and *Ludim.*

The Sukkiims] The *Troglodytes*, a people of Egypt on the coast of the Red Sea. They were called *Troglodytes*, **Τρωγλοδυται, οι τας τρωγλας οικουντες**, “because they dwelt in caves.”-*Hesych.* This agrees with what *Pliny* says of them, *Troglodytæ specus excavant, haec illis domus*; “The Troglodytes dig themselves caves; and these serve them for houses.” This is not very different from the import of the original name **μυγκς** *Sukkiyim*, from **hks** *sachah*, to *cover* or *overspread*; (hence **Ēws** *such*, a *tabernacle*;) the people who were *covered* (emphatically) *under the earth.* The Septuagint translate by the word **Τρωγλοδυται**, *Troglodytes.*

The Ethiopians.] **μυνwk** *Cushim.* Various people were called by this name, particularly a people bordering on the northern coast of the Red Sea; but *these* are supposed to have come from a country of that name on the south of Egypt.

Verse 6. Whereupon the princes of Israel and the king humbled themselves] This is not mentioned in the parallel place, ^{<11425>}**1 Kings 14:25-29**: this was the sole reason why Jerusalem was not at this time *totally* destroyed, and the house of David entirely cut off; for they were totally incapable of defending themselves against this innumerable host.

Verse 8. They shall be his servants] They shall be preserved, and serve their enemies, that they may see the difference between the service of God and that of man. While they were pious, they found the service of the Lord to be *perfect freedom*; when they forsook the Lord, they found the fruit to be *perfect bondage*. A sinful life is both expensive and painful.

Verse 9. Took away the treasures] Such a booty as never had before, nor has since, come into the hand of man.

The shields of gold] These shields were the mark of the king's body-guard: it was in imitation of this Eastern magnificence that Alexander constituted his *Argyraspides*, adorned with the spoils taken from Darius. See Quintus Curtius, lib. viii., c. 5, et alibi.

Verse 13. Was one and forty years old] *Houbigant* thinks he was but *sixteen* years old when he began to reign; and brings many and forcible arguments to prove that the number *forty-one* must be a mistake. That he was *young* when he came to the throne, is evident from his consulting *the young men that were brought up with him*, ^{<14008>}**2 Chronicles 10:8, 10**. They were *young men* then; and if *he* was *brought up with them*, he must have been *young then* also. Besides, Abijah, in his speech to Jeroboam, ^{<11307>}**2 Chronicles 13:7**, says that at the time Rehoboam came to the throne he was tender-hearted, and therefore could not withstand the children of Belial raised up against him by Jeroboam: but surely at that time no man could be reputed *young* and *tender-hearted*-quite devoid of experience, who was above *forty* years of age. Besides, if this reading were allowed, it would prove that he was born before his father Solomon began to reign, for Solomon reigned only *forty* years, and Rehoboam immediately succeeded him.

Verse 15. Concerning genealogies] "In the book of the genealogy of the family of David."-*Targum*.

Verse 16. Abijah his son] Concerning the many varieties in this king's name, see **Clarke's note on** "^{<11431>}**1 Kings 14:31**".

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 13

Abijah begins to reign over Judah, and has war with Jeroboam, 1-3. His speech from Mount Zemaraim to Jeroboam, before the commencement of hostilities, 4-12. While thus engaged, Jeroboam despatches some troops which come on the rear of Abijah's army, 13. Perceiving this, they cry unto the Lord, and the Israelites are defeated with the loss of five hundred thousand men, 14-18. Abijah retakes several cities from Jeroboam, who is smitten by the Lord, and dies, 19, 20. Abijah's marriages and issue, 21, 22.

NOTES ON CHAP. 13

Verse 2. His mother's name-was **Michaiah**] See on ~~<4112>~~ **2 Chronicles 11:20.**

Verse 3. **Abijah set the battle in array**] The *numbers* in this verse and in the seventeenth seem almost incredible. Abijah's army consisted of *four hundred thousand* effective men; that of Jeroboam consisted of *eight hundred thousand*; and the *slain* of Jeroboam's army were *five hundred thousand*. Now it is very possible that there is a *cipher* too much in all these numbers, and that they should stand thus: *Abijah's army, forty thousand; Jeroboam's eighty thousand; the slain, fifty thousand.* Calmet, who defends the common reading, allows that the *Venice* edition of the *Vulgate*, in 1478; another, in 1489; that of *Nuremberg*, in 1521; that of *Basil*, by *Froben*, in 1538; that of *Robert Stevens*, in 1546; and many others, have the *smaller numbers*. Dr. *Kennicott* says: "On a particular collation of the *Vulgate* version, it appears that the number of chosen men here slain, which Pope *Clement's* edition in 1592 determines to be *five hundred thousand*, the edition of Pope *Sixtus*, printed two years before, determined to be only *fifty thousand*; and the two preceding numbers, in the edition of *Sixtus*, are *forty thousand* and *eighty thousand*. As to different *printed editions*, out of *fifty-two*, from the year 1462 to 1592, *thirty-one* contain the less number. And out of *fifty-one* MSS. *twenty-three* in the *Bodleian* library, *four* in that of *Dean Aldrich*, and *two* in that of *Exeter College*, contain the *less* number, or else are corrupted irregularly, varying only one or two numbers."

This examination was made by Dr. *Kennicott* before he had finished his collation of Hebrew MSS., and before *Deuteronomy Rossi* had published his *Variae Lectiones Veteris Testamenti*; but from these works we find little help, as far as the *Hebrew MSS.* are concerned. One Hebrew MS., instead of *āl a twam* [*bra arba meoth eleph, four hundred thousand*], reads *āl a rc* [*bra arba eser eleph, fourteen thousand*].

In all *printed* copies of the *Hebrew*, the numbers are as in the common text, *four hundred thousand, eight hundred thousand, and five hundred thousand*.

The *versions* are as follow:-The *Targum*, or *Chaldee*, the same in each place as the *Hebrew*.

The *Syriac* in ^{<413B>}**2 Chronicles 13:3** has *four hundred thousand young men* for the army of Abijah, and *eight hundred thousand stout youth* for that of Jeroboam. For the *slain* Israelites, in ^{<4137>}**2 Chronicles 13:17**, it has [*Syriac*] *five hundred thousand*, falsely translated in the Latin text *quinque milia, five thousand*, both in the *Paris* and *London Polyglots*: another proof among many that little dependence is to be placed on the *Latin translation* of this version in either of the above Polyglots.

The *Arabic* is the same in all these cases with the *Syriac*, from which it has been translated.

The *Septuagint*, both as it is published in all the Polyglots, and as far as I have seen in MSS.. is the same with the *Hebrew text*. So also is *Josephus*.

The *Vulgate* or *Latin* version is that alone that exhibits any important variations; we have had considerable proof of this in the above-mentioned collations of *Calmet* and *Kennicott*. I shall beg liberty to add others from my own collection.

In the *Editio Princeps* of the Latin Bible, though without *date* or *place*, yet evidently printed long before that of *Fust*, in 1462, the places stand thus: Ver. 3. *Cumque inisset certamen, et haberet bellicosissimos viros, et electorum QUADRAGINTA milia: Itheroam construxit e contra aciem OCTOGINTA milia virorum*; “With him Abia entered into battle; and he had of the most warlike and choice men *forty thousand*; and Jeroboam raised an army against him of *eighty thousand men*.”

And in ver. 17: *Et corruerunt vulnerati ex Israel, QUINQUAGINTA milia virorum fortium*; “And there fell down wounded *fifty* thousand stout men of Israel.”

In the *Glossa Ordinaria*, by *Strabo Fuldensis*, we have *forty thousand* and *eighty thousand* in the two first instances, and *five hundred thousand* in the last.—*Bib. Sacr.* vol. ii., *Antv.* 1634.

In six ancient MSS. of my own, marked A, B, C, D, E, F. the text stands thus:—

A.—*Cumque inisset Abia certamen, et haberet bellicosissimos viros, et electorum XL. MIL. Jeroboam instruxit contra aciem LXXX. MIL.*

And in ver. 17: *Et corruerunt vulnerati ex Israel L. MIL. virorum fortium.* Here we have *forty thousand* for the army of *Abijah*, and *eighty thousand* for that of *Jeroboam*, and *FIFTY thousand* for the *slain* of the latter.

B.—QUADRAGINTA milia, — OCTOGINTA milia,
 FORTY thousand. — EIGHTY thousand.
 QUINQUIAGINTA milia,
 FIFTY thousand.

The numbers being here expressed in *words* at full length, there can be no suspicion of mistake.

C.—CCCC milia, — DCCC milibus, — D milia
 400 thousand. — 800 thousand. — 500 thousand.

This is the same as the Hebrew text, and very distinctly expressed.

D.—*xl. m.* — *lxxx. m.* — *l. v. m.*
 40,000.— 80,000. — 50 and 5000.

This, in the two first numbers, is the same as the others above; but the last is confused, and appears to stand for *fifty thousand* and *five thousand*. A later hand has corrected the two first numbers in this MS., placing *over* the *first* four CCCC, thus

cccc
 xl.,

thus changing *forty* into *four hundred*; and over the second thus,

dccc
lxxx.,

thus changing *eighty* into *eight hundred*. Over the latter number, which is evidently a *mistake* of the scribe, there is no correction.

E.-xl. m. — OCTOGINTA m. — l. m.
40,000 — EIGHTY *thousand*. — 50,000.
F.-CCCC. m. — DCCC. m. — D. m.
400,000. — 800,000. — 600,000.

This also is the same as the Hebrew.

The reader has now the whole evidence which I have been able to collect before him, and may choose; the *smaller* numbers appear to be the most correct. Corruptions in the numbers in these historical books we have often had cause to *suspect*, and to complain of.

Verse 4. Stood up upon Mount Zemaraim] “Which was a mount of the tribe of the house of Ephraim.”-*Targum. Jarchi* thinks that Abijah went to the confines of the tribe of Ephraim to attack Jeroboam. It could not be *Shomeron*, the mount on which *Samaria* was built in the days of Omri king of Israel, ^{<1164>}**1 Kings 16:24**.

Verse 5. By a covenant of salt?] For ever. “For as the waters of the sea never grow *sweet*, neither shall the dominion depart from the house of David.”-*Targum. See Clarke’s note on* ^{<1189>}**Numbers 18:19**”.

Verse 7. When Rehoboam was young and tender-hearted] Therefore he could not be *forty-one* when he came to the throne; see **Clarke’s note on** ^{<1138>}**2 Chronicles 13:3**”. *Children of Belial* here signifies men of the most abandoned principles and characters; or men without consideration, education, or *brains*.

Verse 9. A young bullock and seven rams] He who could provide these for his own consecration was received into the order of this spurious and wicked priesthood. Some think he who could give to Jeroboam a young bullock and seven rams, was thereby received into the priesthood; this being the price for which the priesthood was conferred. The former is most likely.

Verse 10. The Lord is our God] We have not abandoned the Lord; and we still serve him according to his own law.

Verse 12. God himself is with us] Ye have *golden calves*; we have *the living and omnipotent Jehovah*.

With-trumpets to cry alarm against you.] This was appalling: When the priests sound their trumpets, it will be a proof that the vengeance of the Lord shall speedily descend upon you.

Verse 13. But Jeroboam caused an ambushment] While Abijah was thus employed in reproving them, Jeroboam divided his army privately, and sent a part to take Abijah in the rear; and this must have proved fatal to the Jews, had not the Lord interposed.

Verse 17. Slain-five hundred thousand chosen men.] Query, *fifty thousand?* This was a great slaughter: see **Clarke's note on "^{<413B>}2 Chronicles 13:3**", where all these numbers are supposed to be overcharged.

Verse 18. Judah prevailed, because] "They depended on the WORD of the God of their fathers."-*T*.

Verse 19. Beth-el] "Beth-lehem."-*Targum*.

Jeshanah] We know not where these towns lay.

Verse 20. The Lord struck him, and he died.] Who died? *Abijah* or *Jeroboam*? Some think it was *Jeroboam*; some, that it was *Abijah*. Both *rabbins* and *Christians* are divided on this point; nor is it yet settled. The prevailing opinion is that *Jeroboam* is meant, who was struck *then* with that disease of which he died about *two years after*; for he did not die till two years after *Abijah*: see ^{<114D>}**1 Kings 14:20; 15:9**. It seems as if *Jeroboam* was meant, not *Abijah*.

Verse 21. Married fourteen wives] Probably he made alliances with the neighbouring powers, by taking their daughters to him for *wives*.

Verse 22. Written in the story] **vrdmb** *bemidrash*, "in the commentary;" this, as far as I recollect, is the first place where a *midrash* or *commentary* is mentioned. The *margin* is right.

His ways, and his sayings] The *commentary* of the prophet *Iddo* is lost. What his *sayings* were we cannot tell; but from the specimen in this chapter, he appears to have been a very able speaker, and one who knew well how to make the best use of his argument.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 14

Asa succeeds his father Abijah, reigns piously, and has peace for ten years, 1. He makes a great reformation in Judah, and builds cities of defense, 2-7. His military strength, 8. He is attacked by Zerah the Ethiopian, with an immense army; Asa cries to the Lord, attacks the Ethiopians, and gives them a total overthrow, 9-12. He takes several of their cities, their cattle, &c., and returns to Jerusalem, laden with spoils, 13-15.

NOTES ON CHAP. 14

Verse 1. The land was quiet ten years.] Calmet thinks these years should be counted from the *fifth* to the *fifteenth* of Asa's reign.

Verse 2. Did that which was good] He attended to what the law required relative to the worship of God. He was no idolater, though, morally speaking, he was not exempt from faults, ^{<11514>}**1 Kings 15:14**. He suppressed idolatry universally, and encouraged the people to worship the true God: see ^{<14448>}**2 Chronicles 14:3-5**.

Verse 6. Fenced cities] To preserve his territories from invasion, and strengthen the frontiers of his kingdom, see ^{<14407>}**2 Chronicles 14:7**.

Verse 8. Targets and spears] Probably targets with the *dagger in the centre*, and javelins for distant fight.

Bare shields and drew bows] They were not only archers, but had shield and sword for close fight.

Verse 9. Zerah the Ethiopian] Probably of that *Ethiopia* which lay on the south of Egypt, near to *Libya*, and therefore the *Libyans* are joined with them, ^{<14108>}**2 Chronicles 16:8**.

A thousand thousand] If this people had come from any great distance, they could not have had forage for such an immense army.

Verse 11. Whether with many] The same sentiment as that uttered by Jonathan, ^{<09106>}**1 Samuel 14:6**, when he attacked the garrison of the Philistines.

