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First Kings

From Commentary on the Old Testament

C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud

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1 Kings - Keil and Delitzsch

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The Book of Kings

Introduction

Contents and Character, Origin and Sources, of the Books of the Kings.

The books of the Kings, which were but one book originally like the books of Samuel, and which like the latter, were divided into two books by the Alexandrian translators (see the Introduction to the books of Samuel), contain, in accordance with their name (מלכים), the history of the Israelitish theocracy under the kings, from the accession of Solomon to the extinction of the monarchy on the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Chaldaeans and the people were carried away into exile in Babylon. they embrace a period of 455 years, from 1015 to 560 B.C., that is to say, to the reign of the Babylonian king Evil-merodach. And as every kingdom culminates in its king, and the government of the kings determines the fate of the kingdom, the contents of the books before us, which are named after the kings of Israel, consist for the most part of a history of those kings; inasmuch as, whilst on the one hand the reigns of the several kings form the historical and chronological framework for the description of the historical development of the people and kingdom, on the other hand the leading phases which the monarchy assumed furnish the basis of the three periods, into which the history of this epoch and the contents of our books are divided.

The *first* period (1015–975 B.C.) embraces the forty years of Solomon's reign over the undivided kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel, when the Israelitish kingdom of God stood at the summit of its earthly power and glory; though towards the end of this period it began to decline inasmuch as the rebellion of Solomon against the Lord in the closing years of his reign prepared the way for the rebellion of the ten tribes against the house of David.—The *second* period commences with the division of the one kingdom into the two kingdoms, Israel

(or the ten tribes) and Judah, and stretches over the whole period during which these two kingdoms existed side by side, terminating with the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, i.e., from 975 to 722 B.C.—The *third* period embraces the still remaining years of the continuance of the kingdom of Judah, until its eventual dissolution by the Chaldaeans and the carrying away of the people into exile in Babylon, viz., from 722 to 560 B.C.

The *first* part of our books (1 Kings 1–11) therefore contains a description of the reign of Solomon, (*a*) in its commencement, viz., his ascent of the throne and the consolidation of his power (1 Kings 1 and 2); (*b*) in the gradual development of the strength and glory of his government, by his marriage, his sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, his judicial wisdom, and his court (1 Kings 3:1–5:14),—also by the building of the temple and royal palace and the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 5:15–9:9), by the erection of his other edifices and the introduction of navigation and commerce (1 Kings 9:10–28), by the spreading abroad of the fame of his wisdom, and by the increase of his wealth (1 Kings 10); and (*c*) in its eventual decline in consequence of the sin into which the aged monarch fell through his polygamy and idolatry (1 Kings 11). The *second* part opens with an account of the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal family of David, and relates in a synchronistic narrative the history of the two kingdoms in the three stages of their development: viz., (*a*) the early enmity between the two, from Jeroboam to Omri of Israel (1 Kings 12:1–16:28); (*b*) the establishment of friendship and intermarriage between the two royal houses under Ahab and his sons, down to the destruction of the two kings Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah by Jehu (1 Kings 16:29–2 Kings 10); (*c*) the renewal of hostilities between the two kingdoms, from Jehu's ascent of the throne in Israel and Athaliah's usurpation of the throne in Judah to the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel in the sixth year of Hezekiah's reign in Judah (11–17). And, lastly, the *third* part contains the history of the kingdom of Judah from Hezekiah to the destruction of

Jerusalem by the Chaldaeans, and carries it down to the thirty-seventh year of the imprisonment of king Jehoiachin in exile (1 Kings 18–25).

Now, although the history of the kings, or the account of both the duration and character of their reigns, and also of their various enterprises, so far as they promoted or hindered the progress of the kingdom of God, forms the principal substance of these books, they do not consist of a mere chronicle of the deeds and fortunes of the several kings, but describe at the same time the ministry of the prophets in the two kingdoms, and that to some extent in so elaborate a manner, that whilst some have discovered in this a peculiarly “prophetic-didactic purpose” (Hävernick, De Wette, etc.), others regard it as an endeavour “to set forth the history of the Israelitish and Jewish kings in its relation to the demands, the doings, the proclamations, and the predictions of the prophets, from Solomon to the Babylonian exile” (Kern). But however unmistakeable the prophetic-didactic character may be, which the books of Kings have in common with the whole of the historical writings of the Old Testament, a closer investigation of their character will show that there is no ground for the assertion that there is any prophetic-didactic purpose in the mode in which the history is written. For the account of the ministry of the prophets is introduced into the history of the kings as the spiritual leaven which pervaded the Israelitish monarchy from the beginning to the end, and stamped upon its development the character of the theocracy or divine rule in Israel. Jehovah, as the invisible but yet real King of the covenant nation, had created the peculiar instruments of His Spirit in the prophets who maintained His law and right before the kings, standing by their side to advise and direct, or to warn and punish, and, wherever it was necessary, proving their utterances to be words of God by signs and wonders which they did before the people. Thus the Lord directed the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul and David princes over His people, and the prophet Nathan to communicate to

