

(a) Symmetry of these strophes in the number of metrical verses :—

9, 9, 15, 15, 9, 9.

(3) Symmetry in repeated words :—

לֹא מִצָּאָה . . . רִדְפֶיָהּ at the end of strophe 1.

לֹא מִצָּאָה . . . רִדְפֶיָהּ at the end of strophe 2.

The expression הָשִׁיב נַפְשׁ is repeated at the end of the strophes 3, 4, and 5 (vv. 11, 16, 19). In the last strophe notice the *inclusion* לְבִי (sv. 20, 22); and in the third, the *inclusion* רָאָה יְהוָה (sv. 9^b, 11), if the transposition be admitted.

According to the symmetry, as well as according to the sense, the alphabetical order v. 16 ע, v. 17 פ in chap. i, and v. 16 ב, v. 17 ע in chap. ii seems to be right. In chap. ii (not in chap. i) the concatenation is worth attention :—

sv. 1 and 2	אֲרֵנִי	sv. 12 and 13	} ?
2 and 3	יַעֲקֹב	13 and 14	
3 and 4	כֹּאֵשׁ	14 and 15	
4 and 5	כֹּאֲרִיב	15 and 16	עֲלִיד . . . שְׂרֻקוֹ
5 and 6	שָׁחַת	16 and 17	עֲלִיד . . . אֲוִיב
6 and 7	מִזְעֵד	17 and 18	יּוֹם
7 and 8	הִזְמַח	18 and 19	לִילָח
8 and 9	יְהוָה	19 and 20	שְׁלָלִים
9 and 10	אֲרָץ	20 and 21	הֲרִג
10 and 11	לְאֲרָץ	21 and 22	בִּזְמַם אָף
11 and 12	בְּרַחֲבוֹת, עֲמָף, שִׁפְךְ		

These remarks, besides confirming the statements made with regard to Isa. xl ff, may perhaps throw some light on the origin of chapters i and ii of the Lamentations.

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NOTE ON THE WORD עֲבָרָה, GEN. XLIX 7.

How did this word come to mean 'wrath'? The verb עָבַר first means 'to pass over', specially to pass over a river by a ford. Now, passing over a river by a ford, and passing over by a bridge, are very different modes of action. To pass by the bridge is to get across easily. To pass by the ford is often to push one's way strenuously. And it is this latter sense, which, although inherent in the Hebrew stock עָבַר, has been largely lost sight of, chiefly no doubt owing to our Western habit

of viewing the matter from an easy bridge-crossing and, so to speak, map-using standpoint.

The crossing of a ford can be watched from two points of view; from the near bank, whence the traveller's pushfulness and the current's power and danger are noted; and from the far bank, where the fact that he is over is the important point. So in the verb עָבַר and its derivatives, these two points of view are, sometimes together, sometimes the one more than the other, to be reckoned with. The instances in which the sense of 'passing over' is most in evidence have been sufficiently treated in the dictionaries. It remains to consider some instances in which the sense of 'pushing through' is predominant. See Isa. xliii 2, xlvi 2, Ezek. xlvii 5, and 2 Sam. xix 19 (where translate 'and the convoy crossed the ford'—but see Driver on suggested emendation).

The verb עָבַר then, while to the 'Hebrew' a word in general use of 'passing over', 'travelling across', was in a special sense connected with the imagery of the fording of a river. And, as the forder of many rivers remembers in especial those crossings which were most difficult, so this word, in certain connexions, came to carry with it the memory of the stress and peril of the crossing. And then, in no unnatural fashion, the word עָבַר was boldly transferred from the man at the ford to the river at the ford. See Isa. viii 7, 8 (here 'pass through' is certainly not strong or vivid enough: translate 'and he shall sweep onward into Judah—he overwhelms and rushes onward—even to the neck shall he reach'), Nah. i 8, Ps. xlii 8 (cf. ver. 7 טָאֲרַץ יִרְדָּן), and Hab. iii 10 (translate 'they saw thee, they travailed, the mountains—a tempest of waters out-gushed').

The thought of the overwhelming turmoil of the river in spate, gaining in strength and fury as one watches it, commended itself to the poets of old time; see Job xiii 13 ('irruat in me quidquid est calamitatis', Gesen.), Ps. lxxiii 7 (R.V. text is the merest paraphrase; cf. our phrase 'letting the thoughts run riot', and translate 'the imaginations of their heart rush on'), Ps. lxxxviii 17, Job xl 11 ('the full floods of thine anger'), and Hos. v 10.

When in contrast with אָף, עֲבָרָה appears to mean the sustained and continued outbursts of fury as against the first explosion of anger, and to be of the two the stronger word. See Hos. xiii 11, Amos i 11, and Ps. lxxxviii 49.

To sum up then, while no doubt we must be content to render עֲבָרָה by the English 'wrath', we shall do well to remember that it is a strong word with an interesting history; and that the secret of its strength is its close connexion with the mind-picture of a terrible river in ever-growing flood, threatening destruction to any that may attempt its passage.

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