O Lord our God-we rest on thee] “Help us, O Lord our God; because we depend on thy WORD, and in the name of thy WORD we come against this great host.”-*Targum*.

Verse 14. There was-much spoil in them.] These cities being on the rear of this vast army, they had laid up much forage in them; and to get this the Jews overthrew the whole.

Verse 15. Tents of cattle] Those which had carried the baggage of the great army, and which they had left in such places as abounded with pasture. Perhaps sheepfolds, enclosures for camels, mules, &c., may also be intended. The discomfiture was great, because God fought for the people; and the spoil was immense, because the multitude was prodigious, indeed almost incredible, *a million* of men in one place is almost too much for the mind to conceive, but there may be some mistake in the numerals: it is evident from the whole account that the number was vast and the spoil great.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 15

Azariah's prophecy concerning Israel, and his exhortation to Asa, 1-7. Asa completes the reformation which he had begun, his kingdom is greatly strengthened, and all to people make a solemn covenant with the Lord, 8-15. His treatment of his mother Maachah, 16. He brings into the house of God the things that his father had dedicated, 17, 18. And he has no war till the thirty-fifth year of his reign, 19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 15

Verse 1. Azariah the son of Oded] We know nothing of this prophet but what is related of him here.

Verse 2. The Lord is with you, while ye be with him] This is the settled and eternal purpose of God; to them who seek him he will ever be found propitious, and them alone will he abandon who forsake him. In this verse the unconditional perseverance of the saints has no place: a doctrine which was first the ruin of the human race, *Ye shall not die*; and ever since the fall, has been the plague and disgrace of the Church of Christ. The *Targum* is curious: "Hearken to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The WORD of the Lord shall be your helper, while ye walk in *his* ways. If ye seek doctrine from *his presence* he will be found of you in times of trouble; but if you cast away *his fear*, he will abandon you."

Verse 3. Now for a long season Israel] "Israel hath followed Jeroboam, and they have not worshipped the true God. They have burnt incense to their golden calves; their priestlings [*ayrmwk cumeraiya*, their *black, sooty sacrificers*] have burnt perfumes with a strange worship, and have not exercised themselves in the law."-*Targum*. These priests could not *teach*, because they had not *learnt*; and as they had abandoned the *law* of the Lord, consequently they had no proper matter for instruction.

There is a great diversity of opinions concerning the meaning of this text. Some consider it a prophecy relative to the future state of this people, and the final destruction of the Jews as to their political existence: others consider it as referring to the state of the people under the reigns of

Rehoboam and Abijah, which were happily changed under that of Asa; and this appears to me to be the most natural sense of the words.

Verse 5. But great vexations] Does not our Lord allude to this and the following verse in ^{<4246>}**Matthew 24:6, 7, 9, 13?**

Verse 8. Renewed the altar] Dedicated it *afresh*, or perhaps *enlarged* it, that more sacrifices might be offered on it than ever before; for it cannot be supposed that this altar had no victims offered on it till the *fifteenth* year of the reign of Asa, who had previously been so zealous in restoring the Divine worship.

Verse 9. And the strangers] Many out of the different tribes, particularly out of *Simeon*, *Ephraim*, and *Manasseh*, having reflected that the Divine blessing was promised to the house of David, and finding the government of Jeroboam founded in idolatry, would naturally, through a spirit of piety, leave their own country, and go where they might enjoy the worship of the true God.

Verse 10. The third month] At the feast of *pentecost* which was held on the *third* month.

Verse 11. The spoil which they had brought] The spoil which they had taken from Zerah and his auxiliaries, ^{<4444>}**2 Chronicles 14:14, 15.**

Verse 12. They entered into a covenant] The covenant consisted of *two* parts: 1. We will seek the God of our fathers with all our heart, and with all our soul. 2. Whosoever, great or small, man or woman, will not worship the true God, and serve him alone, shall be put to death. Thus no toleration was given to idolatry, so that it must be rooted out: and that this covenant might be properly *binding*, they confirmed it with an *oath*; and God accepted them and their services.

Verse 16. Concerning Maachah] See the matter fully explained in **Clarke's note on** ^{<1153>}**1 Kings 15:13**".

The Jews imagine that Maachah repented, and her name became changed into *Michaiah*, *daughter of Uriel of Gibeah*; and that this was done that there might be no mention of her former name, lest it should be a reproach to her: but we have already seen another gloss on this name. See on ^{<4120>}**2 Chronicles 11:20.**

Verse 17. The high places were not taken away] He had totally suppressed or destroyed the *idolatry*; but some of the *places, buildings, or altars*, he permitted to remain.

Verse 18. The things that his father had dedicated] As it was a custom to dedicate a *part of the spoils taken from an enemy* to the service and honour of God, it is natural to suppose that Abijah, having so signally overthrown Jeroboam, (^{<44315>}**2 Chronicles 13:15-19,**) had dedicated a part of the spoils to the Lord; but they had not been brought into the temple till this time.

Silver, and gold, and vessels.] The word $\mu\lambda\ k$ *kelim*, which we translate *vessels*, signifies *instruments, utensils, ornaments, &c.*

Verse 19. The five and thirtieth year of the reign of Asa] Archbishop Usher thinks that this should be counted from the *separation* of the kingdom, and that this fell on the *fifteenth* year of Asa's reign. To settle in every respect these chronologies is a most difficult undertaking; and the difficulty does not belong to the *sacred books* alone, all other chronological tables of *all* the nations in the world, are in the same predicament. With those of our own history I have often been puzzled, even while I had access to all the archives of the nation. Probably we should read here *the five and twentieth year*. See the margin, and see **Clarke's note on** "^{<11516>}**1 Kings 15:16**".

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 16

Baasha, king of Israel, begins to build Ramah, to prevent his subjects from having any intercourse with the Jews, 1. Asa hires Ben-hadad, king of Syria, against him; and obliges him to leave off building Ramah, 2-5. Asa and his men carry the stones and timbers of Ramah away, and build therewith Geba and Mizpah, 6. Asa is reproved by Hanani, the seer, for his union with the king of Syria: he is offended with the seer, and puts him in prison, 7-10. Of his acts, 11. He is diseased in his feet, and seeks to physicians and not to God, and dies, 12, 13. His sumptuous funeral, 14.

NOTES ON CHAP. 16

Verse 1. The six and thirtieth year] After the division of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah; according to *Usher*. This opinion is followed in our *margin*; see **Clarke's note on "^{<11516>}1 Kings 15:16"**, where this subject is farther considered.

Concerning Baasha's building of Ramah, see **Clarke's note on "^{<11517>}1 Kings 15:17"**.

Verse 3. There is a league] Let there be a treaty, offensive and defensive, between me and thee: see on ^{<11522>}**1 Kings 15:22**.

Verse 6. Took all Judah] See on ^{<11522>}**1 Kings 15:22**.

Verse 7. Escaped out of thine hand.] It is difficult to know what is here intended. Perhaps the Divine providence had intended to give Asa a grand victory over the *Syrians*, who had always been the inveterate enemies of the Jews; but by this unnecessary and very improper alliance between Asa and Ben-hadad, this purpose of the Divine providence was prevented, and thus *the Syrians escaped out of his hands*.

Verse 9. Therefore-thou shalt have wars.] And so he had with Israel during the rest of his reign, ^{<11532>}**1 Kings 15:32**.

Verse 10. Asa was wroth with the seer] Instead of humbling himself, and deprecating the displeasure of the Lord, he persecuted his messenger: and having thus laid his impious hands upon the prophet, he appears to have got his heart hardened through the deceitfulness of sin; and then he began

to *oppress the people*, either by unjust imprisonments, or excessive taxations.

Verse 12. Diseased in his feet] He had a strong and long fit of the *gout*; this is most likely.

He sought not to the Lord] “He did not seek discipline from the face of the Lord, but from the physicians.”-*Targum*.

Are we not taught by this to make prayer and supplication to the Lord in our afflictions, with the expectation that *he* will heal us when he finds us duly humbled, i.e., when the *end* is answered for which he sends the affliction?

Verse 14. And laid him in the bed] It is very likely that the body of Asa was *burnt*; that the *bed* spoken of here was a *funeral pyre*, on which much *spices* and *odoriferous woods* had been placed; and then they set fire to the whole and consumed the body with the aromatics. Some think the body was not burned, but the *aromatics* only, in honour of the king.

How the ancients treated the bodies of the illustrious dead we learn from *Virgil*, in the funeral rites paid to *Misenus*.

*Nec minus interea Misenum in littore Teucri
Flebant, et cineri ingrato suprema ferebant.
Principio pinguem tædis et robore secto
Ingentem struxere pyram: cui frondibus atris
Intexunt latera, et ferales ante cupressas
Constituunt, decorantque super fulgentibus armis, &c.
ÆN. vi. 214.*

“*Meanwhile the Trojan troops, with weeping eyes,
To dead Misenus pay their obsequies.
First from the ground a lofty pile they rear
Of pitch trees, oaks, and pines, and unctuous fir.*

*The fabric’s front with cypress twigs they strew,
And stick the sides with boughs of baleful yew.
The topmost part his glittering arms adorn:
Warm waters, then, in brazen caldrons borne
Are poured to wash his body joint by joint,*

*And fragrant oils the stiffen'd limbs anoint.
With groans and cries Misenus they deplore:
Then on a bier, with purple cover'd o'er,
The breathless body thus bewail'd they lay,*

*And fire the pile (their faces turn'd away.)
Such reverend rites their fathers used to pay.
Pure oil and incense on the fire they throw,
And fat of victims which their friends bestow.*

*These gifts the greedy flames to dust devour,
Then on the living coals red wine they pour.
And last the relics by themselves dispose,
Which in a brazen urn the priests enclose.*

*Old Corineus compass'd thrice the crew,
And dipp'd an olive branch in holy dew;
Which thrice he sprinkled round, and thrice aloud
Invoked the dead, and then dismiss'd the crowd."*

DRYDEN.

All these rites are of *Asiatic* extraction. *Virgil* borrows almost every circumstance from *Homer*; (see *Iliad*, xxiii., ver. 164, &c. ;) and we well know that *Homer* ever describes *Asiatic* manners. Sometimes, especially in war, several captives were sacrificed to the manes of the departed hero. So, in the place above, the *mean-souled, ferocious demon*, *ACHILLES*, is represented sacrificing *twelve Trojan captives* to the ghost of his friend *Patroclus*. *Urns containing the ashes and half-calcined bones* of the dead occur frequently in *barrows* or *tumuli* in this country; most of them, no doubt, the work of the *Romans*. But all ancient nations, in funeral matters, have nearly the same rites.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 17

Jehoshaphat succeeds his father Asa, and reigns piously, and is particularly blessed, 14. He establishes an itinerant ministry, for the instruction of the people, through all the cities of Judah, which produces the most beneficial effects, 7-10. The Philistines and Arabians bring him gifts, 11. His greatness, 12, 13. The commanders of his troops, 14-19.

NOTES ON CHAP. 17

Verse 1. Jehoshaphat-and strengthened himself against Israel] The kingdoms of Israel and Judah were rivals from the beginning; sometimes one, sometimes the other, prevailed. Asa and Baasha were nearly matched; but, after Baasha's death, Israel was greatly weakened by civil contentions, and Jehoshaphat got the ascendancy. See ^{<11616>}1 Kings 16:16-23.

Verse 2. The cities of Ephraim] This conquest from the kingdom of Israel is referred to, ^{<4158>}2 Chronicles 15:8; but when it was made we do not know.

Verse 3. The Lord was with Jehoshaphat] "The WORD of the Lord was Jehoshaphat's Helper."-*Targum*.

Verses 7. - 9. To teach in the cities of Judah.] "To teach the *fear of the Lord* in the cities of Judah."-*Targum*.

In these verses we find a remarkable account of an *itinerant ministry* established by Jehoshaphat; and in this work he employed *three* classes of men: 1. The *princes*. 2. The *Levites*. 3. The *priests*. We may presume that the *princes* instructed the people in the nature of the *civil law* and *constitution* of the *kingdom*; the *Levites* instructed them in every thing that appertained to the *temple service*, and *ritual law*; and the *priests* instructed them in the *nature* and *design* of the *religion* they professed. Thus the nation became thoroughly instructed in their duty to *God*, to the *king*, and to *each other*. They became, therefore, as *one man*; and against a people thus united, on such *principles*, no enemy could be successful.

Verse 9. Had the book of the law of the Lord with them] This was their *text book*: it was the *book of God*; they taught it *as such*, and as *such* the

people received it. Its laws were *God's laws*, and the people *felt* their *obligation*, and their *consciences* were *bound*. Thus they were obedient to the laws of the land, on the principle of *religion*. In this they were encouraged and confirmed by the *example* of all, both in *Church* and *state*. The *princes* were not only *pious*, but were teachers of piety; the *Levites* showed them the worth and excellence of their ritual institutions; and the *priests* showed them the moral use they were to make of the whole: and thus the people became obedient to God as well as to the king, and kept all the civil ordinances, not merely for the sake of a good king, but for the sake of a good and gracious God. By these means the nation enjoyed peace and prosperity; and all insurrections, seditions, and popular commotions, were prevented. The surrounding nations, perceiving this, saw that there was no hope of subduing such a people, so *they made no war with Jehoshaphat*, ^{<41710>} **2 Chronicles 17:10**. And they took care not to provoke such a people to fall on them; therefore, it is said, *The fear of the Lord fell on all the kingdoms and lands that were round about Judah*. Such an itinerant ministry established in these kingdoms for upwards of *fourscore* years, teaching the pure, unadulterated doctrines of the Gospel, with the propriety and necessity of obedience to the laws, has been the principal means, in the hand of God, of preserving these lands from those convulsions and revolutions that have ruined and nearly dissolved the European continent. The *itinerant ministry*, to which this refers, is that which was established in these lands by the late truly reverend, highly learned and cultivated, deeply pious and loyal JOHN WESLEY, A.M., formerly a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, whose followers are known by the name of METHODISTS; a people who are an honour to their country, and a blessing to the government under which they live.

Verse 11. The Philistines brought-presents] They and the *Arabians* purchased peace with the king of Judah by paying an annual *tribute*. The *Philistines* brought *silver*, and no doubt *different kinds of merchandise*, The *Arabs*, whose riches consisted in *cattle*, brought him *flocks* in great abundance, principally *rams* and *he-goats*.

Verse 13. He had much business in the cities] He kept the people constantly employed; they had wages for their work; and by their labours the empire was both enriched and strengthened.

Verse 14. Adnah, the chief] He was *generalissimo* of all this host. These are the numbers of the *five battalions*: under *Adnah*, three hundred

thousand; *Jehohanan*, two hundred and eighty thousand, *Amasiah*, two hundred thousand; *Eliada*, two hundred thousand; *Jehozabad*, one hundred and eighty thousand; in all, one million one hundred and sixty thousand.