David the promise of the everlasting endurance of his throne (2 Sam. 7). But when at a later period David sinned (2 Sam. 11 and 24), it was the prophets Nathan and Gad who threatened him with punishment from God, and on his confession of sin and repentance announced the forgiveness and favour of God (2 Sam. 12:1–15; 24:11–19). Through the medium of the prophet Nathan, Solomon was also appointed the successor of David upon the throne (2 Sam. 12:25), and not only anointed king, but installed in defiance of the machinations of Adonijah (1 Kings 1). But since the monarchy was transmitted from Solomon in a direct line through his descendants by virtue of the divine promise in 2 Sam. 7, it is only in connection with important enterprises, or when the kingdom is involved in difficulties, that we find the prophets coming forward in after times to help or advise those kings who walked in the ways of the Lord; whereas under the idolatrous and godless rulers they offer, in the power of God, such energetic resistance to idolatry and to everything evil and ungodly, that princes and people are compelled to bow before them and succumb to their divine words. In this way the prophets accompanied the monarchy in all its course from Solomon to the Captivity as guardians of the rights of the God-King, and as interpreters of His counsel and will. Under Solomon, indeed, there was apparently a long period, during which prophecy fell into the background; since the Lord Himself not only appeared to this king in a dream at Gibeon shortly after he ascended the throne, but also appeared to him a second time after the dedication of the temple, and promised him the fulfilment of his prayers, and the glorification and eternal continuance of his kingdom, on condition of his faithful observance of the divine commands (1 Kings 3:5ff., 9:1ff.). But towards the end of his reign it rose up again in all the more threatening attitude, against the king who was then disposed to fall away from Jehovah. It was no doubt a prophet who announced to him the separation of ten parts of his kingdom (1 Kings 11:11ff.),—possibly the same Ahijah who promised Jeroboam the

government over ten tribes (1 Kings 11:29ff.). But after the division of the kingdom, when Jeroboam proceeded, in order to fortify his throne, to make the political division into a religious one, and to this end exalted the image-worship into the state religion, the prophets continued to denounce this apostasy and proclaim to the sinful kings the destruction of their dynasties. And when at a still later period Ahab the son of Omri, and his wife Jezebel, endeavoured to make the Phoenician worship of Baal and Asherah into the national religion in Israel, Elijah the Tishbite, "the prophet as fire, whose words burned as a torch" (Ecclus. 48:1), came forward with the irresistible power of God and maintained a victorious conflict against the prophets and servants of Baal, warding off the utter apostasy of the nation by uniting the prophets into societies, in which the worship of God was maintained, and the godly in Israel were supplied with a substitute for that legal worship in the temple which was enjoyed by the godly in Judah. And in the kingdom of Judah also where were never wanting prophets to announce the judgments of the Lord to idolatrous kings, and to afford a vigorous support to the pious and God-fearing rulers in their endeavours to promote the religious life of the nation, and to exalt the public worship of God in the temple. But since the kingdom of Judah possessed the true sanctuary, with the legal worship and an influential body of priests and Levites; and since, moreover, the monarchy of the house of David was firmly established by divine promises resting upon that house, and among the kings who sat upon the throne, from Rehoboam onwards, there were many godly rulers who were distinguished for their lofty virtues as governors; the labours of the prophets did not assume the same prominent importance here as they did in the kingdom of the ten tribes, where they had to fight against idolatry from the beginning to the end.

This explains the fact that the ministry of the prophets assumes so prominent a position in the books of the Kings, whereas the history of the kings appears sometimes to fall into the

background in comparison. Nevertheless the historical development of the monarchy, or, to express it more correctly, of the kingdom of God under the kings, forms the true subject-matter of our books. It was not a prophetic-didactic purpose, but the prophetic-historical point of view, which prevailed throughout the whole work, and determined the reception as well as the treatment of the historical materials. The progressive development of the kingdom was predicted and described by the Lord Himself in the promise communicated to David by the prophet Nathan: "And when thy days shall be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name; and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son, that if he go astray, I may chasten him with man's rod, and with stripes of the children of men; but my mercy will not depart from him, as I caused it to depart from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be for ever before thee, thy throne will be established for ever" (2 Sam. 7:12-16). This thoroughly glorious promise forms the red thread which runs through the history of the kings from Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and constitutes the leading idea in the record of this history in our books. The author's intention is to show in the history of the kings how the Lord fulfilled this gracious word, how He first of all chastised the seed of David for its transgressions, and then cast it off, though not for ever. To this end he shows in the history of Solomon, how, notwithstanding the usurpation of the throne attempted by Adonijah, Solomon received the whole of his father's kingdom, as the seed of David promised by the Lord, and established his power; how the Lord at the very beginning of his reign renewed to him at Gibeon the promise made to his father on the condition of his faithful observance of His law, and in answer to his prayer gave him not only a wise and understanding heart, but also riches and honour, so that his equal was not to be found

among all the kings of the earth (1 Kings 1:1–5:14); how Solomon then carried out the work of building the temple, entrusted to him by his father according to the will of the Lord; and how, after it was finished, the Lord again assured him of the fulfilment of that promise (1 Kings 5:15–9:9); and, lastly, how Solomon, having attained to the highest earthly glory, through the completion of the rest of his buildings, through the great renown of his wisdom, which had reached to nations afar off, and through his great riches, acquired partly by marine commerce and trade, and partly from tributes and presents, forgot his God, who had bestowed this glory upon him, and in his old age was led astray into unfaithfulness towards the Lord through his numerous foreign wives, and had at last to listen to this sentence from God: “Because thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant: notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father’s said; but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. Howbeit I will not rend away all thy kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake which I have chosen” (1 Kings 9:10–11:13). Thus, because God had promised to the seed of David the eternal possession of the throne (2 Sam. 7:12ff.), one portion of the kingdom was to be left to the son of Solomon, with the chosen city of Jerusalem, and his servant (Jeroboam, 1 Kings 11:26–40) was only to obtain dominion over ten tribes. The historical realization of this prophecy is shown in the history of the two divided kingdoms.

