

## NOTES ON DIFFICULT TEXTS.

2 KINGS xv. 10. "And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him (*i.e.* Zechariah), and smote him before the people, and slew him, and reigned in his stead." The verse reads innocently enough in the English: but the Hebrew scholar does not require to have pointed out to him the extraordinary style of the expression rendered *before the people*, קָבַל-עַם. Why the Aramaic word קָבַל, which occurs besides only in the avowedly Aramaic sections of Daniel and Ezra? why עַם without the article? No such usage occurs throughout the Old Testament. Ewald, following the rendering of LXX., took *Qobolām* as a proper name ("and Qobolām smote him, and slew him," etc., *History*, iv. 154), supposing the allusion to be to a usurper, who obtained power for but a short time, and is not therefore further mentioned. But the name comes in very abruptly, and interrupts the connexion (for only Shallum is spoken of in *vv.* 13-15), and is not satisfactorily accounted for, even by the theory that it may have been originally merely a note written upon the margin. Κεβλαάμ of the LXX. does not count for much; for in this version a word which the translators did not understand is very frequently transliterated: examples in this very book are, for instance, ἀφφώ, ii. 14, x. 10; Βαιθακάθ, x. 12; σαδημώθ, xxiii. 4; Χωμαρίμ, *ib.* 5; so Νεεσσαράν, 1 Sam. xxi. 7; Πηγάβ, Jud. i. 19, and many others. All difficulty is removed by the brilliant conjecture of Grätz,<sup>1</sup> which has been accepted by Stade,<sup>2</sup> עַם־בְּלֵאִם in *Ibleam* for עַם־לֵבָל. The change of letters is as slight as possible; and as Stade points out, it is the custom of the narrator in similar cases to indicate the locality of the occurrence, *vv.* 14, 25; 1 Kings xv. 27, xvi. 9; 2 Kings xii. 20 [21 Heb.]. Ibleam lay in the plain of Jezreel (Josh. xvii. 11; 2 Kings

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. der Juden*, II. i. p. 99.<sup>2</sup> *Gesch. des V. Israels*, p. 575.

ix. 27), where Hosea (i. 5) actually anticipated the fall of Jehu's dynasty, and the ruin of Israel; but the coincidence is probably accidental, for the prophet pictures to himself a *military* disaster ("I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel"), which he imagines as enacted on the great "battle-field of Palestine," which had also been the scene of Jehu's triumph, while the historian apparently describes an assassination at the hand of a body of conspirators.

Hos. xiii. 9. שְׁחַתֵּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־בִי בְעִוְרֶךָ; A.V. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." This rendering of A.V. is derived, in the first part of the verse, from the mediæval Jewish scholar Rashi (d. 1104) who paraphrases חבלת עצמך ישראל; in the second part, from David Kimchi (כי בי היה עורר). That it is not tenable is clear: (1) שְׁחַתֵּךְ cannot, even paraphrastically, be rendered "thou hast destroyed thyself"; (2) כִּי has the force of *but* only after a negative ("they have not rejected thee, *for* me they have rejected," i.e. "*but* me they have rejected"); (3) בעורר, with the prep. ב, cannot denote the subject of the last clause. שְׁחַתֵּךְ is the 3 pers. of a verb; and the subject must be either (1) something inferred from the context, as the calf mentioned above (so Kimchi), or (2) the indeterminate pronoun *One*—or, to speak more accurately, in accordance with Semitic usage, the cognate participle הַמְשִׁיחַת;<sup>1</sup> or (3) the sentence in clause *b*, "that, etc." Clause *b*, now, if the text be sound, can only be understood