Verse 19. These waited on the king] They were disposable forces, always at the king's command; and were independent of those by which the cities of Judah were *garrisoned*.

THERE is not a sovereign in Europe or in the world but might read this chapter with advantage. 1. It shows most forcibly that true religion is the basis of the state, and that, wherever it prospers, there the state prospers. 2. It shows also that it is the wisdom of kings to encourage religion with all their power and influence; for if the hearts of the subjects be not bound and influenced by true religion, vain is the application of laws, fines, imprisonments, or corporal punishment of any kind. 3. A religious nation is ever a great nation; it is loved by its friends, it is dreaded by its enemies. 4. It is ever a peaceable and united nation: the blessings of religion, and a wholesome and paternal government, are so fully felt and prized, that all find it their interest to preserve and defend them. Harmony, peace, piety, and strength, are the stability of such times. May Britain know and value them!

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 18

Jehoshaphat joins affinity with Ahab, king of Israel, 1, 2; who invites him to assist him in the war against the Syrians, to which Jehoshaphat agrees, 3. They consult the prophets concerning the success of the war; and all, except Micaiah, promise Ahab victory, 4-17. Micaiah relates his vision concerning the lying spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets, 18-22. Zedekiah, a false prophet, opposes Micaiah; and Micaiah is put in prison, 23-27. Both the kings go against the Syrians; the confederate armies are defeated, and the king of Israel slain, 28-31.

NOTES ON CHAP. 18

Verse 1. Jehoshaphat had riches and honour] The preceding chapter gives ample proof of this.

Joined affinity with Ahab.] Took his daughter *Athalia* to be wife to his son *Joram*.

Verse 3. To Ramoth-gilead] This place belonged to the Israelites, and was now held by the king of Syria.

The whole of this chapter is circumstantially explained in the notes on ^{<122>}1 Kings 22:1-53.

Verse 9. The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat] “Ahab consulted false prophets; but Jehoshaphat sought instruction from the presence of the Lord, and prayed at the entering in of Samaria; and before these all the false prophets prophesied lies.”-*Targum*.

Verse 20. Then there came out a spirit] The *Targum* gives a strange gloss here: “Then the spirit of Naboth of Jezreel came out from the abode of the righteous, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will deceive him. And the Lord said, By what means? To which he answered, I will be a spirit of false prophecy in the mouth of his prophets. And the Lord said, Thou mayest then. But although the power of deceiving them is given unto thee, nevertheless it will not be lawful for thee to sit among the righteous; for whosoever shall speak falsely cannot have a mansion among the righteous. Therefore go forth from me, and do as thou hast said.”-*Targum*.

Verse 29. I will disguise myself] See Clarke's note on "^{<1223>}1 Kings 22:30".

Verse 31. But Jehoshaphat cried out] "Jehoshaphat cried, and the WORD of the Lord brought him assistance."-*Targum*.

Verse 33. A certain man drew a bow] The *Targum* tells us *who* it was. "Now, Naaman, the captain of the host of the great king of Syria, drew a bow against him, (that the prophecy of Elijah the Tishbite, and of Micaiah the son of Imla, might be fulfilled,) and smote the king of Israel between the heart and the caul of the liver, through the place where the coat of mail is joined." See Clarke's note on "^{<1260>}2 Kings 5:1" for this tradition.

Verse 34. Stayed himself up-against the Syrians] There was a great deal of true personal courage and patriotism in this last act of the king of Israel: he well knew that if his troops found that he was mortally wounded, they would immediately give way, and the battle would not only be lost, but the slaughter would be great in the pursuit; therefore he stayed himself up till the evening, when the termination of the day must necessarily bring the battle to a close: and when this was done, the Israelites found that their king was slain, and so they left the field of battle to their foes. Thus Israel had a great loss, and the *Syrians had got a great deliverance*. Had it not been for this accident, the Syrians had probably been defeated. See on ^{<1223>}1 Kings 22:36.

IN the notes referred to above, the *quibbling* predictions of false prophets and *lying oracles* are mentioned, and several instances given; and the whole account of the *lying spirit* going forth from the Lord to deceive Ahab, particularly considered. See especially the notes as above on ^{<14819>}2 Chronicles 18:19, 23, 24.

The reader should never forget a truth so very frequently occurring in the Bible, that God is repeatedly represented as *doing* what, in the course of his providence, he only *permits* to be done.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 19

Jehoshaphat, on his return from Ramoth-gilead, is met by the prophet Jehu, and reprov'd, 1-3. He makes a farther reformation in the land, establishing courts of justice, and giving solemn and pertinent directions to the judges, Levites, &c., to do judgement and justice among the people, in the fear of God, 4-11.

NOTES ON CHAP. 19

Verse 1. Returned to his house in peace] That is, in *safety*, notwithstanding he had been exposed to a danger so imminent, from which only the especial mercy of God could have saved him.

Verse 2. Jehu the son of Hanani] We have met with this prophet before; see Clarke's note on "^{<11667>}1 Kings 16:7".

Therefore is wrath upon thee] That is, Thou *deservest* to be punished. And who can doubt this, who knows that he did *help* the *ungodly*, and did *love* them that *hated Jehovah*? And is not the wrath of God upon all those alliances which his people form with the *ungodly*, whether they be *social*, *matrimonial*, *commercial*, or *political*?

Verse 4. From Beer-sheba to Mount Ephraim] Before the separation of the ten tribes, in speaking of the extent of the land it was said, *From Dan to Beer-sheba*; but since that event, the kingdom of Judah was bounded on the *south* by Beer-sheba, and on the *north* by the mountains of Ephraim. This shows that Jehoshaphat had gone through all his territories to examine every thing himself, to see that judgment and justice were properly administered among the people.

Verse 6. Take heed what ye do] A very solemn and very necessary caution; judges should feel themselves in the place of God, and judge as those who know they shall be judged for their judgments.

Verse 8. And for controversies, when they returned to Jerusalem.] Who were they that returned to Jerusalem? Some suppose that it means *Jehoshaphat and his courtiers*, who returned to Jerusalem after the expedition mentioned ^{<41904>}2 Chronicles 19:4: but if this were so, or if the

text spoke of any person *returning to Jerusalem*, would not **μὴ ἔρω** *lirushalem*, TO *Jerusalem*, and not the simple word **μὴ ἔρω** *Yerushalem*, without the preposition, be used?

Learned men have supposed, with great plausibility, that the word **ἠῶν** *vaiyashubu*, “and they returned,” should be written **ἠῶν** *yoshebey*, “the inhabitants,” and that the words should be read, *And for the controversies of the inhabitants of Jerusalem*. That this was the original reading is very probable from its vestiges in the *Vulgate*, *habitoribus ejus*, “its INHABITANTS;” and in the *Septuagint* it is found *totidem verbis*, **καὶ κρινεῖν τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ**, *And to judge the inhabitants of Jerusalem*.

There is a clause in ^{<1434>}**2 Chronicles 34:9** where we have a similar mistake in our version: *And they returned to Jerusalem*, **μὴ ἔρω ἠῶν** where the false *keri*, or *marginal* note, directs it, in opposition to common sense and ALL the *versions*, to be read **ἠῶν** *and they returned*, which our translation has unhappily followed.

Verse 10. Between blood and blood] Cases of man-slaughter or accidental murder, or cases of *consanguinity*, the settlement of inheritance, family claims, &c.

Between law and commandment] Whatsoever concerns the *moral precepts*, *rites*, and *ceremonies*, of the law, or whatsoever belongs to *civil* affairs.

Verse 11. Behold, Amariah] Here was a two-fold jurisdiction, *ecclesiastical* and *civil*: in the *ecclesiastical court*, Amariah the high-priest was *supreme judge*, in the *civil court*, Zebadiah was supreme. To assist both the *Levites* were a sort of *counsellors*.

WITHOUT good and wholesome *laws*, no nation can be prosperous: and vain are the best laws if they be not *judiciously* and *conscientiously* administered. The things of GOD and the things of the KING should never be confounded in the administration of justice. Amariah the priest, and Zebadiah the ruler, should ever have their distinct places of jurisdiction.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 20

The Moabites, Ammonites, and Edomites, invade Judah, 1, 2. Jehoshaphat proclaims a fast, and gathers the people together to seek the Lord, 3, 4. His prayer to God, 5-12. Great and small, male and female, seek the Lord, 13. Jahaziel predicts the downfall of their enemies, 14-17. The king, the Levites, and the people take courage; praise and magnify God; and go forth to meet their enemies, 18-21. The enemies are confounded, and destroy each other, 22-24. The men of Judah take the spoil, praise the Lord, and return with joy to Jerusalem, 25-28. The fear of the Lord falls upon all their enemies round about; and the land has rest, 29, 30. Transactions and character of Jehoshaphat, 31-34. He joins with Ahaziah, king of Israel, in building a fleet of ships to go to Tarshish, but they are wrecked at Ezion-geber, 35-37.

NOTES ON CHAP. 20

Verse 1. Children of Ammon, and with them other beside the Ammonites] Here there must be a mistake; surely the *Ammonites* are the same as the *children of Ammon*. Our translators have falsified the text by inserting the words “other *beside*,” which have nothing properly to represent them in the Hebrew. Literally translated, the words are: “And it happened after this, the children of Moab, and the children of Ammon, and with them of the Ammonites:” and thus the *Vulgate*. The *Syriac*, which the *Arabic* follows, has felt the difficulty, and translated, *Came together with warlike men to fight, &c.* The *Septuagint* have given it another turn: **καὶ μετ’ αὐτῶν ἐκ τῶν Μιναιῶν**, *And with them people of the Minaïtes*; which were a people of Arabia Felix near the Red Sea. The *Targum* has **yamwda ʿm ʿwhm[w** *Ve-immehon min Edomaey*, “And with them some of the Edomites.” This is very likely to be the true reading, as we find from **2 Chronicles 20:10, 22, 23**, that they procured men from Mount *Seir*; and these were the *Idumeans* or *Edomites*. We should, in my opinion, read the text thus: *The children of Moab, and the children of common, and with them some of the Edomites.*

Verse 2. On this side Syria] Instead of **μραμ** *mearam*, from *Syria*, I would read with one of Kennicott’s MSS. (89) **μδαμ** *meedom*, from *Edom*, which alteration brings it to truth and does not require the change of *half a letter*, as it consists in the almost imperceptible difference

between **r** *resh* and **d** *daleth*. We do not read of any *Syrians* in this invasion, but we know there were *Edomites*, or *inhabitants of Mount Seir*.

Hazazon-tamar] “In the wood of palm trees, that is, in Engedi.”-*Targum*. This is the meaning of the word, and it is probable that they lay hid here.

Verse 3. Jehoshaphat feared] He found that he could not possibly stand against such a numerous army, and therefore could not expect to be delivered except by the strong arm of God. To get this assistance, it was necessary to *seek* it; and to get such *extraordinary* help, they should seek it in an *extraordinary way*; hence he proclaimed a *universal fast*, and all the people came up to Jerusalem to seek the Lord.

Verse 6. Jehoshaphat stood] What an instructive sight was this! The king who proclaimed the fast was foremost to observe it, and was on this occasion the priest of the people; offering in the congregation, without *form* or any *premeditation*, one of the most sensible, pious, correct, and as to its composition one of the most elegant prayers ever offered under the Old Testament dispensation.

Verse 7. Art not thou our God] “Hast not thou, by thy WORD, driven out.”-*Targum*.

Verse 8. Therein for thy name] “For the name of thy WORD.”-*Targum*.

Verse 9. For thy name is in this house] “Thy *Majesty* is in this house.” Several of Kennicott’s and Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS., with the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, and *Arabic*, add **arqn** *nikra*, “is invoked;” *Thy name is invoked in this house*-here thou dwellest, and here thou art worshipped.

Verse 11. They reward us] Six of Kennicott’s and Deuteronomy Rossi’s MSS. add **h[r** *evil*: “Behold, they reward us *EVIL*.” This is also the reading of the *Targum*.

Verse 12. Wilt thou not judge them] That is, Thou wilt inflict deserved punishment upon them.

Verse 15. For the battle is not yours, but God’s.] God will not employ you in the discomfiture of this great host; he himself will take the matter in hand, deliver you, and destroy them.

Verse 17. For the Lord will be with you.] “The WORD of the Lord shall be your Helper.”-*Targum*.

Verse 20. Believe in the Lord your God] “Believe in the WORD of the Lord your God, and believe in his law, and believe in his prophets; and ye shall prosper.” Here the WORD and the revelation are most pointedly distinguished; the *Word* being used *personally*.

Verse 22. The Lord set ambushments] “The WORD of the Lord placed snares among the children of Ammon and Moab; and the inhabitants of the mountain of Gibla, who came to fight with Judah; and they were broken to pieces:” so the *Targum*.

Houbigant translates the place thus: “The Lord set against the children of Ammon and Moab ambushments of those who came from Mount Seir against Judah; and the children of Ammon and Moab were smitten: but they afterwards rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and utterly destroyed them; who being destroyed, they rose up one against another, and mutually destroyed each other.” This is probably the meaning of these verses. *Calmet’s* version is not very different.

Verse 25. Both riches with the dead bodies] For **pyrgp** *peparim*, *dead bodies*, **pydgb** *begadim*, *garments*, is the reading of eight MSS. in the collections of *Kennicott* and *Deuteronomy Rossi*, and in several ancient editions. None of the versions have *dead bodies* except the *Chaldee*. The words might be easily mistaken for each other, as the **p** *pe*, if a little faint in the under dot might easily pass for a **b** *beth*; and we know that the **r** *resh* and **d** *daleth*, are frequently interchanged and mistaken for each other, both in *Hebrew* and *Syriac*. I believe *garments* to be the true reading; and as to the clause *which they stripped off for themselves*, it should be understood thus: *Which they seized for themselves, &c.*

Verse 26. Assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah] “The valley of Benediction;” and so in the latter clause.-*Targum*.

Verse 27. Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them] He was their leader in all these spiritual, holy, fatiguing, and self-denying exercises. What a noble and persuasive pattern!

Verse 29. The Lord fought] “The WORD of the Lord made war against the enemies of Israel.”-*Targum*.

Verse 33. The high places were not taken away] The idolatry, as we have seen, was universally suppressed; but some of the places where that

worship had been performed were not destroyed. Some of them still remained; and these, to such a fickle people, became the means of idolatry in reigns less propitious to truth and religion.

Verse 34. In the book of Jehu] This is totally lost, though it is evident that it was in being when the books of Chronicles were written.