In the synchronistic account of these kingdoms, according to the principle already adopted in the book of Genesis, of disposing of the subordinate lines of the patriarchs before proceeding with the main line (see *Comm. on Pent.* p. 21), the reigns of the kings of Israel are described before those of the contemporaneous kings of Judah, and to some extent in a more elaborate manner. The reason of this, however, is, that the history of the kingdom of Israel, in which one dynasty overthrew another, whilst

all the rulers walked in the sin of Jeroboam, and Ahab even added the worship of Baal to that sin, supplied the author with more materials for the execution of his plan than that of the kingdom of Judah, which had a much quieter development under the rule of the house of David, and of which, therefore, there was less to relate. Apart from this, all the events of the kingdom of Judah which are of any importance in relation to the progress of the kingdom of God, are just as elaborately described as those connected with the kingdom of Israel; and the author does equal justice to both kingdoms, showing how the Lord manifested Himself equally to both, and bore with them with divine long-suffering and grace. But the proof of this necessarily assumed different forms, according to the different attitudes which they assumed towards the Lord. Jeroboam, the founder of the kingdom of Israel, when told that he would be king over the ten tribes, had received the promise that Jehovah would be with him, and build him a lasting house as He built for David, and give Israel to him, on condition that he would walk in the ways of God (1 Kings 11:37, 38). This implied that his descendants would rule over Israel (of the ten tribes) so long as this kingdom should stand; for it was not to last for ever, but the separation would come to an end, and therefore he is not promised the everlasting continuance of his kingdom (see at 1 Kings 11:38). But Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, nor did any of the rulers of Israel who succeeded him. Nevertheless the Lord had patience with the kings and tribes who were unfaithful to His law, and not only warned them continually by His prophets, and chastised them by threats of punishment and by the fulfilment of those threats upon the kings and all the people, but repeatedly manifested His favour towards them for the sake of His covenant with Abraham (2 Kings 13:23), to lead them to repentance—until the time of grace had expired, when the sinful kingdom fell and the ten tribes were carried away to Media and Assyria.—In the kingdom of David, on the contrary, the succession to the throne was promised to the house of David for all time:

therefore, although the Lord caused those who were rebellious to be chastised by hostile nations, yet, for His servant David's sake, He left a light shining to the royal house, since He did not punish the kings who were addicted to idolatry with the extermination of their family (1 Kings 15:4; 2 Kings 8:19); and even when the wicked Athaliah destroyed all the royal seed, He caused Joash, the infant son of Ahaziah, to be saved and raised to the throne of his fathers (2 Kings 11). Consequently this kingdom was able to survive that of the ten tribes for an entire period, just because it possessed a firm political basis in the uninterrupted succession of the Davidic house, as it also possessed a spiritual basis of no less firmness in the temple which the Lord had sanctified as the place where His name was revealed. After it had been brought to the verge of destruction by the godless Ahaz, it received in Hezekiah a king who did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah, as his father David had done, and in the severe oppression which he suffered at the hands of the powerful army of the proud Sennacherib, took refuge in the Lord, who protected and saved Jerusalem, "for His own and His servant David's sake," at the prayer of the pious king of Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:34; 20:6). But when at length, throughout the long reign of Manasseh the idolater, apostasy and moral corruption prevailed to such an extent in Judah also, that even the pious Josiah, with the reformation of religion which he carried out with the greatest zeal, could only put down the outward worship of idols, and was unable to effect any thorough conversion of the people to the Lord their God, and the Lord as the Holy One of Israel was obliged to declare His purpose of rejecting Judah from before His face on account of the sins of Manasseh, and to cause that purpose to be executed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 23:26, 27; 24:3, 4); Jehoiachin was led away captive to Babylon, and under Zedekiah the kingdom was destroyed with the burning of Jerusalem and the temple. Yet the Lord did not suffer the light to be altogether extinguished to His servant David; but when Jehoiachin had pined in captivity at Babylon for thirty-seven years,

expiating his own and his fathers' sins, he was liberated from his captivity by Nebuchadnezzar's son, and raised to honour once more (2 Kings 25:27-30).—The account of this joyful change in the condition of Jehoiachin, with which the books of the Kings close, forms so essential a part of their author's plan, that without this information the true conclusion to his work would be altogether wanting. For this event shed upon the dark night of the captivity the first ray of a better future, which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and with it upon the whole nation in its eventual redemption from Babylon, and was also a pledge of the certain fulfilment of the promise that the Lord would not for ever withdraw His favour from the seed of David.¹

Thus the books of the Kings bring down the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God, according to the divine plan of the kingdom indicated in 2 Sam. 7, from the close of David's reign to the captivity; and the fact that in 1 Kings 1:1 they are formally attached to the books of Samuel is an indication that they are a continuation of those books. Nevertheless there is no doubt that they formed from the very first a separate work, the independence and internal unity of which are apparent from the uniformity of the treatment of the history as well as from the unity of the language. From beginning to end the author quotes from his original sources, for the most part with certain standing formulas; in all important events he gives the chronology carefully (1 Kings 6:1, 37, 38; 7:1; 9:10; 11:42; 14:20, 21, 25; 15:1, 2, 9, 10, etc.); he judges the conduct of the kings throughout according to the standard of the law of Moses (1 Kings 2:3; 3:14; 2 Kings 10:31; 11:12; 14:6; 17:37; 18:6; 21:8; 22:8ff., 23:3, 21, etc.); and he nearly always employs the same expressions when describing the commencement, the character, and the close of each reign, as well as the death and burial of the kings (compare 1 Kings 11:43; 14:20, 31; 15:8, 24; 22:51; 2 Kings 8:24; 13:9; 14:29; and for the characteristics of the several kings of Judah, 1 Kings 15:3, 11; 22:43; 2 Kings 12:3; 14:3; 15:3, etc.; and for those of the kings of Israel, 1 Kings