<sup>1</sup> In such a sentence as על-כן קרא לבאר, Gen. xlviii. 1, or ויאמר ליוסף, ib. xvi. 14, the true subject of the verb is not the indefinite *one* (Germ. *man*, Fr. *on*), but the cognate participle ויאמר האומר, ויאמר הקורא, על כן קרא הנופל ממנו, which is sometimes actually expressed, as Deut. xxii. 8, כי יפול הנופל ממנו, when *he that falleth shall fall from it*; 2 Sam. xvii. 9, וישמע השומע; Isa. xxviii. 4, ואשר יראה הראה אותה, which *he that seeth it shall see*. Comp. Ibn Ezra on Isa. viii. 4, and often (Friedländer, *Essays on Ibn Ezra*, p. 134, note 5), Kimchi on 1 Ki. xxii. 38 (וישמה, sc. השומע), Prof. Cheyne, critical note on Isa. xiv. 30, etc.; and for Arabic, Dr. Wright, *Arab. Gr.*, ii. § 132. The explanation of the idiom in Ges., *Gr.* § 137, 3, is not adequate.

by the assumption of an ellipse: "that (thou art) against me, against thy help" (R.V.: so in effect already Rashi בעורך כִּי בִי פִשְׁעָת מֵרַדְתָּ בְּעֹזְרִי, "for against me hast thou transgressed, (and) rebelled against thy help"). Combining (3) with this, we obtain the rendering, "It hath destroyed thee, O Israel, that (thou art) against me, against thy help," which is that of Ewald, Hitzig, Nowack, and the R.V. Adopting the construction (2), and for the sake of English idiom transforming "He that destroyeth hath destroyed thee," into the passive "Thou art destroyed," we obtain the rendering of R.V. *margin*., "Thou art destroyed, O Israel; for (thou art) against me, against thy help," which, so far as concerns the first clause, is quite grammatical, though not, perhaps, altogether so forcible as the former alternative. Still, with either of these constructions, the ellipse—or aposiopesis—in clause *b* is strange and unusual; and the preposition כִּי without some verb (such as is added in the paraphrase of Rashi) denoting explicitly the idea of opposition or rebellion, does not naturally express *against*. The LXX. for the last two words have τὴς βοηθήσει: the Peshitto similarly מִי יִשְׁעֶנִּי *who* will help thee? This points to a reading מִי *who?* for בִּי "against me": "Thou art destroyed, O Israel: for *who is there as thy help?*" and affords a sense in thorough harmony with the context. Jehovah, *v.* 8 declares, will be to Israel as a foe; the nation is thus undone. He who would be their natural ally is no longer there to help them. The כִּי is the well-known (so-called) *Beth essentia* (see Ges. Lexic., *s.v.* כִּי), and there is a close parallel in expression in Exod. xviii. 4, אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי בְּעֹזְרִי, "for the God of my father was my help" (lit. "was *in* or *as* my help," as here). The change from מִי into בִּי is a slight one, and may easily have taken place under the influence of the following בעורך.

Micah ii. 7. הָאָמֹר בֵּית יַעֲקֹב. As pointed, הָאָמֹר can only be the interrogative with the passive participle; but

the construction in that case is singularly harsh, and indeed hardly affords an intelligible sense: "Is there a thing said,<sup>1</sup> O house of Jacob," etc. Hence Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 101b, treats הָ as an exclamatory particle, alien to הִיָּה, Ezek. xxx. 2, and renders "Ah! that which is said!" or "Ah! what a speech! O house of Israel. Is the spirit of the Lord shortened?" etc. The vocative might be paralleled by Isa. xxix. 16, הַפְּנֵיכֶם "O your perverseness!" but there is no other example either of the particle supposed, or of such a use of the passive participle. Others, to obviate the first of these objections, read הָאָמַר (the article having the force of a vocative), rendering similarly *O the speech!* (Steiner, *ad loc.*), but without substantially relieving the awkwardness of the expression.<sup>2</sup>

A.V. (following David Kimchi) and Keil render: "O thou that art named the house of Jacob," *i.e.* O you that are named Israelites, so far as the title goes, but are not Israelites in reality (cf. Isa. xlvi. 1). The sense thus obtained is tolerable, though not specially favoured by the context; a more serious objection is that it is not defensible philologically. For, (1) the art. before אֵ is always הָ not הִיָּה; and (2), what is more important, אָמַר cannot signify *called* or *named*: *he was called* is not אָמַר לִי but אָמַר לִי, lit. *there was said to him . . .* (as Isa. iv. 3, xxxii. 5). Keil attempts to show the contrary by appealing to הִנְקָרְאִים *which are called*, Isa. xlvi. 1; but this reference is not to the point; for קָרָא, unlike אָמַר, may be construed with a simple accusative, as well as with לִי; and thus its passive (though even then rarely) admits of the construction with a personal subject.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The rendering *Num dicendum?* puts more into the participle than it legitimately expresses.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Caspari, *Micha*, p. 119 (*O über das Gesagte!*), and Kleinert (in Lange's *Bibelwerk*), but without distinctly saying how they explain the הָ.