Verse 36. To go to Tarshish] “In the great sea.”-*Targum*. By which expression they always meant the *Mediterranean Sea*.

Verse 37. The Lord hath broken, &c.] “The WORD of the Lord hath broken.”-*Targum*. Concerning *Tarshish*, *Ezion-geber*, and *Ophir*, and the voyage thither, see Clarke’s notes on “^{<1102>}**1 Kings 10:22**”, and at the end of that chapter, See Clarke “^{<1102>}**1 Kings 10:29**”, and on ^{<14026>}**2 Chronicles 9:26-28**. The Tarshish here is called by the Chaldee *Torsos in the great sea*, some place in the Mediterranean. On this subject the reader has, no doubt, already seen a great variety of opinions.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 21

Jehoram succeeds his father Jehoshaphat; and commences his reign with the murder of his brethren, and of several of the princes of Israel, 1-5. He walks in the way of Ahab, whose bad daughter, Athaliah, he had married, 6. God remembers his covenant with David, and does not destroy the nation, 7. The Edomites revolt, 8-10. Jehoram restores the high places in the mountains of Judah, and greatly corrupts the morals of the people, 11. A letter comes to him from Elijah, 12-15. The Philistines and Arabians come up against him, pillage his house, and take away his wives, with all his sons except Jehoahaz, 16, 17. He is smitten with an incurable disease in his bowels; of which, in two years, he dies miserably, after a profligate reign of eight years, 18-20.

NOTES ON CHAP. 21

Verse 2. And he had brethren—the sons of Jehoshaphat, king of Israel.]

Jehoshaphat certainly was not king of *Israel*, but king of *Judah*. **I arvy Yisrael** must be a corruption in the text, for **hdwhy Yehudah**; which is the reading of the *Syriac, Arabic, Septuagint, and Vulgate*: the *Chaldee*, only agrees with the Hebrew text. And the reading of the *versions* is supported by *thirty-eight* of *Kennicott's* and *Deuteronomy Rossi's* MSS. The word *Judah* should therefore be restored to the text.

Verse 3. The kingdom gave he to Jehoram] He made him co-partner with himself in the kingdom about *three* years before his death; so that he reigned only *five* years after the death of his father Jehoshaphat. See the notes on ^{<1816>}**2 Kings 8:16**, &c.; and on the same, ^{<1817>}**2 Kings 1:17**, where an attempt is made to settle this disturbed chronology.

Verse 4. Slew all his brethren] What a truly diabolic thing is the *lust of power!* it destroys all the charities of life, and renders those who are under its influence the truest resemblants of the arch fiend. That he might sit the more secure upon his throne, this execrable man imbrues his hands in the blood of his own brothers! There are more instances of this species of cruelty among bad Asiatic kings than among any other class of men. The history of every country abounds in proofs; even that of our own is not the least barren.

Verse 6. He had the daughter of Ahab to wife] This was *Athaliah*, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, who was famous for her impieties and cruelty, as was her most profligate mother. It is likely that she was the principal cause of Jehoram's cruelty and profaneness.

Verse 7. To give a light to him] To give him a *descendant*.

Verse 8. In his days the Edomites revolted] See on ^{<1282>}**2 Kings 8:21**.

Verse 11. To commit fornication] That is, to *serve idols*. The Israelites were considered as joined to Jehovah as a *woman* is joined to her *husband*: when *she* associates with *other men*, this is *adultery*; when *they* served *other gods*, this was called by the same name, it was *adultery* against Jehovah. This is frequently the only meaning of the terms *adultery* and *fornication* in the Scriptures.

Verse 12. There came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet] From ^{<1281>}**2 Kings 2:11**, it is evident that Elijah had been translated in the reign of Jehoshaphat, the father of Jehoram. How then could he send a letter to the son? Some say he sent it from heaven by an angel; others, that by the spirit of prophecy he foresaw this defection of Jehoram, and left the letter with Elisha, to be sent to him when this defection should take place; others say that *Elijah* is put here for *Elisha*; and others, that *this Elijah* was not the *same* that was translated, but another prophet of the same name. There are others who think that, as Elijah was still in the *body*, for he did not *die*, but was *translated*, he sent this letter from that secret place in which he was hidden by the Almighty. All the *versions* have *Elijah*, and all the MSS. the same reading. Dr. *Kennicott* contends that *Elisha* was the writer; for *Elijah* had been taken up to heaven *thirteen* years before the time of this writing. Our *margin* says, the letter *was written before his assumption*, and refers to ^{<1280>}**2 Kings 2:1**.

These are all *conjectures*; and I could add *another* to their number, but still we should be where we were. I should adopt the conjecture relative to *Elisha*, were not every *Hebrew MS.*, and *all the Oriental versions*, against it; to which may be added, that the author of this book does not once mention *Elisha* in any part of his work. It is certainly a possible case that this *writing* might have been a *prediction* of Jehoram's impiety and miserable death, delivered in the time of the prophet, and which was now laid before this wicked king for the first time: and by it the prophet, though

not among mortals, still continued to speak. I can see no solid reason against this opinion.

Verse 14. Will the Lord smite] “The WORD of the Lord will send a great mortality.”-*Targum*.

Verse 15. Until thy bowels fall out] This must have been occasioned by a violent inflammation: by the same death perished *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and *Herod Agrippa*.

Verse 16. The Philistines, and-the Arabians] We have no other account of this war. Though it was a predatory war, yet it appears to have been completely ruinous and destructive. What a general curse fell upon this bad king; in his *body, soul, substance, family, and government!*

Verse 17. Save Jehoahaz the youngest] This person had at least *three* names, *Jehoahaz, Ahaziah*, (^{<1201>}**2 Chronicles 22:1**), and *Azariah*, (^{<1206>}**2 Chronicles 22:6**.)

Verse 18. The Lord smote him] “And after all these things the WORD Of the Lord smote his bowels,” &c.-*Targum*.

Verse 19. After the end of two years, his bowels fell out] The *Targum* seems to intimate that he had a constipation and inflammation in his bowels; and that at last his bowels gushed out.

No burning] “His people made no burning of aromatic woods for him, as they had done for his forefathers.”-*Targum*. See on ^{<1414>}**2 Chronicles 16:14**.

Verse 20. Departed without being desired.] He was hated while he lived, and neglected when he died; visibly cursed of God, and necessarily execrated by the people whom he had lived only to corrupt and oppress. No *annalist* is mentioned as having taken the pains to write any account of his vile life. This summary mention of him consigns him to the execration of posterity, and holds in the view of every prudent governor, the rock on which he split and wrecked the state.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 22

Ahaziah begets to reign; and reigns wickedly under the counsels of his bad mother, 1-4. He is slain by Jehu, who destroys all the house of Ahab, 5-9. Athaliah destroys all the seed royal of Judah, except Joash, who is hidden by his nurse in the temple six years, 10-12.

NOTES ON CHAP. 22

Verse 1. Made Ahaziah his youngest son king] All the others had been slain by the Arabians, &c.; see the preceding chapter, ^{<14217>}2 Chronicles 21:17.

Verse 2. Forty and two years old was Ahaziah] See Clarke's note on "^{<12826>}2 Kings 8:26". Ahaziah might have been *twenty-two* years old, according to ^{<12826>}2 Kings 8:26, but he could not have been *forty-two*, as stated here, without being *two years older than his own father!* See the note there. The *Syriac* and *Arabic* have *twenty-two*, and the *Septuagint*, in some copies, *twenty*. And it is very probable that the Hebrew text read so originally; for when *numbers* were expressed by *single letters*, it was easy to mistake *m mem*, FORTY, for *k caph*, TWENTY. And if this book was written by a scribe who used the ancient *Hebrew letters*, now called the *Samaritan*, the mistake was still more easy and probable, as the difference between [Samaritan] *caph* and [Samaritan] *mem* is very small, and can in many instances be discerned only by an accustomed eye.

The reading in ^{<12826>}2 Kings 8:26 is *right*, and any attempt to reconcile this in *Chronicles* with *that* is equally futile and absurd. *Both* readings cannot be *true*; is that therefore likely to be genuine that makes the *son two years older* than the *father* who begat him? *Apagæ hae nugæ!*

Verse 3. His mother was his counsellor] Athaliah, the wicked daughter of a wicked parent, and the wicked spouse of an unprincipled king.

Verse 5. Went with Jehoram] See on ^{<12828>}2 Kings 8:28.

Verse 9. He sought Ahaziah] See a different account ^{<12927>}2 Kings 9:27, and the note there, where the accounts are reconciled.

Verse 10. All the seed royal of the house of Judah] Nothing but the miraculous intervention of the Divine providence could have saved the line of David at this time, and preserved the prophecy relative to the Messiah. The whole truth of that prophecy, and the salvation of the world, appeared to be now suspended on the brittle thread of the life of an *infant* of a year old, (see ^{<1420E>}**2 Chronicles 24:1**), to destroy whom was the interest of the reigning power! But God can save by few as well as by many. He had purposed, and vain were the counter-exertions of earth and hell.

Verse 12. Hid in the house of God] “In the house of the sanctuary of God.”-*Targum*. Or, as he says on ^{<1421E>}**2 Chronicles 22:11**, **ayvdwq vdwqb** *bekudash kudeshaiya* “in the holy of holies.” To this place Athaliah had no access, therefore Joash lay concealed, he and his affectionate aunt-nurse.-See on ^{<12110E>}**2 Kings 11:1**.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 23

Jehoiada the priest, after having taken counsel with the captains, Levites, &c., proclaims Joash, and anoints him king, 1-11. Athaliah, endeavouring to prevent it, is slain, 12-15. He makes the people enter into a covenant, that they would serve the Lord, 16. The people break down the temple of Baal, and slay Mattan his priest, 17. Jehoiada makes several alterations, and remodels the kingdom, 18-21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 23

Verse 1. And in the seventh year] See on ^{<21104>}2 Kings 11:4, &c.

Verse 9. Spears and bucklers] See on ^{<21110>}2 Kings 11:10.

Verse 11. God save the king.] *May the king live!* See on ^{<21112>}2 Kings 11:12.

Verse 14. And whoso followeth her, let him be slain with the sword.] He who takes her part, or endeavours to prevent the present revolution, let him be immediately slain.

Verse 15. Of the horse-gate] See on ^{<21116>}2 Kings 11:16.

Verse 16. Made a covenant between him] The high priest was, on this occasion, the representative of GOD; whom both the people and the king must have had in view, through the medium of his priest.

Verse 17. Mattan the priest] The *Targum* will not prostitute the term *priest*, but calls him *armwk cumera, priestling*.

Verse 21. The city was quiet] There was no attempt at a counter-revolution. Concerning the coronation of Joash, there is a curious circumstance mentioned by the *Targumist* on ^{<42311>}2 Chronicles 23:11, it is as follows:—

“And they brought forth the son of the king, and put on him the royal crown which David took from the head of the king of the children of Ammon. In it was inserted the precious attracting stone, in which was engraven and expressed the great and honourable

NAME [hwhy] which David had placed there by the Holy Spirit: and it was of the weight of a talent of gold; it was therefore a testimony to the house of David that no king who was not of the seed of David should be able to put it on his head, nor be able to bear its weight. When, therefore, the people saw it placed on the head of Joash, and that he was able to bear this crown, they believed him to be of the seed of David, and immediately constituted him king. Therefore Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, and said, May the king be prosperous in his kingdom!”

The Jews say that this was the crown of the king of the Ammonites; and that it was always worn afterwards by the kings of the house of Judah. See *Jarchi* on this place.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 24

Joash begins to reign when seven years old, and reigns well all the days of Jehoiada the priest, 1-3. He purposes to repair the temple of God; and makes a proclamation that the people should bring in the money prescribed by Moses, 4-9. They all contribute liberally; and the different artificers soon perfect the work, 10-13. The rest of the money is employed to form utensils for the temple, 14. Jehoiada dies, 15, 16. And the people after his death become idolaters, 17, 18. Prophets are sent unto them, 19. And among the rest Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, who testifies against them; and they stone him to death, 20-22. The Syrians come against Jerusalem, and spoil it, 23, 24. Joash is murdered by his own servants, 25, 26. His acts, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 24

Verse 1. Joash was seven years old] As he was hidden *six* years in the temple, and was but *seven* when he came to the throne, he could have been but *one* year old when he was secreted by his aunt; see on ^{<14210>}**2 Chronicles 22:10**.

Verse 4. To repair the house of the Lord.] During the reigns of Joram and Athaliah, the temple of God had been pillaged to enrich that of Baal, and the whole structure permitted to fall into decay; see ^{<14307>}**2 Chronicles 24:7**.

Verse 5. Gather of all Israel money] As the temple was the property of the whole nation, and the services performed in it were for the salvation of the people at large, it was right that each should come forward on an occasion of this kind, and lend a helping hand. This is the first instance of such a general collection for building or repairing a house of God.

From year to year] It must have been in a state of great dilapidation, when it required such annual exertions to bring it into a thorough state of repair.

Verse 6. The collection-of Moses] This was the poll-tax, fixed by Moses, of half a shekel, which was levied on every man from twenty years old and upward; and which was considered as a *ransom for their souls, that there might be no plague among them*. See ^{<123012>}**Exodus 30:12-14**.

Verse 8. They made a chest] See Clarke's notes on the parallel places, "^{<12120>}2 Kings 12:4", &c.

Verse 16. They buried him-among the kings] He had, in fact, been *king* in Judah; for Joash, who appears to have been a weak man, was always under his tutelage. Jehoiada governed the state in the name of the king; and his being buried among the kings is a proof of the high estimation in which he was held among the people.

Verse 17. The princes of Judah-made obeisance to the king] I believe the *Targum* has given the true sense of this verse: "After the death of Jehoiada, the great men of Judah came and adored King Joash, and seduced him; and then the king received from them their idols."

Verse 20. And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah] "When he saw the transgression of the king and of the people, burning incense to an idol in the house of the sanctuary of the Lord, on the day of expiation; and preventing the priests of the Lord from offering the burnt-offerings, sacrifices, daily oblations, and services, as written in the book of the law of Moses; he stood above the people, and said."-*Targum*.

Verse 21. Stoned him-at the commandment of the king] What a most wretched and contemptible man was this, who could imbrue his hands in the blood of a prophet of God, and the son of the man who had saved him from being murdered, and raised him to the throne! Alas, alas! Can even *kings* forget benefits? But when a man falls from God, the devil enters into him; and then he is capable of every species of cruelty.

Verse 22. The Lord look upon it, and require it.] And so he did; for, at the end of that year, the Syrians came against Judah, destroyed all the princes of the people, sent their spoils to Damascus; and Joash, the murderer of the prophet, the son of his benefactor, was himself murdered by his own servants. Here was a most signal display of the Divine retribution.