14:8; 15:26, 34; 16:19, 26, 30; 22:53; 2 Kings 3:2, 3; 10:29, 31; 13:2, 11, etc.). And so, again, the language of the books remains uniform in every part of the work, if we except certain variations occasioned by the differences in the sources employed; since we find throughout isolated expressions and forms of a later date, and words traceable to the Assyrian and Chaldaean epoch, such as כָּר for חָמַר in 1 Kings 5:2, 25; צָדִינָן in 1 Kings 11:33; רָצִין in 2 Kings 11:13; מְדִינֹת in 1 Kings 20:14, 15, 17, 19; קָבָל in 2 Kings 15:10; שָׂרֵי הַחֲלָלִים in 1 Kings 15:20, 2 Kings 25:23, 26; רַב טְבָחִים in 2 Kings 25:8; פָּחָה in 1 Kings 10:15; 20:24, 2 Kings 18:24; and many others, which do not occur in the earlier historical books.—The books of the Kings are essentially distinguished from the books of Samuel through these characteristic peculiarities; but not so much through the quotations which are so prominent in the historical narrative, for these are common to all the historical books of the Old Testament, and are only more conspicuous in these books, especially in the history of the kings of the two kingdoms, because in the case of all the kings, even of those in relation to whom there was nothing to record of any importance to the kingdom of God except the length and general characteristics of their reign, there are notices of the writings which contain further information concerning their reigns.—The unity of authorship is therefore generally admitted, since, as De Wette himself acknowledges, “you cannot anywhere clearly detect the interpolation or combination of different accounts.” The direct and indirect contradictions, however, which Thenius imagines that he has discovered, prove to be utterly fallacious on a closer inspection of the passages cited as proofs, and could only have been obtained through misinterpretations occasioned by erroneous assumptions. (See, on the other hand, my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das A. T.* p. 184ff.)

All that can be determined with certainty in relation to the *origin* of the books of Kings is,

that they were composed in the second half of the Babylonian captivity, and before its close, since they bring the history down to that time, and yet contain no allusion to the deliverance of the people out of Babylon. The author was a prophet living in the Babylonian exile, though not the prophet Jeremiah, as the earlier theologians down to Hävernick have assumed from the notice in the Talmud (*Baba bathra*, f. 15, 1): *Jeremias scripsit librum suum et librum Regum et Threnos*. For even apart from the fact that Jeremiah ended his days in Egypt, he could hardly have survived the last event recorded in our books, namely, the liberation of Jehoiachin from prison, and his exaltation to royal honours by Evil-merodach. For inasmuch as this event occurred sixty-six years after his call to be a prophet, in the thirteenth year of Josiah, he would have been eighty-six years old in the thirty-seventh year after Jehoiachin had been carried away into exile, even if he had commenced his prophetic career when only a young man of twenty years of age. Now, even if he had reached this great age, he would surely not have composed our books at a later period still. Moreover, all that has been adduced in support of this is seen to be inconclusive on closer inspection. The similarity in the linguistic character of our books and that of the writings of Jeremiah, the sombre view of history which is common to the two, the preference apparent in both for phrases taken from the Pentateuch, and the allusions to earlier prophecies,—all these peculiarities may be explained, so far as they really exist, partly from the fact that they were written in the same age, since all the writers of the time of the captivity and afterwards cling very closely to the Pentateuch and frequently refer to the law of Moses, and partly also from the circumstance that, whilst Jeremiah was well acquainted with the original sources of our books, viz., the annals of the kingdom of Judah, the author of our books was also well acquainted with the prophecies of Jeremiah. But the relation between 2 Kings 24:18ff. and Jer. 52 is not of such a nature, that these two accounts of the destruction of Jerusalem and the carrying away of the

remnant of the people could have emanated from the hand of Jeremiah; on the contrary, a closer inspection clearly shows that they are extracts from a more elaborate description of this catastrophe (see at 2 Kings 24:18ff.).

As *sources* from which the author has obtained his accounts, there are mentioned, for the history of Solomon, a סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, or book of the acts (affairs) of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41); for the history of the kings of Judah, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיְיָמִים לְמַלְכֵי יְהוּדָה, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Judah (1 Kings 14:29; 15:7, 23; 22:46; 2 Kings 8:23; 12:20, etc.); and for that of the kings of Israel, סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי הַיְיָמִים לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, book of the daily occurrences of the kings of Israel (1 Kings 14:19; 15:31; 16:5, 14, 20, 27; 22:39; 2 Kings 1:18). These are quoted as writings in which more is written concerning the life, the deeds, and the particular undertakings, buildings and so forth, of the several kings. The two last-named works were evidently general annals of the kingdoms: not, indeed, the national archives of the two kingdoms, or official records made by the מְזַכְרֵי of the reigns and acts of the kings, as Jahn, Movers, Stähelin, and others suppose; but annals composed by prophets, and compiled partly from the public year-books of the kingdom or the national archives, and partly from prophetic monographs and collections of prophecies, which reached in the kingdom of Israel down to the time of Pekah (2 Kings 15:31), and in that of Judah to the time of Jehoiakim (2 Kings 24:5). Moreover, they were not written successively by different prophets, who followed one another, and so carried on the work in uninterrupted succession from the rise of the two kingdoms to the death of the two kings mentioned; but they had been worked out into a "*Book of the history of the times of the Kings*" for each of the two kingdoms, a short time before the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah, by collecting together the most important things that had been written both concerning the reigns of the several kings by annalists and other historians who were