<sup>3</sup> אָמַר with אָשׁ, "the name is called . . ." is common enough; but אָמַר with a personal subject, "he is called . . ." does not occur earlier than second Isaiah (xliii. 7, liv. 5, lvi. 7, lxi. 6, cf. xlvi. 2) and Zech. viii. 3; see the more usual construction, אָמַר לִי; 1 Sam. ix. 9; Isa. i. 26, xxxii. 5;

אָמַר, on the contrary, is *to say*, not *to call* or *name*:<sup>1</sup> hence אָמַרְתָּ (הָ) will only mean *that which is said*, not *thou to whom there is said* (=who art named); the rendering "Thou that art named the house of Jacob" must accordingly be abandoned.

The sense required is clearly *Num dicendum?* and this may be obtained in a manner thoroughly agreeable to Hebrew idiom by the change of one point—by reading אָמַרְתָּ for אָמַרְתָּ; אָמַרְתָּ will be of course the inf. absol., lit. *shall one say?*—used with a touch of passion, as Jer. vii. 9, "הֲגַנֵּב וְגו'" "Is there stealing, murdering, committing adultery," etc., or Job xl. 2, "הֲרַב עִם שְׂדֵי יְסוּר", "*shall a caviller contend with the Almighty?*" Render therefore, "*Shall it be said*, O house of Jacob, Is the ear of the Lord shortened?" etc., *i.e.* Will you accuse Jehovah of impatience? will you charge Him with being the cause of your misfortunes? On the contrary, *His* words are always good with those who walk uprightly: if misfortunes come, the cause must lie in yourselves.

Mic. ii. 12, 13. The interpretation of these verses is difficult, on account of the abruptness with which they are introduced, and their want of connexion with the preceding context. Apparently, they contain a promise of restoration after calamity; and undoubtedly such a promise is frequently met with in the prophets, following immediately upon an announcement of disaster, *e.g.* Hos. i. 10—ii. 1 [Heb. ii. 1—3]; Isa. iv. 2—6; but here it follows a *denunciation of sin*, so that between *vv.* 11 and 12 there is no

etc. Similarly, in the active voice, אָמַרְתָּ is by far the most usual construction (Gen. i. 5, xvi. 14, etc.): אָמַרְתָּ with an accusative is much rarer, Gen. xxvi. 33; Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14; and in agreement with the less usual construction of the passive in the same author, Isa. liv. 6, lx. 18.

<sup>1</sup> In Gen. xxxii. 28 the construction is: "Not Jacob shall be said any more (as) thy name, but Israel": and in Jer. vii. 32: "*there shall no more be said Topheth, or the valley of the sons of Hinnom,*" etc.; the *It* of A.V. here represents an implicit לָּ in the Hebrew, not the subject of אָמַרְתָּ.

point of connexion whatever. Hence very different views of the passage have been taken by commentators. (1) It has been understood as a denunciation of *judgment*, the reference in *v.* 12 being supposed to be to the people crowded together in cities for fear of the enemy, and in *v.* 13 to their final flight when the capital was entered by the enemy. So, for instance, David Kimchi (who refers *v.* 13 definitely to the flight of Zedekiah "between the two walls," quoting 2 Kings xxv. 4, and Ezek. xii. 12), the Geneva Version (the note in which on "the breaker" is, "The enemies shall break their gates and walls, and lead them into Caldea," and on "The Lord shall be upon their heads" [*sic*], "to drive them forward, and to help their enemies"), Calvin. But this interpretation evidently does violence to *v.* 13, especially the latter part of the verse. Others (2) connecting *vv.* 12-13 closely with *v.* 11 have supposed them placed in the mouth of the false prophets, as an illustration of their deceptive promises of security (to be construed then: "he shall surely be a prophet of this people (saying): I will surely," etc.). So already Ibn Ezra; and in modern times Ewald<sup>1</sup> and Kleinert. This is a far better suggestion than the former, and Isa. v. 19 or Jer. xxiii. 17 might be quoted in defence of it; but the contents of the verses are too characteristic, and too completely in harmony with the style and tone of Micah himself (cf. iv. 6 *sq.*), for it to be a really probable one.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, as Caspari (p. 123) observes, the verses *presuppose* disaster, if not exile, which itself would not be granted by the false prophets (see chap. iii. 11). The ordinary interpretation must be acquiesced in; but it must be granted that the verses stand in no logical connexion