On the subject of the death of this prophet the reader is requested to refer to the note on ^{<12334>}Matthew 23:34, 35.

Verse 26. These are they that conspired against him] The two persons here mentioned were certainly not *Jews*; the *mother* of one was an *Ammonitess*, and the *mother* of the other was a *Moabitess*. Who their *fathers* were we know not; they were probably *foreigners* and *aliens*.

Some suppose that these persons were of the *king's chamber*, and therefore could have the easiest access to him. It has been, and is still, the *folly* of kings to have foreigners for their valets and most confidential servants, and they have often been the causes of murders and treacheries of different kinds. *Foreigners* should be banished from the person of the sovereign by strong and efficient laws: even in this country they have often been the cause of much political wo.

Verse 27. The greatness of the burdens laid upon him] Meaning, probably, the heavy tribute laid upon him by the Syrians; though some think the vast sums amassed for the repairs of the temple are here intended.

Written in the story] *vr̄dm* *midrash*, the *commentary*, of the book of Kings. We have met with this before; but these works are all lost, except the extracts found in Kings, Chronicles, and Ezra. These *abridgments* were the cause of the neglect, and finally of the destruction, of the originals. This has been often the case in works of great consequence. *Trogus Pompeius* wrote a general history of the world, which he brought down to the reign of Augustus, in *forty-four* volumes. Justin abridged them into *one* volume, and the original is lost.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 25

Amaziah succeeds his father Joash, and begins his reign well, 1, 2. He slays his father's murderers but spares their children, 3, 4. He reviews and remodels the army, 5; and hires a hundred thousand soldiers out of Israel, whom, on the expostulation of a prophet, he sends home again, without bringing them into active service; at which they are greatly offended, 6-10. He attacks the Syrians, kills ten thousand, and takes ten thousand prisoners, whom he precipitates from the top of a rock, so that they are dashed to pieces, 11, 12. The Israelitish soldiers, sent back, ravage several of the cities of Judah, 13. Amaziah becomes an idolater, 14. Is reproved by a prophet, whom he threatens, and obliges to desist, 15, 16. He challenges Joash, king of Israel, 17; who reproves him by a parable, 18, 19. Not desisting, the armies meet, the Jews are overthrown, and Amaziah taken prisoner by Joash, who ravages the temple, and takes away all the treasures of the king, 20-24. The reign of Amaziah: a conspiracy is formed against him; he flees to Lachish, whither he is pursued and slain; is brought to Jerusalem, and buried with his fathers, 25-28.

NOTES ON CHAP. 25

Verse 2. He did that which was right] He began his reign well, but soon became an idolater, ^{<12514>} **2 Chronicles 25:14,15.**

Verse 5. Gathered Judah together] He purposed to avenge himself of the Syrians, but wished to know his military strength before he came to a rupture.

Verse 7. The Lord is not with Israel] “The WORD of the Lord is not the helper of the Israelites, nor of the kingdom of the tribe of Ephraim.”-*Targum.*

Verse 9. The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.] Better lose the *money* than keep the *men*, for they will be a curse unto thee.

Verse 10. They returned home in great anger] They thought they were insulted, and began to meditate revenge. See the notes on ^{<12140>} **2 Kings 14:1-20**, where almost every circumstance in this chapter is examined and explained.

Verse 14. The gods of the children of Seir] “The idols of the children of Gebal.”-*Targum*.

Verse 16. Art thou made of the king’s counsel?] How darest *thou* give advice to, or reprove, a king?

Verse 18. The thistle that was in Lebanon] See the explanation of this ^{<12149>}**2 Kings 14:9**. After reciting this fable, the *Targum* adds, “Thus hast thou done in the time thou didst send unto me, and didst lead up from the house of Israel *a hundred thousand* strong warriors for *a hundred* talents of silver: and after they were sent, thou didst not permit them to go with thee to war, but didst send them back, greatly enraged, so that they spread themselves over the country; and having cut off *three thousand*, they brought back much spoil.”

Verse 24. In the house of God with Obed-edom] From ^{<13365>}**1 Chronicles 26:15** we learn that to Obed-edom and his descendants was allotted the keeping of the house of *Asuppim* or *collections* for the Divine treasury.

And-the hostages] See on ^{<12144>}**2 Kings 14:14**.

Verse 26. The rest of the acts of Amaziah, first and last] Says the *Targum*; “The *first*, when he walked in the fear of the Lord, the *last*, when he departed from the right way before the Lord; are they not written,” &c.

Verse 27. Made a conspiracy] He no doubt became very unpopular after having lost the battle with the Israelites; the consequence of which was the dismantling of Jerusalem, and the seizure of the royal treasures, with several other evils. It is likely that the last *fifteen* years of his reign were greatly embittered: so that, finding the royal city to be no place of safety, he endeavoured to secure himself at Lachish; but all in vain, for thither his murderers pursued him; and he who forsook the Lord was forsaken by every friend, perished in his gainsaying, and came to an untimely end.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 26

Uzziah, the son of Amaziah, succeeds; and begins his reign piously and prosperously, which continued during the life of Zechariah the prophet, 1-5. He fights successfully against the Philistines, and takes and dismantles some of their chief cities, 6; prevails over the Arabians and Mehunims, 7; and brings the Ammonites under tribute, 8. He fortifies Jerusalem, and builds towers in different parts of the country, and delights in husbandry, 9, 10. An account of his military strength, warlike instruments, and machines, 11-15. He is elated with his prosperity, invades the priest's office, and is smitten with the leprosy, 16-20. He is obliged to abdicate the regal office, and dwell apart from this people, his son Jotham acting as regent, 21. His death and burial, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 26

Verse 1. The people of Judah took Uzziah] They all agreed to place this son on his father's throne.

Verse 2. He built Eloth] See Clarke's notes on "~~2Kings~~ 2 Kings 14:21". This king is called by several different names; see Clarke's note on "~~2Kings~~ 2 Kings 15:1".

Verse 5. In the days of Zechariah] Who this was we know not, but by the character that is given of him here. He was wise *in the visions of God*-in giving the true interpretation of Divine prophecies. He was probably the tutor of Uzziah.

Verse 7. And God helped him] "And the WORD of the Lord helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gerar, and the plains of Meun."-*Targum*. These are supposed to be the Arabs which are called the *Meuneons*, or *Munites*, or *Meonites*.

Verse 8. The Ammonites gave gifts] Paid an annual *tribute*.

Verse 10. Built towers in the desert] For the defence of his flocks, and his shepherds and husbandmen.

And in Carmel] Calmet remarks that there were *two* Carmels in Judea: one in the tribe of Judah, where Nabal lived, and the other on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, near to Kishon; and both fertile in vines.

He loved husbandry.] This is a perfection in a king: on husbandry every state depends. Let their trade or commerce be what they may, there can be no true national prosperity if agriculture do not prosper; for the king himself is served by the field. When, therefore, the king of a country encourages agriculture, an emulation is excited among his subjects; the science is cultivated; and the earth yields its proper increase; then, should trade and commerce fail, the people cannot be reduced to wretchedness, because there is plenty of bread.

Verse 14. Shields, and spears] He prepared a vast number of military weapons, that he might have them in readiness to put into the hands of his subjects on any exigency.

Verse 15. Engines-to shoot arrows and great stones] The *Targum* says, “He made in Jerusalem ingenious instruments, and little hollow towers, to stand upon the towers and upon the bastions, for the shooting of arrows, and projecting of great stones.”

This is the very first intimation on record of any warlike engines for the *attack* or *defense* of besieged places; and this account is long prior to any thing of the kind among either the Greeks or Romans. Previously to such inventions, the besieged could only be *starved out*, and hence sieges were very *long* and *tedious*. Shalmaneser consumed *three* years before such an inconsiderable place as Samaria, ^{<2176>} **2 Kings 17:5, 6**; Sardanapalus maintained himself in Nineveh for *seven* years, because the besiegers had no engines proper for the attack and destruction of walls, &c., and it is well known that Troy sustained a siege of *ten* years, the Greeks not possessing any machine of the kind here referred to. The *Jews* alone were the inventors of such engines; and the invention took place in the reign of Uzziah, about *eight hundred* years before the Christian era. It is no wonder that, in consequence of this, *his name spread far abroad*, and struck terror into his enemies.

Verse 16. He transgressed against the Lord] “He sinned against the WORD of the Lord his God.”-*T*.

Went into the temple to burn incense] Thus assuming to himself the priest’s office. See this whole transaction explained in the notes on ^{<2196>} **2 Kings 15:5**.

Verse 20. Because the Lord had smitten him.] “Because the WORD of the Lord had brought the plague upon him.”-*T*.

Verse 21. And dwelt in a several house] He was *separated*, because of the infectious nature of his disorder, from all society, domestic, civil, and religious.

Jotham-was over the king’s house] He became *regent* of the land; his father being no longer able to perform the functions of the regal office.

Verse 22. The rest of the acts of Uzziah, first and last, did Isaiah the prophet-write.] This work, however, is *totally lost*; for we have not any history of this king in the writings of Isaiah. He is barely mentioned,
^{<3010>}**Isaiah 1:1; 6:1.**

Verse 23. They buried him-in the field of the burial] As he was a *leper*, he was not permitted to be buried in the common burial-place of the kings; as it was supposed that even a place of sepulture must be defiled by the body of one who had died of this most afflictive and dangerous malady.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 27

Jotham succeeds his father Uzziah, and reigns well, 1, 2. His buildings, 3, 4. His successful wars, 5, 6. General account of his acts, reign, and death, 7-9.

NOTES ON CHAP. 27

Verse 2. He entered not into the temple] He copied his father's conduct as far as it was constitutional; and avoided his transgression. See the preceding chapter.

Verse 3. On the wall of Ophel] The wall, says the *Targum*, of the *interior palace*. Ophel was some part of the wall of Jerusalem, that was most pregnable, and therefore Jotham fortified it in a particular manner.

Verse 4. Castles and towers.] These he built for the protection of the country people against marauders.

Verse 5. He fought also with-the Ammonites] We find here that he brought them under a heavy tribute for *three* years; but whether this was the *effect* of his prevailing against them, is not so evident. Some think that they paid this tribute for three years, and then revolted; that, in consequence, he attacked them, and their utter subjection was the result.

Verse 7. The rest of the acts of Jotham, and all his wars, and his ways] It was in his days, according to ^{<121537>}**2 Kings 15:37**, that *Rezin* king of Syria, and *Pekah* king of Israel, *began to cut Judah short*. See the notes on ^{<121536>}**2 Kings 15:36, 37**.

Written in the book of the kings, &c.] There is not so much found in the books of *Kings* which we have now, as in this place of the *Chronicles*. In both places we have *abridged* accounts only: the larger histories have long been lost. The reign of Jotham was properly the last *politically* prosperous reign among the Jews. *Hezekiah* and *Josiah* did much to preserve the Divine worship; but Judah continued to be cut short, till at last it was wholly ruined.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 28

Ahaz succeeds his father Jotham, and reigns wickedly for sixteen years, 1. He restores idolatry in its grossest forms, 2-4; and is delivered into the hands of the kings of Israel and Syria, 5. Pekah slays one hundred and twenty thousand Jews in one day, and carries away captive two hundred thousand of the people, whom, at the instance of Oded the prophet, they restore to liberty, and send home, clothed and fed, 6-15. Ahaz sends to the king of Assyria for help against the Edomites, Philistines, &c., from whom he receives no effectual succour, 16-21. He sins yet more, spoils and shuts up the temple of God, and propagates idolatry throughout the land, 22-25. A reference to his acts, his death, and burial, 26, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 28

Verse 1. Ahaz was twenty years old] For the difficulties in this chronology, see Clarke's notes on "⁶⁻¹²¹⁶⁰¹2 Kings 16:1".

Verse 3. Burnt his children in the fire] There is a most remarkable addition here in the *Chaldee* which I shall give at length: "Ahaz burnt his children in the fire; but the WORD of the Lord snatched Hezekiah from among them; for it was manifest before the Lord that the *three* righteous men, *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah*, were to proceed from him; who should deliver up their bodies that they might be cast into a burning fiery furnace, on account of the great and glorious NAME, (*hwhy*) and from which they should escape. *First*, *Abram* escaped from the furnace of fire among the Chaldeans, into which he had been cast by Nimrod, because he would not worship their idols. *Secondly*, *Tamar* escaped burning in the house of judgment of Judah, who had said, *Bring her out, that she may be burnt*. *Thirdly*, *Hezekiah* the son of Ahaz escaped from the burning, when Ahaz his father cast him into the valley of the son of Hinnom, on the altars of Tophet. *Fourthly*, *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, and *Azariah*, escaped from the burning fiery furnace of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. *Fifthly*, *Joshua*, the son of Josedek the high priest, escaped, when the impious Nebuchadnezzar had cast him into a burning fiery furnace, with Achaab the son of Kolia, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, the false prophet. *They* were consumed by fire; but Joshua the son of Josedek escaped because of his righteousness."

Verse 5. Delivered him into the hand of the king of Syria] For the better understanding of these passages, the reader is requested to refer to what has been advanced in the notes on the sixteenth chapter of ^{<121615>}**2 Kings 16:5**, &c.

Verse 6. A hundred and twenty thousand] It is very probable that there is a mistake in this number. It is hardly possible that *a hundred and twenty thousand* men could have been slain in one day; yet all the *versions* and *MSS.* agree in this number. The whole people seem to have been given up into the hands of their enemies.

Verse 9. But a prophet of the Lord-whose name was Oded] To this beautiful speech nothing can be added by the best comment; it is simple, humane, pious, and overwhelmingly convincing: no wonder it produced the effect mentioned here. That there was much of humanity in the heads of the children of *Ephraim* who joined with the prophet on this occasion, the *fifteenth* verse sufficiently proves. They did not barely dismiss these most unfortunate captives, but they took that very spoil which their victorious army had brought away; and they clothed, fed, shod, and anointed, these distressed people, set the feeblest of them upon asses, and escorted them safely to Jericho. We can scarcely find a parallel to this in the universal history of the wars which savage man has carried on against his fellows, from the foundation of the world.

Verse 16. The kings of Assyria to help him.] Instead of **ykl m malchey**; **KINGS**; the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Arabic*, and *Chaldee*, one *MS.*, and the parallel place, ^{<121617>}**2 Kings 16:7**, have **Ël m melek**, **KING**, in the *singular* number. This king was *Tiglath-pileser*, as we learn from the second book of Kings.

Verse 21. But he helped him not.] He did him no ultimate service. See **Clarke's note on** "^{<121619>}**2 Kings 16:9**".