contemporaneous with the events, and also concerning the labours of the prophets, which were deeply interwoven with the course of public affairs, whether composed by themselves or by their contemporaries. And in this finished form they lay before the author of our work. This view of the annals of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel follows unquestionably from the agreement which exists between our books of the Kings and the second book of the Chronicles, in the accounts common to both, and which can only be explained from the fact that they were drawn from one and the same source. But in the Chronicles there are different writings of individual prophets quoted, beside the day-books of the kings of Judah and Israel; and it is expressly stated in relation to some of them that they were received into the annals of the kings (compare 2 Chron. 20:34 and 32:32, and the Introduction to the books of the Chronicles). Moreover, there are no historical traces of public annalists to be found in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and their existence is by no means probable, on account of the constant change of dynasties. The fact, however, that the frequently recurring formula "to this day" (1 Kings 9:13; 10:12; 2 Kings 2:22; 10:27; 14:7; 16:6 [17:23, 34, 41], 20:17; 21:15) never refers to the time of the captivity, except in the passages enclosed in brackets, but always to the time of the existing kingdom of Judah, and that it cannot therefore have emanated from the author of our books of the Kings, but can only have been taken from the sources employed, is a proof that these annals of the kingdom were composed towards the close of the kingdom of Judah; and this is placed beyond all doubt, by the fact that this formula is also found in many passages of the books of the Chronicles (compare 1 Kings 8:8 with 2 Chron. 5:9; 1 Kings 9:21 with 2 Chron. 8:8; 1 Kings 12:19 with 2 Chron. 10:19; and 2 Kings 8:22 with 2 Chron. 21:10).—In a similar manner to this must we explain the origin of the סֵפֶר דְּבָרֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, since three prophetic writings are quoted in 1 Chron. 29:29 in connection with Solomon's

reign, and their account agrees in all essential points with the account in the books of the Kings. Nevertheless this "history of Solomon" never formed a component part of the annals of the two kingdoms, and was certainly written much earlier.—The assumption that there were other sources still, is not only sustained by no historical evidence, but has no certain support in the character or contents of the writings before us. If the annals quoted were works composed by prophets, the elaborate accounts of the working of the prophets Elijah and Elisha might also have been included in them.—Again, in the constant allusion to these annals we have a sure pledge of the historical fidelity of the accounts that have been taken from them. If in his work the author followed writings which were composed by prophets, and also referred his readers to these writings, which were known and accessible to his contemporaries, for further information, he must have been conscious of the faithful and conscientious employment of them. And this natural conclusion is in harmony with the contents of our books. The life and actions of the kings are judged with unfettered candour and impartiality, according to the standard of the law of God; and there is no more concealment of the idolatry to which the highly renowned Solomon was led astray by his foreign wives, than of that which was right in the eyes of God, when performed by the kings of the ten tribes, which had fallen away from the house of David. Even in the case of the greatest prophet of all, namely Elijah, the weakness of his faith in being afraid of the vain threats of the wicked Jezebel is related just as openly as his courageous resistance, in the strength of the Lord, to Ahab and the prophets of Baal.—Compare my *Einleitung in das Alte Test.* §§ 56–60, where adverse views are examined and the commentaries are also noticed.

First Book of the Kings

I. History of Solomon's Reign.

1 Kings 1–11. David had not only established the monarchy upon a firm basis, but had also exalted the Old Testament kingdom of God to

such a height of power, that all the kingdoms round about were obliged to bow before it. This kingdom was transmitted by divine appointment to his son Solomon, in whose reign Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore, and dwelt in security, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree (1 Kings 4:20; 5:5). The history of this reign commences with the account of the manner in which Solomon had received the kingdom from his father, and had established his own rule by the fulfilment of his last will and by strict righteousness (1 Kings 1 and 2). Then follows in 1 Kings 3–10 the description of the glory of his kingdom, how the Lord, in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, not only gave him an understanding heart to judge his people, but also wisdom, riches, and honour, so that his equal was not to be found among the kings of the earth; and through his wise rule, more especially through the erection of the house of Jehovah and of a splendid royal palace, he developed the glory of the kingdom of God to such an extent that his fame penetrated to remote nations. The conclusion, in 1 Kings 11, consists of the account of Solomon's sin in his old age, viz., his falling into idolatry, whereby he brought about the decay of the kingdom, which manifested itself during the closing years of his reign in the rising up of opponents, and at his death in the falling away of ten tribes from his son Rehoboam. But notwithstanding this speedy decay, the glory of Solomon's kingdom is elaborately depicted on account of the typical significance which it possessed in relation to the kingdom of God. Just as, for example, the successful wars of David with all the enemies of Israel were a prelude to the eventual victory of the kingdom of God over all the kingdoms of this world; so was the peaceful rule of Solomon to shadow forth the glory and blessedness which awaited the people of God, after a period of strife and conflict, under the rule of *Shiloh* the Prince of peace, whom Jacob saw in spirit, and who would increase government and peace without end upon the throne of David and in his kingdom (Isa. 9:5, 6; Ps. 72).