Who, however, supposes that they were not originally part of the text, but were written on the margin "either by Micah himself, or by another ancient reader of the prophecy, as an example of such promises."

<sup>2</sup> All these interpretations are mentioned, and elaborately discussed, by the learned Pococke, in his Commentary on this Prophet (Oxford, 1677).

with the chapter as a whole. It does not, however, appear on this account that they are to be regarded as not Micah's own; nor is it clear that they contain ideas foreign to the age of Micah.<sup>1</sup> The idea of a scattering or exile is implied in chap. i. and in ii. 4, 5, to say nothing of iii. 12; the idea of the preservation of a "remnant" had been promulgated more than a generation before by Amos (ix. 8-9, cf. v. 15, where the word "remnant" first occurs)—not to quote Hos. i. 10, 11, xi. 10, 11; Isa. xi. 11-16. The *form* which the idea assumes is due to the imagination of the particular prophet; and the similarity of these two verses with Jer. xxxi. 8, Isa. lii. 12 is not sufficiently close to authorise us in treating them as an addition made to the book of Micah's prophecies in the time of the exile. Either, however, they are misplaced; or Micah's prophecies have not been preserved to us in their integrity, and some connecting link has here been lost.

The general sense is clear. Assembled as a thronging multitude at one centre, like sheep in a fold, the Israelites prepare to re-enter their ancient homes. The "breaker up," *i.e.* either a leader, or a detachment of men, whose duty it was to break up walls or other obstacles opposing the progress of an army, advances before them, breaking through the gates of the prison in which the people are confined; they follow, marching forth triumphantly through the open way; their king, with Jehovah at his side (Ps. cx. 5), heads the victorious procession (Exod. xiii. 21; Isa. lii. 12).<sup>2</sup> The scene is finely conceived, and the

<sup>1</sup> So Stade, in his *Zeitschr. für die Alttest. Wiss.*, 1881, p. 161-5.

<sup>2</sup> In v. 12 the sense of *בצורה* is uncertain. On the one hand the Targ. (*חוטרא*) and Vulg. (*ovile*), followed by Ewald, Hitzig, Gesenius, Caspari, understood a *sheepfold*, from *בצור*, prop. a place *fenced off*, or *secured* (cf. the Aram. *בִּיצוּרְתָא*, which in the Targ. represents the *הַרְבֵּי* of Ezek. xli. 10, etc., *i.e.* a part of the court surrounding the Temple *railed off* from the public), which, though the word does not occur elsewhere in this sense (or in fact at all except as a prop. n.), would agree well with the parallel *pasture*; on the other hand, David Kimchi, followed by A.V., R.V., and Keil, understand by it the Edom-

past tenses represent it forcibly and vividly. The "breaker up" is commonly taken as denoting an individual leader: but the leader is mentioned separately afterwards (at the end of the verse); and the analogy of הַאֲרִיב, הַמְשִׁיחִית, הַחֲלִיץ, הַמְאַסֵּף<sup>1</sup> (all used collectively to denote a particular part of an army), may be pleaded in favour of the view that הַפְּרִיץ is meant similarly, and denotes that part of the army which was told off to prepare a free way for the advance of the main body.