After ver. 15, the 23d, 24th, and 25th verses are introduced before the 16th, in the *Syriac* and *Arabic*, and the 22d verse is wholly wanting in both, though some of the expressions may be found in the twenty-first verse.

Verse 23. He sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him] "This passage," says *Mr. Hallet*, "greatly surprised me; for the sacred historian himself is here represented as saying, *The gods of Damascus had smitten Ahaz*. But it is impossible to suppose that an *inspired* author could

say this; for the Scripture everywhere represents the heathen *idols* as *nothing* and *vanity*, and as incapable of *doing either good or hurt*. All difficulty is avoided if we follow the *old Hebrew copies*, from which the *Greek translation* was made, **Και ειπεν ο βασιλεις Αχαζ, εκζητησω τους Θεους Δαμασκου τους τυπτοντας με**, *And King Ahaz SAID, I WILL SEEK TO THE GODS OF DAMASCUS WHICH HAVE SMITTEN ME*; and then it follows, both in Hebrew and Greek, *He said moreover, Because the gods of the king of Syria help them; therefore will I sacrifice to them, that they may help me*. Both the *Syriac* and *Arabic* give it a similar turn; and say that *Ahaz sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, and said, Ye are my gods and my lords; you will I worship, and to you will I sacrifice.*”

Verse 24. Shut up the doors] He caused the Divine worship to be totally suspended; and they continued shut till the beginning of the reign of Hezekiah, one of whose first acts was to reopen them, and thus to restore the Divine worship, ~~423B~~ **2 Chronicles 29:3.**

Verse 27. The kings of Israel] It is a common thing for the writer of this book to put *Israel* for *Judah*. He still considers them as *one people*, because proceeding from one stock. The *versions* and *MSS.* have the same reading with the Hebrew; the matter is of little importance, and with this interpretation none can mistake.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 29

Hezekiah's good reign, 1, 2. He opens and repairs the doors of the temple, 3. He assembles and exhorts the priests and Levites, and proposes to renew the covenant with the Lord, 4-11. They all sanctify themselves and cleanse the temple, 12-17. They inform the king of their progress, 18, 19. He collects the rulers of the people: and they offer abundance of sin-offerings, and burnt-offerings, and worship the Lord, 20-30. Every part of the Divine service is arranged, and Hezekiah and all the people rejoice, 31-36.

NOTES ON CHAP. 29

Verse 2. He did that which was right] See Clarke's note on "~~2~~² Kings 18:3".

Verse 8. He hath delivered them to trouble, to astonishment] He probably refers here chiefly to that dreadful defeat by the Israelites in which *a hundred and twenty thousand* were slain, and *two hundred thousand* taken prisoners; see the preceding chapter, ~~14206~~² **Chronicles 28:6, 8.**

Verse 10. To make a covenant] To renew the covenant under which the whole people were constantly considered, and of which circumcision was the sign; and the *spirit* of which was, *I will be your God: Ye shall be my people.*

Verse 16. And the priests went] The priests and Levites cleansed first the courts both of the priests and of the *people*. On this labour they spent eight days. Then they cleansed the *interior* of the temple; but as the Levites had no right to enter the temple, the priests carried all the dirt and rubbish to the *porch*, whence they were collected by the Levites, carried away, and cast into the brook Kidron; in this work eight days more were occupied, and thus the temple was purified in *sixteen days*.

Verse 17. On the first day] "They began on the first day of the first month Nisan."-*Targum.*

Verse 19. All the vessels, which King Ahaz] The *Targum* says, "All the vessels which King Ahaz had polluted and rendered abominable by strange idols, when he reigned in his transgression against the WORD of the Lord,

we have collected and hidden; and others have we prepared to replace them; and they are now before the Lord.”

Verse 21. They brought seven bullocks, &c.] This was more than the law required; see ^{<RBH>}**Leviticus 4:13**, &c. It ordered *one calf* or *ox* for the sins of the *people*, and *one he-goat* for the sins of the *prince*; but Hezekiah here offers many more. And the reason appears sufficiently evident: the law speaks only of *sins of ignorance*; but here were sins of every kind and every die-idolatry, apostasy from the Divine worship, profanation of the temple, &c., &c. The sin-offerings, we are informed, were offered, *first* for *the KINGDOM*-for the transgressions of the *king* and his family; *secondly*, for the *SANCTUARY*, which had been defiled and polluted, and for the *priests* who had been profane, negligent, and unholy; and, *finally*, for *JUDAH*-for the whole mass of the people, who had been led away into every kind of abomination by the above examples.

Verse 23. They laid their hands upon them] That is, they confessed their sin; and as they had by their transgression *forfeited their lives*, they now offer these animals to die as vicarious offerings, their life being taken for the life of their owners.

Verse 25. With cymbals, with psalteries] Moses had not appointed any musical instruments to be used in the divine worship; there was nothing of the kind under the first tabernacle. The *trumpets* or *horns* then used were not for song nor for praise, but as we use *bells*, i.e., to give notice to the congregation of what they were called to perform, &c. But David did certainly introduce many *instruments* of music into God's worship, for which we have already seen he was solemnly reprov'd by the prophet Amos, ^{<MO>}**Amos 6:1-6**. Here, however, the author of this book states he had the commandment of the prophet Nathan, and Gad the king's seer; and this is stated to have been *the commandment of the Lord by his prophets*: but the *Syriac* and *Arabic* give this a different turn—"Hezekiah appointed the Levites in the house of the Lord, with instruments of music, and the sound of harps, and with the *HYMNS* of *DAVID*, and the *HYMNS* of *GAD*, the king's prophet, and of *NATHAN*, the king's prophet: for David *sang the praises of the Lord his God, as from the mouth of the prophets*." It was by the hand or *commandment* of the *Lord* and his *prophets* that the *Levites should praise the Lord*; for so the Hebrew text may be understood: and it was by the *order of David* that so many instruments of music should be introduced into the Divine service. But were it even evident, which it is

not, either from this or any other place in the sacred writings, that instruments of music were prescribed by Divine authority *under the law*, could this be adduced with any semblance of reason, that they ought to be used in *Christian worship*? No: the whole spirit, soul, and genius of the Christian religion are against this: and those who know the Church of God best, and what *constitutes its genuine spiritual state*, know that these things have been introduced as a substitute for the *life and power* of religion; and that where they prevail most, there is least of the *power* of Christianity. Away with such portentous baubles from the worship of that infinite Spirit who requires his followers to worship him *in spirit and in truth*, for to no such worship are those instruments friendly. See the texts in the margin; also the use of the trumpets in the sanctuary, ^{<04102>}Numbers 10:2, &c., and the notes there.

Verse 34. They could not flay all the burnt-offerings] Peace-offerings, and such like, the Levites might flay and dress; but the whole burnt-offerings, that is, those which were *entirely consumed* on the altar, could be touched only by the priests, unless in a case of necessity, such as is mentioned here.

The Levites were more upright in heart] The *priests* seem to have been very backward in this good work; the *Levites* were more ready to help forward this glorious reformation. Why the former should have been so backward is not easy to tell; but it appears to have been the fact. Indeed, it often happens that the higher orders of the priesthood are less concerned for the prosperity of true religion than the lower. Why is this? They are generally too busy about *worldly things*, or too much satisfied with *secular emoluments*. A rich priesthood is not favourable either to the *spread* or *depth* of religion. Earthly gratifications are often put in the place of Divine influences: it is almost a miracle to see a very rich man deeply interested in behalf either of his own soul, or the souls of others.

Verse 36. And Hezekiah rejoiced] Both he and the people rejoiced that God had prepared their hearts to bring about so great a reformation in so short a time; *for*, it is added, *the thing was done suddenly*. The king's example and influence were here, under God, the grand spring of all those mighty and effectual movements. What amazing power and influence has God lodged with *kings*! They can sway a whole empire nearly as they please; and when they declare themselves in behalf of religion, they have the *people* uniformly on their side. *Kings*, on this very ground, are no

indifferent beings; they must be either a great curse or a great blessing to the people whom they govern.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 30

Hezekiah invites all Israel and Judah, and writes letters to Ephraim and Manasseh to come up to Jerusalem, and hold a passover to the Lord, 1-4. The posts go out with the king's proclamation from Dan to Beer-sheba, and pass from city to city through the coasts of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, but are generally mocked in Israel, 5-10. Yet several of Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun, humble themselves, and come to Jerusalem, 11. But in Judah they are all of one heart, 12, 13. They take away the idolatrous altars, kill the passover, sprinkle the blood, and, as circumstances will permit, sanctify the people, 14, 15. Many having eaten of the passover, who were not purified according to the law, Hezekiah prays for them; and the Lord accepts his prayer, and heals them, 16-20. Hezekiah exhorts them; and they hold the feast seven additional days, fourteen in all, and the people greatly rejoice, 21-26. The priests and the Levites bless the people, and God accepts their prayers and thanksgivings, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 30

Verse 1. Hezekiah sent to all Israel] It is not easy to find out how this was permitted by the king of Israel; but it is generally allowed that *Hoshea*, who then reigned over Israel, was one of their best kings. And as the Jews allow that at this time both the golden calves had been carried away by the Assyrians,-that at Dan by Tiglath-pileser, and that at Bethel by Shalmaneser,-the people who chose to worship Jehovah at Jerusalem were freely permitted to do it, and Hezekiah had encouragement to make the proclamation in question.

Verse 2. In the second month.] In *Ijar*, as they could not celebrate it in *Nisan*, the *fourteenth* of which month was the proper time. But as they could not complete the purgation of the temple, till the *sixteenth* of that month, therefore they were obliged to hold it now, or else adjourn it till the next year, which would have been fatal to that spirit of reformation which had now taken place. The *law* itself had given permission to those who were at a distance, and could not attend to the *fourteenth* of the first month, and to those who were accidentally defiled, and ought not to attend, to celebrate the passover on the *fourteenth* of the second month; see ^{<04910>}**Numbers 9:10, 11.** Hezekiah therefore, and his counsellors, thought that they might extend that to the *people at large*, because of the delay necessarily occasioned by the cleansing of the temple, which was

granted to *individuals* in such cases as the above, and the result showed that they had not mistaken the mind of the Lord upon the subject.

Verse 6. So the posts went] פּוֹסְטִים *ratsim*, the *runners* or *couriers*; persons who were usually employed to carry messages; men who were *light of foot*, and *confidential*.

Verse 9. And will not turn away his face from you] Well expressed by the *Targum*: “For the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not cause his majesty to ascend up from among you, if ye will return to his fear.” The *shechinah*, of which the Targumist speaks, is the *dwelling* of the Divine Presence among men, and the *visible symbol* of that presence.

Verse 18. A multitude of the people-had not cleansed themselves] As there were men from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, they were excusable, because they came from countries that had been wholly devoted to idolatry.

The good Lord pardon every one] “The Lord, who is good, have mercy on this people who err.”-*T*.

Verse 22. Spake comfortably unto all the Levites] On such occasions the priests and Levites had great fatigue, and suffered many privations; and therefore had need of that encouragement which this prudent and pious king gave. It is a fine and expressive character given of these men, “They taught the good knowledge of God to the people.” This is the great work, or should be so, of every Christian minister. They should convey that knowledge of God to the people by which they may be saved; that is, *the good knowledge of the Lord*.

Verse 25. The strangers that come out of the land of Israel] That is, the *proselytes* of the *covenant* who had embraced Judaism, and had submitted to the rite of *circumcision*, for none others could be permitted to eat of the passover.

Verse 26. Since the time of Solomon-there was not the like in Jerusalem.] For from that time the ten tribes had been separated from the true worship of God, and now many of them for the first time, especially from Asher, Issachar, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Zebulun, joined to celebrate the passover.

Verse 27. And their voice was heard] God accepted the fruits of that pious disposition which himself had infused.

And their prayer came up] As the smoke of their sacrifices ascended to the clouds, so did their prayers, supplications, and thanksgivings, ascend to the heavens. The *Targum* says: “Their prayer came up to the dwelling-place of his holy *shechinah*, which is in heaven.” Israel now appeared to be in a fair way of regaining what they had lost; but alas, how soon were all these bright prospects beclouded for ever!

It is not for the want of holy resolutions and heavenly influences that men are not saved but through their own unsteadiness; they do not persevere, they forget the necessity of *continuing in prayer*, and thus the Holy Spirit is grieved, departs from them, and leaves them to their own darkness and hardness of heart. When we consider the heavenly influences which many receive who draw back to perdition, and the good fruits which for a time they bore, it is blasphemy to say they had no genuine or saving grace; they had it, they showed it, they trifled with it, sinned against it, continued in their rebellions, and *therefore* are lost.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 31

The people destroy all traces of idolatry throughout Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh, 1. Hezekiah reforms the state of religion in general; and the tithes are brought in from all quarters, and proper officers set over them, 2-13. They bring to also the freewill-offerings, and regulate the priests and Levites and their families, according to their genealogies, 14-19. Hezekiah does every thing in sincerity and truth, and is prosperous, 20, 21.

NOTES ON CHAP. 31

Verse 1. Brake the images in pieces] This species of reformation was not only carried on through *Judah*, but they carried it into *Israel*; whether through a transport of religious zeal, or whether with the *consent* of Hoshea the Israelitish king, we cannot tell.

Verse 2. In the gates of the tents of the Lord.] That is, in the temple; for this was the house, tabernacle, tent, and camp, of the Most High.

Verse 3. The king's portion of his substance for the burnt-offerings] It is conjectured that the Jewish kings, at least from the time of David, furnished the morning and evening sacrifice daily at their own expense, and several others also.

Verse 5. Brought-the first-fruits] These were principally for the maintenance of the priests and Levites; they brought tithes of all the produce of the field, whether commanded or not, as we see in the instance of *honey*, which was not to be offered to the Lord, ^{<[R21]>}**Leviticus 2:11**, yet it appears it might be offered to the priests as *first-fruits*, or in the way of *tithes*.

Verse 7. In the third month] “The month *Sivan*; the *seventh*, *Tisri*.”-*Targum*.

The heaps] The vast *collections of grain* which they had from the tithes over and above their own consumption; see ^{<[B10]>}**2 Chronicles 31:10**.

Verse 11. To prepare chambers] To make granaries to lay up this superabundance.

Verse 12. Shimei-was the next.] He was assistant to Cononiah.

Verse 15. And Miniamin] Instead of [^]mynm, *Miniamin*, [^]mynb, *Benjamin*, is the reading of three of Kennicott's and Deuteronomy Rossi's MSS.; and this is the reading of the *Vulgate*, *Syriac*, *Septuagint*, and *Arabic*.

Verse 17. From twenty years old] Moses had ordered that the Levites should not begin their labour till they were *thirty* years of age; but David changed this order, and obliged them to begin at *twenty*.