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1 Kings 1

Anointing and Accession of Solomon

1 Kings 1. The attempt of Adonijah to seize upon the throne when David's strength was failing (vv. 1–10), induced the aged king, as soon as it was announced to him by Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan, to order Solomon to be anointed king, and to have the anointing carried out (vv. 11–40); whereupon Adonijah fled to the altar, and received pardon from Solomon on condition that he would keep himself quiet (vv. 41–53).

1 Kings 1:1–4. When king David had become so old that they could no longer warm him by covering him with clothes, his servants advised him to increase his vitality by lying with a young and robust virgin, and selected the beautiful Abishag of Shunem to perform this service. This circumstance, which is a trivial one in itself, is only mentioned on account of what follows,—first, because it shows that David had become too weak from age, and too destitute of energy, to be able to carry on the government any longer; and, secondly, because Adonijah the pretender afterwards forfeited his life through asking for Abishag in marriage.—The opening of our book, וְהָמֶלֶךְ (and the King), may be explained from the fact that the account which follows has been taken from a writing containing the earlier history of David, and that the author of these books retained the *Vav cop.* which he found there, for the purpose of showing at the outset that his work was a continuation of the books of Samuel. וְהָמֶלֶךְ as in Josh. 13:1; 23:1, Gen. 24:1, etc. “They covered him with clothes, and he did not get warm.” It follows from this that the king was bedridden, or at least that when lying down he could no longer be kept warm with bed-clothes. וְהָמֶלֶךְ does not mean clothes to wear here, but large cloths, which were used as bed-clothes, as in 1 Sam. 19:13 and Num. 4:6ff. וְהָמֶלֶךְ is used impersonally, and derived from וְהָמֶלֶךְ, cf. Ewald, § 193, *b.*, and 138, *b.* As David was then in his

seventieth year, this decrepitude was not the natural result of extreme old age, but the consequence of a sickly constitution, arising out of the hardships which he had endured in his agitated and restless life. The proposal of his servants, to restore the vital warmth which he had lost by bringing a virgin to lie with him, is recommended as an experiment by Galen (*Method. medic.* viii. 7). And it has been an acknowledged fact with physicians of all ages, that departing vitality may be preserved and strengthened by communicating the vital warmth of strong and youthful persons (compare Trusen, *Sitten Gebräuche u. Krankheiten der Hebräer*, p. 257ff.). The singular suffix in לְאִדְנִי is to be explained on the ground that one person spoke. וְנָעִרָה בְּתוֹלָהּ, a maid who is a virgin. לְפָנַי, to stand before a person as servant = to serve (cf. Deut. 1:38 with Ex. 24:13). סְכֵנָה, an attendant or nurse, from סָכַן = לָשָׁב, to live with a person, then to be helpful or useful to him. With the words “that she may lie in thy bosom,” the passage passes, as is frequently the case, from the third person to a direct address.

1 Kings 1:3, 4. They then looked about for a beautiful girl for this purpose, and found *Abishag of Shunem*, the present *Sulem* or *Solam*, at the south-eastern foot of the *Duhy* of Little Hermon (see at Josh. 19:18), who became the king's nurse and waited upon him. The further remark, “and the king knew her not,” is not introduced either to indicate the impotence of David or to show that she did not become David's concubine, but simply to explain how it was that it could possibly occur to Adonijah (1 Kings 2:17) to ask for her as his wife. Moreover, the whole affair is to be judged according to the circumstances of the times, when there was nothing offensive in polygamy.

1 Kings 1:5–10. Adonijah seized the opportunity of David's decrepitude to make himself king. Although he was David's fourth son (2 Sam. 3:4), yet after the death of Ammon and Absalom he was probably the eldest, as Chileab, David's second son, had most likely

died when a child, since he is never mentioned again. Adonijah therefore thought that he had a claim to the throne (cf. 1 Kings 2:15), and wanted to secure it before his father's death. But in Israel, Jehovah, the God-King of His people, had reserved to Himself the choice of the earthly king (Deut. 17:15), and this right He exercised not only in the case of Saul and David, but in that of Solomon also. When He gave to David the promise that his seed should rule for ever (2 Sam. 7:12–16), He did not ensure the establishment of the throne to any one of his existing sons, but to him that would come out of his loins (i.e., to Solomon, who was not yet born); and after his birth He designated him through the prophet Nathan as the beloved of Jehovah (2 Sam. 12:24, 25). David discerned from this that the Lord had chosen Solomon to be his successor, and he gave to Bathsheba a promise on oath that Solomon should sit upon the throne (vv. 13 and 30). This promise was also acknowledged in the presence of Nathan (vv. 11ff.), and certainly came to Adonijah's ears. Adonijah said, "I will be king," and procured chariots and horsemen and fifty runners, as Absalom had done before (2 Sam. 15:1). רָכָב, in a collective sense, does not mean fighting or war chariots, but state carriages, like מְרֻכָבָה in 2 Sam. 15:1; and פָּרָשִׁים are neither riding nor carriage horses, but riders to form an escort whenever he drove out.

1 Kings 1:6. "And (= for) his father had never troubled him in his life (מִיָּמָיו, *a diebus ejus*, i.e., his whole life long), saying, "Why hast thou done this?" Such weak oversight on the part of his father encouraged him to make the present attempt. Moreover, he "was very beautiful," like Absalom (see at 2 Sam. 14:25), and born after Absalom, so that after his death he appeared to have the nearest claim to the throne. The subject to יִלְדָה is left indefinite, because it is implied in the idea of the verb itself: "she bare," i.e., his mother, as in Num. 26:59 (vid., Ewald, § 294, b.). There was no reason for mentioning the mother expressly by name, as there was

nothing depending upon the name here, and it had already been given in v. 5.