The "breaker up" has been supposed by some to represent the Messiah, and the passage has even been quoted as typical of the Ascension of Christ!<sup>2</sup> In so far as this has been held to rest upon the opinions of the Jews, it is apparently an error; the Jews identify *their king*, in the latter part of the verse, with the Messiah, but not the "breaker up." Thus Kimchi expressly: "In the Midrash (i.e. as expounded allegorically) the 'Breaker up' is Elijah, 'their king' is the Branch, the son of David." The passages referred to by Pearson do not substantiate his view. Thus the old Midrash of Moses ha-Darshan,<sup>3</sup> explaining Cant. i. 4, "Let us be glad and rejoice in thee," writes "When (shall we rejoice)? when the captivities shall ascend out of Gehenna, with the Shekinah at their head, as it is said, 'And their king passed on before them, and *the LORD at their head.*'" This comment, however (to say nothing of the foreign ideas which it imports into the text of Micah),

its capital, Bozrah, supposing this to have been the centre of a pastoral district, which is possible, though Isa. xxxiv. 6 is no proof of it. On the whole, the former view seems the more probable. In clause *b*, the subject of the 3 *pl. fem.* תְּהִי מְנוּחָה is צֹאן, which is regularly construed so (*e.g.* Jer. xxxiii. 13; Zech. xiii. 7). The prophet, as he begins, has the figure of the sheep in his mind; but, as he continues, the thing signified insensibly takes its place, and so he explains by מְרֵב אָדָם "by reason of the multitude of men": cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 37 *sq.*

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Sam. xiii. 17; Judg. xx. 36, 37; Josh. vi. 7, 9, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Bp. Pearson, *On the Creed*, fol. 270.

<sup>3</sup> In the *Pugio Fidei* of Raymundus Martini, p. 890, Carpzov (= p. 685, Le Voisin).



does not allude to the "breaker up" at all, but relates exclusively to the words at the end of the verse.<sup>1</sup>

The Midrashic passages cited by Schöttgen<sup>2</sup> are, if possible, of even less value, though one or two are worth quoting as samples of Rabbinical exegesis. Thus from the Midrash on Genesis, the *B'reshith Rabbah*, § 48: "God said to Abraham, 'Thou saidst, *And wash your feet* (Gen. xviii. 4): As thou livest, I will reward thy children in the wilderness, in the land of Canaan, and in the world to come.' Whence may it be learnt that He rewarded them in the wilderness? From Ezek. xvi. 9, where it is said, 'And I *washed* thee with water.' Whence that He rewarded them in the land of Canaan? From Isa. i. 16, '*Wash* you, and make you clean.' Whence that He will reward them in the world to come? From Isa. iv. 4, 'When the LORD shall have *washed* the

<sup>1</sup> The other passage, on Ps. lxxx. 10, cited *ibid.* and also p. 538 C. (=432, Le V.) is obscure, but receives light from the context, which, through the kind aid of my friend Dr. Neubauer, has been transcribed for me from the MS. of the *B'reshith Rabbathi* (see Zunz, *Gottesd. Vorträge*, p. 288 *f.*), in the possession of the Jewish community at Prague, by Herr Epstein, of Vienna (who contemplates the publication of the MS.). On the words (Gen. xl. 9), "Behold, a vine was before me," after quoting Ps. lxxx. 10, "Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt" and observing that the vine is Israel, which had gradually extended itself and increased since it was first "planted" in its single (Isa. li. 2) ancestor Abraham, the Midrash continues: "So Israel were small below like a plant, as it is said (Deut. vii. 7), 'For ye were the smallest of all nations'; but they are multiplied above like blossoms, as it is written (*ibid.* i. 10), 'Behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.' The plantation from below; this is Abraham: the plantation from above; this is the Messiah, as it is said (Mic. ii. 13), 'The breaker is *gone up* before them.'" The argument is apparently a verbal one, based on the connexion existing between עלה, "is gone up," and מלמעלה, "from above": Israel originated humbly in Abraham; it culminates proudly in the Messiah. But the passage is an isolated one, and in view of the general tenor of Jewish opinion (see the passages cited in the text) does not show that the "breaker up" was a recognised title of the Messiah. The occurrence of the passage in the Prague MS. is of interest as corroborating the good faith of Raymundus Martini, which, as his citations are not always to be verified in the printed texts, has been sometimes called in question. It appears however that the quotation on p. 880 is more correct than that on p. 538.