Verse 20. Wrought-good and right and truth] Here is the proper character of a worthy king: he is GOOD, and he does *good*; he is UPRIGHT, and he acts *justly* and maintains *justice*; he is *truly* RELIGIOUS, and he lives according to that *truth* which he receives as a revelation from God.

Verse 21. He did it with all his heart] In every respect he was a thoroughly excellent man, saw his duty to God and to his people, and performed it with becoming *zeal* and *diligence*. May God ever send such *kings* to the nations of the world; and may the *people* who are blessed with such be duly obedient to them, and thankful to the God who sends them!

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 32

Sennacherib invades Judea, 1. Hezekiah takes proper measures for the defence of his kingdom, 2-6. His exhortation, 7, 8. Sennacherib sends a blasphemous message to Hezekiah, and to the people, 9-15. His servants rail against God; and he and they blaspheme most grievously, 16-19. Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah cry to God; he answers, and the Assyrians are destroyed, and Sennacherib is slain by his own sons, 20, 21. The Lord is magnified, 22, 23. Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, 24. His ingratitude, 25. His humiliation, 26. His riches, 27-30. His error relative to the Babylonish ambassadors, 31. His acts and death, 32, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 32

Verse 1. After these things] God did not permit this pious prince to be *disturbed* till he had completed the reformation which he had begun.

Verse 2. When Hezekiah saw] This was in the *fourteenth* year of the reign of Hezekiah; and at first the Jewish king *bought* him off at the great price of *three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold*; and even emptied his own treasures, and spoiled the house of the Lord, to gratify the oppressive avarice of the Assyrian king. See the whole account, ^{<121813>}**2 Kings 18:13**, &c.

Verse 4. Stopped all the fountains] This was prudently done, for without water how could an immense army subsist in an *arid country*? No doubt the Assyrian army suffered much through this, as a Christian army did *eighteen hundred years* after this. When the crusaders came, in A.D. 1099, to besiege Jerusalem, the people of the city stopped up the wells, so that the Christian army was reduced to the greatest necessities and distress.

Verse 5. Raised it up to the towers] He built the wall up to the height of the towers, or, having built the wall, he raised towers on it.

Verse 6. Set captains of war over the people-in the street of the gate of the city] That is, the *open places* at the gate of the city, whither the people came for judgment, &c.

Verse 7. There be more with us than with him] We have more power than they have. (These words he quotes from the prophet Elisha, ^{<121616>}**2**

Kings 6:16.) This was soon proved to be true by the slaughter made by the angel of the Lord in the Assyrian camp.

Verse 9. After this did Sennacherib] Having received the silver and gold mentioned above, he withdrew his army, but shortly after he sent Rab-shakeh with a blasphemous message. This is the fact mentioned here.

Verse 10. Thus saith Sennacherib] See all these circumstances largely explained ^{<121817>}**2 Kings 18:17-36.**

Verse 17. Wrote also letters] See ^{<121919>}**2 Kings 19:9, 14.**

Verse 21. The Lord sent an angel] See ^{<121936>}**2 Kings 19:36**, and the note there.

House of his god] Nisroch.

They that came forth of his own bowels] His sons Adrammelech and Sharezer.

Verse 23. Many brought gifts unto the Lord] They plainly saw that Jehovah was the protector of the land.

And presents to Hezekiah] They saw that God was his *friend*, and would undertake for him; and they did not wish to have such a man for their *enemy*.

Verse 24. Hezekiah was sick] See ^{<122001>}**2 Kings 20:1**, &c., and the notes there.

Verse 25. Hezekiah rendered not again] He got into a vain confidence, took pleasure in his riches, and vainly showed them to the messengers of the king of Babylon. See on ^{<122012>}**2 Kings 20:12**, &c.

Verse 26. Humbled himself] Awoke from his sleep, was sorry for his sin, deprecated the wrath of God, and the Divine displeasure was turned away from him.

Verse 27. Pleasant jewels] *hdmj yl k keley chemdah*, desirable *vessels* or *utensils*.

Verse 30. The upper watercourse] He made canals to bring the waters of Gihon from the west side of Jerusalem to the west side of the city of David.

Verse 31. Of the ambassadors] See ^{<22013>}**2 Kings 20:13**, and the observations at the end of that chapter. See Clarke “^{<22020>}**2 Kings 20:20**”.

Verse 32. The vision of Isaiah] See this prophet, chap. 36 to 39.

Verse 33. Chiefest of the sepulchres] This respect they paid to *him* who, since David, had been the best of all their kings.

I shall subjoin a few things from the *Targum* on this chapter.

Ver. 1. “After these things which Hezekiah did, and their establishment, the Lord appointed by his WORD to bring Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and his army, into the land of Israel, that he might destroy the Assyrians in the land of the house of Judah, and smite their troops on the mountains of Jerusalem, and deliver all their spoils into the hands of Hezekiah and his people: wherefore Sennacherib came with immense armies, which could not be numbered; and having pitched his camps in the land of the tribe of Judah, besieged their fortified cities with his armies, hoping to overthrow them.”

Ver. 8. *Hezekiah said*-“His help is the strength of the flesh; but our auxiliary is the WORD of the Lord.”

Ver. 16. “His (Sennacherib’s) servants spoke blasphemy against the WORD of the Lord God.”

Ver. 18. *In the Jews’ speech*-“In the language of the holy house.”

Ver. 21. “And the WORD of the Lord sent Michael, and the angel Gabriel, and destroyed them on the night of the passover with a destructive fire; and burnt up their breath within their bodies, and consumed every soldier, captain, and prince, in the army of the king of Assyria; and he returned with shame of face into his own land.”

The destruction of God’s enemies, and the support and salvation of the faithful, is in every instance in this *Targum* attributed to the WORD of the Lord, *personally* understood. See Clarke’s note on “^{<14327>}**2 Chronicles 34:27**”.

Ver. 24. “In those days was Hezekiah sick near to death; but he prayed before the Lord who spoke to him by his WORD to preserve him and to add to his life *fifteen* years.”

Ver. 31. “The king of Babylon sent, that they might inquire concerning the miracle that had been done in the land; that they might see the two tables of stone which were in the ark of the covenant of the Lord which Moses had placed there with the two tables which he had broken on account of the sin of the calf which they made in Horeb. The WORD of the Lord permitted him to show them these; neither did he suffer for it; that he might try him, and see what was in his heart.”

THUS God speaks after the manner of men: he either brings, or permits them to be brought, into such circumstances as shall cause them to show their prevailing propensities; and then warns them against the evils to which they are inclined, after having shown them that they are capable of those evils. To know ourselves, and our own character, is of the utmost importance to our religious growth and perfection. He who does not know where his weakness lies, is not likely to know where his strength lies. Many, by not being fully acquainted with their own character, have been unwatchful and unguarded, and so become an easy prey to their enemies. *Know thyself* is a lesson which no man can learn but from the Spirit of God.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 33

Manasseh reigns fifty-five years, and restores idolatry, pollutes the temple, and practises all kinds of abominations, 1-9. He and the people are warned in vain, 10. He is delivered into the hands of the Assyrians, bound with fetters, and carried to Babylon, 11. He humbles himself, and is restored, 12, 13. He destroys idolatry, and restores the worship of God, 14-16. The people keep the high places, but sacrifice to the Lord on them, 17. His acts, prayer, and death, 18-20. His son Amon succeeds him; and after a wicked idolatrous reign of two years, is slain by his own servants in his own house, 21-24. The people rise up, and slay his murderers, and make Josiah his son king in his stead, 25.

NOTES ON CHAP. 33

Verse 1. Manasseh was twelve years old] We do not find that he had any godly director; his *youth* was therefore the more easily seduced. But surely he had a *pious education*; how then could the principles of it be so soon eradicated?

Verse 3. Altars for Baalim] The SUN and MOON. *And made groves, twrva Asheroth, Astarte, VENUS; the host of heaven, all the PLANETS and STARS.* These were the general objects of his devotion.

Verse 5. He built altars] See the principal facts in this chapter explained in the notes on ^{<122101>}2 Kings 21:1-17.

Verse 7. A carved image] “He set up an image, the likeness of himself, in the house of the sanctuary.” The *Targumist* supposes he wished to procure himself Divine honours.

Verse 12. And when he was in affliction] Here is a very large addition in the Chaldee: “For the Chaldeans made a brazen mule, pierced full of small holes, and put him within it, and kindled fires all around it; and when he was in this misery, he sought help of all the idols which he had made, but obtained none, for their were of no use. He therefore repented, and prayed before the Lord his God, and was greatly humbled in the sight of the Lord God of his fathers.”

Verse 13. And prayed unto him] “While he was thus praying, all the presiding angels went away to the gates of prayer in heaven; and shut all

the gates of prayer, and all the windows and apertures in heaven, lest that his prayer should be heard. Immediately the compassions of the Creator of the world were moved, whose right hand is stretched out to receive sinners, who are converted to his fear, and break their hearts' concupiscence by repentance. He made therefore a window and opening in heaven, under the throne of his glory; and having heard his prayer, he favourably received his supplication. And when his WORD had shaken the earth, the mule was burst and he escaped. Then the Spirit went out from between the wings of the cherubim; by which, being inspired through the decree of the WORD of the Lord, he returned to his kingdom in Jerusalem. And then Manasseh knew that it was the Lord God who had done these miracles and signs; and he *turned* to the Lord with his whole heart, left all his idols, and never served them more." This long addition gives the Jewish account of those particulars which the sacred writer has passed by: it is curious, though in some sort trifling. The *gates of prayer* may be considered childish; but in most of those things the ancient rabbins purposely hid deep and important meanings.

Verse 14. He built a wall] This was probably a weak place that he fortified; or a part of the wall which the Assyrians had broken down, which he now rebuilt.

Verse 15. He took away the strange gods] He appears to have done every thing in his power to destroy the idolatry which he had set up, and to restore the pure worship of the true God. His repentance brought forth fruits meet for repentance. How *long* he was in captivity, and *when* or by *whom* he was delivered, we know not. The fact of his restoration is asserted; and we believe it on Divine testimony.

Verse 17. The people did sacrifice] "Nevertheless the people did sacrifice on the high places, but only to the name of the WORD of the Lord their God."-*Targum*.

Verse 18. The words of the seers that spake to him] "Which were spoken to him in the name of the WORD of the Lord God of Israel."-*Targum*.

Verse 19. His prayer also] What is called the *Prayer of Manasseh, king of Judah, when he was holden captive in Babylon*, being found among our apocryphal books, I have inserted it at the end of the chapter, without either asserting or thinking that it is the identical prayer which this penitent

king used when a captive in Babylon. But, as I have observed in another place, there are many good sentiments in it; and some sinners may find it a proper echo of the distresses of their hearts; I therefore insert it.

Written among the sayings of the seers.] “They are written in the words of Chozai.”-*Targum*. So says the *Vulgate*. The *Syriac* has *Hunan the prophet*; and the *Arabic* has *Saphan the prophet*.

Verse 21. Amon-reigned two years] See on ^{<12219>} **2 Kings 21:19**.

Verse 22. Sacrificed unto all the carved images] How astonishing is this! with his father’s example before his eyes, he copies his father’s *vices*, but not his *repentance*.

Verse 23. Trespassed more and more.] He appears to have exceeded his father, and would take no warning.

Verse 24. His servants conspired against him] On what account we cannot tell.

Verse 25. The people of the land slew all them] His murder was not a *popular* act, for the people slew the regicides. They were as prone to idolatry as their king was. We may rest satisfied that idolatry was accompanied with great *licentiousness* and sensual gratifications else it never, as a mere religious system, could have had any sway in the world.

FOR an explanation of the term *groves*, ^{<1423B>} **2 Chronicles 23:3**, see **Clarke’s observations at the end of** “^{<122126>} **2 Kings 21:26**”.

I have referred to the *prayer* attributed to *Manasseh*, and found in what is called the *Apocrypha*, just before the first book of *Maccabees*. It was anciently used as a form of confession in the Christian Church, and is still as such received by the Greek Church. It is as follows:—

“O Lord, Almighty God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of their righteous seed, who hast made heaven and earth, with all the ornament thereof; who hast bound the sea by the word of thy commandment; who hast shut up the deep, and sealed it by thy terrible and glorious name; whom all men fear, and tremble before thy power; for the majesty of thy glory cannot be borne, and thine angry threatening towards sinners is insupportable; but thy merciful promise is unmeasurable and unsearchable; for thou art the most high Lord, of great compassion, long-suffering, very merciful, and

repentest of the evils of men. Thou, O Lord, according to thy great goodness, hast promised repentance and forgiveness to them that have sinned against thee, and of thine infinite mercies hast appointed repentance unto sinners, that they may be saved. Thou, therefore, O Lord, that art the God of the just, has not appointed repentance to the just, as to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, which have not sinned against thee; but thou hast appointed repentance unto me that am a sinner: for I have sinned above the number of the sands of the sea. My transgressions, O Lord, are multiplied; my transgressions are multiplied; and I am not worthy to behold and see the height of heaven for the multitude of mine iniquities. I am bowed down with many iron bands, that I cannot lift up mine head, neither have any release; for I have provoked thy wrath, and done evil before thee. I did not thy will, neither kept I thy commandments. I have set up abominations, and have multiplied offences. Now therefore I bow the knee of mine heart, beseeching thee of grace. I have sinned, O Lord, I have sinned, and I acknowledge mine iniquities: wherefore I humbly beseech thee, forgive me, O Lord, forgive me, and destroy me not in mine iniquities. Be not angry with me for ever, by reserving evil for me; neither condemn me into the lower parts of the earth. For thou art the God, the God of them that repent; and in me thou wilt show all thy goodness: for thou wilt save me, that am unworthy, according to thy great mercy. Therefore I will praise thee for ever all the days of my life: for all the powers of the heavens do praise thee, and thine is the glory for ever and ever.-*Amen.*

The above translation, which is that in our common Bibles, might be mended; but the piece is scarcely worth the pains.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 34

Josiah reigns thirty-one years; destroys idolatry in Judah, as also in Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and even to Naphtali, 1-7. He begins to repair the temple, and collects money for the purpose, and employs workmen, 8-13. Hilkiah the priest finds the book of the law in the temple, which is read by Shaphan before the king, 14-19. He is greatly troubled, and consults Huldah the prophetess, 20-22. Her exhortation, and message to the king, 23-28. He causes it to be read to the elders of Judah, and they make a covenant with God, 29, 32. Josiah reforms every abomination, and the people serve God all his days, 33.