1 Kings 1:7. He conferred (for the expression, compare 2 Sam. 3:17) with Joab and Abiathar the priest, who supported him. עָזַר אַחֲרָי פ', to lend a helping hand to a person, i.e., to support him by either actually joining him or taking his part. Joab joined the pretender, because he had fallen out with David for a considerable time (cf. 2:5, 6), and hoped to secure his influence with the new king if he helped him to obtain possession of the throne. But what induced Abiathar the high priest (see at 2 Sam. 8:17) to join in conspiracy with Adonijah, we do not know. Possibly jealousy of Zadok, and the fear that under Solomon he might be thrown still more into the shade. For although Zadok was only high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, he appears to have taken the lead; as we may infer from the fact that he is always mentioned before Abiathar (cf. 2 Sam. 8:17; 20:25, and 15:24ff.). For we cannot imagine that Joab and Abiathar had supported Adonijah as having right on his side (Thenius), for the simple reason that Joab did not trouble himself about right, and for his own part shrank from no crime, when he thought that he had lost favour with the king.

1 Kings 1:8. If Adonijah had powerful supporters in Joab the commander-in-chief and the high priest Abiathar, the rest of the leading officers of state, viz., Zadok the high priest (see at 2 Sam. 8:17), Benaiah, captain of the king's body-guard (see at 2 Sam. 8:18 and 23:20, 21), the prophet Nathan, Shimei (probably the son of Elah mentioned in 1 Kings 4:18), and Rei (unknown), and the Gibborim of David (see at 2 Sam. 23:8ff.), were not with him.

1 Kings 1:9ff. Adonijah commenced his usurpation, like Absalom (2 Sam. 15:2), with a solemn sacrificial meal, at which he was proclaimed king, "at the stone of *Zocheleth* by the side of the fountain of *Rogel*," i.e., the spy's fountain, or, according to the Chaldee and Syriac, the fuller's fountain, the present fountain of Job or Nehemiah, below the junction of the valley of Hinnom with the valley of

Jehoshaphat (see at 2 Sam. 7:17 and Josh. 15:7). E. G. Schultz (*Jerusalem, eine Vorlesung*, p. 79) supposes the stone or rock of *Zocheleth* to be “the steep, rocky corner of the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom, which casts so deep a shade.” “The neighbourhood (*Wady el Rubâb*) is still a place of recreation for the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” To this festal meal Adonijah invited all his brethren except Solomon, and “all the men of Judah, the king’s servants,” i.e., all the Judaeans who were in the king’s service, i.e., were serving at court as being members of his own tribe, with the exception of Nathan the prophet, Benaiah, and the Gibborim. The fact that Solomon and the others mentioned were not included in the invitation, showed very clearly that Adonijah was informed of Solomon’s election as successor to the throne, and was also aware of the feelings of Nathan and Benaiah.

1 Kings 1:11–31. Adonijah’s attempt was frustrated by the vigilance of the prophet Nathan.

1 Kings 1:11ff. Nathan informed Solomon’s mother, Bathsheba (see at 2 Sam. 11:3), that Adonijah was making himself king (כִּי מֶלֶךְ, that he had become [as good as] king: Thenius), and advised her, in order to save her life and that of her son Solomon (וּמִלְטֵי, and save = so that thou mayest save; cf. Ewald, § 347, *a.*), to go to the king and remind him of his promise on oath, that her son Solomon should be king after him, and to inquire why Adonijah had become king. If Adonijah had really got possession of the throne, he would probably have put Solomon and his mother out of the way, according to the barbarous custom of the East, as his political opponents.

1 Kings 1:14. While she was still talking to the king, he (Nathan) would come in after her and confirm her words. מְלֵא דְבָר, to make a word full, i.e., not to supply what is wanting, but to make full, like πληροῦν, either to fill by accomplishing, or (as in this case) to confirm it by similar assertion.

1 Kings 1:15–21. Bathsheba followed this advice, and went to the king into the inner chamber (הַחֲדָרָה), since the very aged king, who was waited upon by Abishag, could not leave his room (מִשְׁרָתָהּ for מִשְׁרָתָהּ; cf. Ewald, § 188, *b.*, p. 490), and, bowing low before him, communicated to him what Adonijah had taken in hand in opposition to his will and without his knowledge. The second וְעַתָּה is not to be altered into וְאַתָּה, inasmuch as it is supported by the oldest codices and the Masora,² although about two hundred codd. contain the latter reading. The repetition of וְעַתָּה (“And now, behold, Adonijah has become king; and now, my lord king, thou knowest it not”) may be explained from the energy with which Bathsheba speaks. “And Solomon thy servant he hath not invited” (v. 19). Bathsheba added this, not because she felt herself injured, but as a sign of Adonijah’s feelings towards Solomon, which showed that he had reason to fear the worst if Adonijah should succeed in his usurpation of the throne. In v. 20, again, many codd. have וְעַתָּה in the place of וְאַתָּה; and Thenius, after his usual fashion, pronounces the former the “only correct” reading, because it is apparently a better one. But here also the appearance is deceptive. The antithesis to what Adonijah has already done is brought out quite suitably by וְאַתָּה: Adonijah has made himself king, etc.; but thou my lord king must decide in the matter. “The eyes of all Israel are turned towards thee, to tell them who (whether Adonijah or Solomon) is to sit upon the throne after thee.” “The decision of this question is in thy hand, for the people have not yet attached themselves to Adonijah, but are looking to thee, to see what thou wilt do; and they will follow thy judgment, if thou only hastenest to make Solomon king.”—Seb. Schmidt. To secure this decision, Bathsheba refers again, in v. 21, to the fate which would await both herself and her son Solomon after the death of the king. They would be חַטְּאִים, i.e., guilty of a capital crime. “We

should be punished as though guilty of high treason" (Clericus).