<sup>2</sup> *Hore Hebraica*, ii. pp. 62, 69, 135, 212. These passages (except the third) will be found in full in Aug. Wünsche's German translation of the Midrashim, called the *Bibliotheca Rabbinica* (Leipzig, 1880-85).

filth of the daughters of Zion.' 'Thou saidst, *And rest you under the trees:*'" the reward for this is established similarly, for the wilderness, from Ps. cv. 39, "He spread a cloud for a covering;" for Canaan, from Lev. xxiii. 42, "In booths shall ye dwell for seven days;" for the world to come, from Isa. iv. 6, "And there shall be a pavilion for a shadow by day from the drought." After other instances of a similar kind, we read, "So it is written, *And he stood before them* (Gen. xviii. 8). As thou livest, I will reward thy children in the wilderness, in the land of Canaan, and in the world to come. In the wilderness, as it is written (Exod. xiii. 21), 'And the LORD went *before them,*' etc.; in the land of Canaan, as it is written (Ps. lxxxii. 1), 'God *standeth* in the congregation of God;' in the world to come, as it is written (Mic. ii. 13), 'The breaker is gone up *before them.*'"

Again, from the Midrash on Lamentations, *Echah Rabbah*, on i. 22; "You will find that with whatever thing the Israelites sinned, in it they were smitten, and in it are they comforted. They sinned with the head; they were smitten in the head; they are comforted with the head. They sinned with the head, as it is written, Num. xiv. 4, 'Let us make a head (!), and return to Egypt.' They were smitten in the head, as it is written (Isa. i. 5), 'Every head is sick;' they are comforted with the head, as it is written (Mic. ii. 13), 'And the LORD at their head.'" The argument is carried on with the ear (Zech. vii. 11; Jer. xix. 3; Isa. xxx. 21), eye (Isa. iii. 16; Lam. i. 16; Isa. lii. 8), nostril, and other members. In the *Pesikta Rabbathi* it is resumed with other objects, including kings, which gives occasion to the verse being quoted again: "They sinned in the matter of a king, as it is said (1 Sam. viii. 5), 'Now make us a *king* to judge us, like all the nations;' they were smitten in a king, as it is said (Hos. xiii. 11), 'I give thee a *king* in mine anger, and take him away in my wrath'; they are comforted in a king, as it is said (Mic. ii. 13), 'And

their *king* passed on before them, and the LORD at their head.'"<sup>1</sup>

Further, from the Midrash on *Proverbs* (vi. 11); " 'And thy poverty (read *thy head*, פְּשָׁרָא for פְּשָׁרָא) shall come as a traveller: ' this is the King Messiah, who will pass on at the head of Israel, as it is said (Mic. ii. 13), ' And their king passed on before them, and the LORD at their head.' "

None of these passages, however, identify the " breaker up " with the Messiah; nor do others that have been cited. The Targum of Jonathan, and Rashi, make here no mention of the Messiah whatever: the extract from the *Abkath Rochel*,<sup>2</sup> a work of the 16th century, and the comment upon it in the *Theologia Judaica* of Hulsius, do not show that the Jews so understood the term. Abarbanel and Pococke merely quote the Midrash, which has been already cited from Kimchi: " The " breaker up " is Elijah: ' their king ' is the Branch, the son of David." Even Rabbinical exegesis, after it has identified the " breaker up " with Elijah, would hardly proceed to identify it with the Messiah; for these two figures are distinct in Jewish as they are in Christian theology. But " their king," in the latter part of the verse, is doubtless the ideal monarch and leader, whose figure the prophets delineate, and who in after ages is known by the title of Messiah.

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<sup>1</sup> *Pesikta Rabbathi*, ed. Prag, c. 1655, fol. 60<sup>b</sup> (ed. Friedmann, Wien, 1880, fol. 157<sup>b</sup>). The passage quoted above from *Echah Rabbathi* follows, but with Mic. iii. 11, " the heads thereof judge for reward," as the example of sinning, instead of Num. xiv. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Hulsius, *Theol. Jud.*, p. 142: " When the Jews are brought back from captivity, then will clouds of glory encircle them, and Jehovah will go before them, as it is said," quoting Mic. ii. 13.