NOTES ON CHAP. 34

Verse 2. He declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left.] He never swerved from God and truth; he never omitted what he knew to be his duty to God and his kingdom; he carried on his reformation with a steady hand; *timidity* did not prevent him from going *far enough*; and *zeal* did not lead him beyond due bounds. He walked in the *golden mean*, and his *moderation* was known unto all men. He went neither to the right nor to the left, he looked *inward*, looked *forward*, and looked *upward*. Reader, let the conduct of this pious youth be thy exemplar through life.

Verse 4. The altars of Baalim] How often have these been broken down, and how soon set up again! We see that the religion of a land is as the religion of its king. If the *king* were *idolatrous*, up went the altars, on them were placed the statues, and the smoke of incense ascended in ceaseless clouds to the honour of that which is *vanity*, and *nothing to the world*; on the other hand, when the king was *truly religious*, down went the idolatrous altars, broken in pieces were the images, and the sacrificial smoke ascended only to the true God: in all these cases the *people* were as one man with the *king*.

Verse 5. He burnt the bones of the priests] [ayrmwk](#) *kumeraiya*, the *kemarim*, says the *Targum*. See this word explained, ^{<122316>} **2 Kings 23:5**.

Verse 6. The cities of Manasseh] Even those who were under the government of the Israelitish king permitted their idols and places of idolatry to be hewn down and destroyed: after the truth was declared and

acknowledged, the *spade* and the *axe* were employed to complete the reformation.

Verse 9. And they returned to Jerusalem.] Instead of **wbvyw** *vaiyashubu*, “they returned,” we should read **ybvwy** *yoshebey*, “the inhabitants;” a reading which is supported by many MSS., printed *editions*, and all the *versions*, as well as by *necessity* and *common sense*. See **Clarke’s note on “⁴⁴⁰⁸2 Chronicles 19:8”**, where a similar mistake is rectified.

Verse 12. All that could skill of instruments of music] Did the musicians play on their several instruments to encourage and enliven the workmen? Is not this a probable case from their mention here? If this were really the case, *instrumental music* was never better applied in any thing that refers to the worship of God. It is fabled of *Orpheus*, a most celebrated musician, that such was the enchanting *harmony* of his *lyre*, that he *built the city of Thebes* by it: the *stones* and *timbers* danced to his *melody*; and by the power of his *harmony* rose up, and took their respective places in the different parts of the wall that was to defend the city! This is *fable*; but as all *fable* is a representation of *truth*, where is the *truth* and *fact* to which this refers? How long has this question lain unanswered! But have we not the answer now? It is known in general, that the cities of *Herculaneum* and *Pompeii* were overwhelmed by an eruption of Mount *Vesuvius*, about the *seventy-ninth* year of the Christian era. It is also known that, in sinking for wells, the workmen of the king of Naples lighted on houses, &c., of those overwhelmed cities; that *excavations* have been carried on, and are now in the act of being carried on, which are bringing daily to view various *utensils*, *pictures*, and *books*, which have escaped the influence of the burning lava; and that some of those *parchment volumes* have been unrolled, and *facsimiles* of them *engraved* and published; and that our late *Prince Regent*, afterwards George IV., king of Great Britain, expended considerable sums of money annually in searching for, unrolling, and deciphering those *rolls*. This I record to his *great credit* as the lover of science and literature. Now, among the books that have been unrolled and published, is a *Greek Treatise on Music*, by *Philodemus*; and here we have the *truth* represented which lay hidden under the *fables* of *Orpheus* and *Amphion*. This latter was a *skilful harper*, who was frequently employed by the Theban *workmen* to play to them while engaged in their labour, and for which they *rewarded him out of the proceeds of that labor*. So

powerful and pleasing was his *music*, that they went lightly and comfortably through their work; and *time* and *labour* passed on without *tedium* or *fatigue*; and the *walls and towers were speedily raised*. This, by a metaphor, was attributed to the *dulcet sounds* of his *harp*; and *poetry* seized on and embellished it, and *mythology* incorporated it with her fabulous system. Orpheus is the same. By his skill in music he drew stones and trees after him, i.e., he presided over and encouraged the workmen by his skill in music. Yet how simple and natural is the representation given by this ancient Greek writer of such matters! See *Philodemus*, *Col.* viii. and ix. *Orpheus*, and *Amphion*, by their music, moved the workmen to diligence and activity, and lessened and alleviated their toil. May we not suppose, then, that skilful musicians among the *Levites* did exercise their art among the *workmen* who were employed in the *repairs* of the house of the Lord? May I be allowed a gentle transition? Is it not the *power* and *harmony* of the *grace* of *Jesus Christ* in the *Gospel*, that convert, change, and purify the souls of men, and prepare them for and place them in that part of the house of God, the New Jerusalem? A most beautiful and chaste allusion to this *fact* and *fable* is made by an eminent poet, while praying for his own success as a *Christian* minister, who uses all his skill as a *poet* and *musician* for the glory of God:—

*Thy own musician, Lord, inspire,
 And may my consecrated lyre
 Repeat the psalmist's part!
 His Son and thine reveal in me,
 And fill with sacred melody
 The fibres of my heart.
 So shall I charm the listening throng,
 And draw the LIVING STONES along
 By Jesus' tuneful name.
 The living stones shall dance, shall rise,
 And FORM a CITY in the skies,
 The New Jerusalem.
 CHARLES WESLEY.*

Verse 14. Found a book of the law] See on ^{<12218>}2 Kings 22:8.

Verse 22. Huldah the prophetess] See on ^{<12214>}2 Kings 22:14.

Verse 27. Because thine heart was tender] “Because thy heart was melted, and thou hast humbled thyself in the sight of the WORD of the

Lord, *ygd armym meymera daya*, when thou didst hear his words, *ywmgtp ty yath pithgamoï*, against this place,” &c. Here the *Targum* most evidently distinguishes between *armym meymera*, the PERSONAL WORD, and *µgtp pithgam*, a *word spoken or expressed*.

Verse 28. Gathered to thy grave in peace] See particularly Clarke’s note on “~~<1221>~~ 2 Kings 22:20”.

Verse 30. The king went] See on ~~<1230>~~ 2 Kings 23:1.

Verse 31. Made a covenant] See on ~~<1231B>~~ 2 Kings 23:3. And see the notes on that and the preceding chapter, for the circumstances detailed here.

Verse 32. To stand to it.] It is likely that he caused them all to arise when he read the terms of the covenant, and thus testify their approbation of the covenant itself, and their resolution to observe it faithfully and perseveringly.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 35

Josiah celebrates a passover, 1; regulates the courses of the priests; assigns them, the Levites, and the people, their portions; and completes the greatest passover ever celebrated since the days of Solomon, 2-19. Pharaoh Necho passes with his army through Judea, 20. Josiah meets and fights with him at Megiddo, and is mortally wounded, 21-23. He is carried to Jerusalem, where he dies, 24. Jeremiah laments for him, 25. Of his acts and deeds, and where recorded, 26, 27.

NOTES ON CHAP. 35

Verse 3. Put the holy ark in the house] It is likely that the priests had secured this when they found that the idolatrous kings were determined to destroy every thing that might lead the people to the worship of the true God. And now, as all appears to be well established, the ark is ordered to be put into its *own place*.

For an ample account of this passover and the reformation that was then made, see on ^{<1223>} **2 Kings 23:1**, &c., and the places marked in the margin.

Verse 11. They killed the passover] The *people* themselves might slay their own paschal lambs, and then present the *blood* to the *priests*, that they might *sprinkle* it before the altar; and the *Levites* flayed them, and made them ready for dressing.

Verse 18. There was no passover like to that] “That which distinguished this passover from all the former was,” says Calmet, “the great liberality of Josiah, who distributed to his people a greater number of victims than either David or Solomon had done.”

Verse 20. Necho king of Egypt] *Pharaoh the lame*, says the *Targum*.

Verse 21. God commanded me to make haste] The *Targum* gives a curious turn to this and the following verse: “My idol commanded me to make haste; refrain therefore from me and my idol which is with me, that he betray thee not. When he heard him mention his idol, he would not go back; and he hearkened not unto the words of Necho, which he spake

concerning his idol.” Here is the rabbinical *excuse* for the conduct of Josiah.

Verse 24. The second chariot] Perhaps this means no more than that they took Josiah out of his own chariot and put him into another, either for *secrecy*, or because his own had been *disabled*. The chariot into which he was put might have been that of the *officer* or *aid-de-camp* who attended his master to the war. See Clarke’s note on “~~1220~~ 2 Kings 22:20”.

Verse 25. Behold, they are written in the lamentations.] The Hebrews had *poetical compositions* for all great and important events, *military songs*, songs of *triumph*, *epithalamia* or *marriage odes*, *funeral elegies*, &c. Several of these are preserved in different parts of the historical books of Scripture, and these were generally made by *prophets* or *inspired men*. That composed on the tragical end of this good king by Jeremiah is *now* lost. The *Targum* says, “Jeremiah bewailed Josiah with a great lamentation; and all the chiefs and matrons sing these lamentations concerning Josiah to the present day, and it was a statute in Israel annually to bewail Josiah. Behold, these are written in the book of Lamentations, which Baruch wrote down from the mouth of Jeremiah.”

Verse 27. And his deeds, first and last] “The former things which he did in his childhood, and the latter things which he did in his youth; and all the judgments which he pronounced from his *eighth* year, when he came to the kingdom, to his *eighteenth*, when he was grown up, and began to repair the sanctuary of the LORD; and all that he brought of his substance to the hand of judgment, purging both the house of Israel and Judah from all uncleanness; behold, they are written in the book of the Kings of the house of Israel, and of the house of Judah.”-*Targum*. These general histories are lost; but in the books of *Kings* and *Chronicles* we have the leading facts.

II CHRONICLES

CHAPTER 36

Jehoahaz made king on the death of his father Josiah, and reigns only three months, 1, 2. He is dethroned by the king of Egypt, and Jehoiakim his brother made king in his stead, who reigns wickedly eleven years, and is dethroned and led captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, 3-8. Jehoiachin is made king in his stead, and reigns wickedly three months and ten days, and is also led captive to Babylon, 9, 10. Zedekiah begins to reign, and reigns wickedly eleven years, 11, 12. He rebels against Nebuchadnezzar, and he and his people cast all the fear of God behind their backs; the wrath of God comes upon them to the uttermost; their temple is destroyed; and the whole nation is subjugated, and led into captivity, 13-21. Cyrus, king of Persia, makes a proclamation to rebuild the temple of the Lord, 22, 23.

NOTES ON CHAP. 36

Verse 1. Took Jehoahaz] It seems that after Necho had discomfited Josiah, he proceeded immediately against *Charchemish*, and in the interim, Josiah dying of his wounds, the people made his son king.

Verse 3. The king of Egypt put him down] He now considered Judah to be *conquered*, and *tributary* to him and because the people had set up Jehoahaz without his consent, he dethroned him, and put his brother in his place, perhaps for no other reason but to show his supremacy. For other particulars, see the notes on ^{<12331>}**2 Kings 23:31-35**.

Verse 6. Came up Nebuchadnezzar] See Clarke's notes on "^{<12401>}**2 Kings 24:1**". Archbishop *Usher* believes that Jehoiakim remained *three* years after this tributary to the Chaldeans, and that it is from this period that the *seventy years' captivity*, predicted by Jeremiah, is to be reckoned.

Verse 9. Jehoiachin was eight] See on ^{<12406>}**2 Kings 24:6-15**.

Verse 10. Made Zedekiah-king] His name was at first *Mattaniah*, but the king of Babylon changed it to *Zedekiah*. See ^{<12417>}**2 Kings 24:17**, and the notes there.

Verse 12. Did that which was evil] Was there ever such a set of weak, infatuated men as the Jewish kings in general? They had the fullest evidence that they were only *deputies* to God Almighty, and that they

could not expect to retain the throne any longer than they were faithful to their Lord; and yet with all this conviction they lived wickedly, and endeavoured to establish *idolatry* in the place of the worship of their Maker! After bearing with them long, the Divine mercy gave them up, as their case was utterly hopeless. *They sinned till there was no remedy.*

Verse 19. They burnt the house of God] Here was an end to the *temple*; the most superb and costly edifice ever erected by man.

Brake down the wall of Jerusalem] So it ceased to be a *fortified* city.

Burnt all the palaces] So it was no longer a *dwelling-place* for kings or great men.

Destroyed all the goodly vessels] Beat up all the silver and gold into masses, keeping only a few of the finest in their own shape. See ^{<14618>}**2 Chronicles 36:18.**

Verse 21. To fulfill the word of the Lord] See ^{<24250>}**Jeremiah 25:9, 12; 26:6, 7; 29:12.** For the miserable death of Zedekiah, see ^{<122504>}**2 Kings 25:4, &c.**

Verse 22. Now in the first year of Cyrus] This and the following verse are supposed to have been written by *mistake* from the *book of Ezra*, which begins in the same way. The book of the *Chronicles*, properly speaking, does close with the *twenty-first verse*, as then the Babylonish captivity *commences*, and these *two verses* speak of the transactions of a period *seventy years after*. This was in the first year of the reign of Cyrus over the *empire of the East* which is reckoned to be A.M. 3468. But he was king of *Persia* from the year 3444 or 3445. See *Calmet* and *Usher*.

Verse 23. The Lord his God be with him] “Let the WORD of the Lord be his helper, and let him go up.”-*Targum*. See the notes on the beginning of *Ezra*. See **Clarke “Ezr 1:1”**.

THUS ends the history of a people the most fickle, the most ungrateful, and perhaps on the whole the most sinful, that ever existed on the face of the earth. But what a display does all this give of the power, justice, mercy, and long-suffering of the Lord! There was no people like this people, and no God like their God.

MASORETIC NOTES

The *sum* of the *verses* in both books of Chronicles is 1656. *Middle* verse, ~~13725~~ **1 Chronicles 27:25**. Its Masoretic sections, *twenty-five*.

Having made particular remarks on every thing which I judged of importance in these and the preceding historical books, and in the course of this work having often found the want of a chronological list of the kings of Israel and Judah, in the consecutive order of their reigns; for the reader's information I have brought all the facts into a synopsis or general view, so that he may see at once the contemporary reigns in those two kingdoms, as well as the leading facts by which their reigns were distinguished. In this table will be seen, at one view, the year of the world; the year before Christ; the year before and after the First Olympiad; the year before and from the building of Rome; and under them the Jewish history, from its first kings till the time in which its regal state was entirely abolished, and both kingdoms led into captivity, never more to arise to any political consequence till they acknowledge the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and take Jesus the Christ, the son and only legitimate heir of David, for their Saviour and their Lord. I hope that the table which is here subjoined will be found, in every point of view, both interesting and instructive.

A. CLARKE.

Millbrook, December 7, 1819.

Finished correcting the two books of Chronicles, March 28th,
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