1 Kings 1:22ff. While Bathsheba was still speaking, Nathan came. When he was announced to the king, Bathsheba retired, just as afterwards Nathan went away when the king had Bathsheba called in again (cf. v. 28 with v. 32). This was done, not to avoid the appearance of a mutual arrangement (Cler., Then., etc.), but for reasons of propriety, inasmuch as, in audiences granted by the king to his wife or one of his counsellors, no third person ought to be present unless the king required his attendance. Nathan confirmed Bathsheba's statement, commencing thus: "My lord king, thou hast really said, Adonijah shall be king after me ... ? for he has gone down to-day, and has prepared a feast, ... and they are eating and drinking before him, and saying, Long live king Adonijah!" And he then closed by asking, "Has this taken place on the part of my lord the king, and thou hast not shown thy servants (Nathan, Zadok, Benaiah, and Solomon) who is to sit upon the throne of my lord the king after him?" The indirect question introduced with אִם is not merely an expression of modesty, but also of doubt, whether what had occurred had emanated from the king and he had not shown it to his servants.

1 Kings 1:28–30. The king then sent for Bathsheba again, and gave her this promise on oath: "As truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all distress (as in 2 Sam. 4:9), yea, as I swore to thee by Jehovah, the God of Israel, saying, Solomon thy son shall be king after me, ... yea, so shall I do this day." The first and third כִּי serve to give emphasis to the assertion, like *imo*, yea (cf. Ewald, § 330, b.). The second merely serves as an introduction to the words.

1 Kings 1:31. Bathsheba then left the king with the deepest prostration and the utterance of a blessing, as an expression of her inmost gratitude. The benedictory formula, "May the king live for ever," was only used by the Israelites on occasions of special importance; whereas the Babylonians and ancient Persians

constantly addressed their kings in this way (cf. Dan. 2:4; 3:9; 5:10; 6:22; Neh. 2:3. *Aeliani var. hist.* i. 32, and *Curtius de gestis Alex.* vi. 5).

1 Kings 1:32–40. David then sent for Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah, and directed them to fetch the servants of their lord (אֲדֹנֵיכֶם, a *pluralis majestatis*, referring to David alone), and to conduct Solomon to Gihon riding upon the royal mule, and there to anoint him and solemnly proclaim him king. The servants of your lord (עֲבָדַי אֲדֹנֵיכֶם) are the *Crethi* and *Plethi*, and not the *Gibborim* also (Thenius), as v. 38 clearly shows, where we find that these alone went down with him to Gihon as the royal body-guard. עַל־הַפָּרְדָּה אֲשֶׁר לִי, upon the mule which belongs to me, i.e., upon my (the king's) mule. When the king let any one ride upon the animal on which he generally rode himself, this was a sign that he was his successor upon the throne. Among the ancient Persians riding upon the king's horse was a public honour, which the king conferred upon persons of great merit in the eyes of all the people (cf. Esth. 6:8, 9). פָּרְדָּה, the female mule, which in Kahira is still preferred to the male for riding (see Rosenmüller, *bibl. Althk.* iv. 2, p. 56). *Gihon* (גִּחֹן) was the name given, according to 2 Chron. 32:30 and 33:14, to a spring on the western side of Zion, which supplied two basins or pools, viz., the upper watercourse of Gihon (2 Chron. 32:30) or upper pool (2 Kings 18:17; Isa. 7:3; 36:2), and the lower pool (Isa. 22:9). The upper Gihon still exists as a large reservoir built up with hewn stones, though somewhat fallen to decay, which is called by the monks *Gihon*, by the natives *Birket el Mamilla*, about 700 yards W.N.W. from the Joppa gate, in the basin which opens into the valley of Hinnom. The lower pool is probably the present *Birket es Sultan*, on the south-western side of Zion (see Robinson, *Palestine*, i. p. 485ff., 512ff., and *Biblical Researches*, p. 142ff.). The valley between the two was certainly the place where Solomon was anointed, as it is not stated that this took place at the fountain of Gihon. And even the expression הוֹרְדָתֶם אֹתוֹ עַל גִּחֹן (take him down

to Gihon) agrees with this. For is you go from Zion to Gihon towards the west, you first of all have to descend a slope, and then ascend by a gradual rise; and this slope was probably a more considerable one in ancient times (Rob. *Pal.* i. p. 514, note).³

1 Kings 1:34. The blowing of the trumpet and the cry “Long live the king” (cf. 1 Sam. 10:24) were to serve as a solemn proclamation after the anointing had taken place.

1 Kings 1:35. After the anointing they were to conduct Solomon up to Zion again; Solomon was then to ascend the throne, as David was about to appoint him prince over Israel and Judah in his own stead. Both the anointing and the appointment of Solomon as prince over the whole of the covenant nation were necessary, because the succession to the throne had been rendered doubtful through Adonijah’s attempt, and the aged king was still alive. In cases where there was no question, and the son followed the father after his death, the unanimous opinion of the Rabbins is, that there was no anointing at all. Israel and Judah are mentioned, because David had been the first to unite all the tribes under his sceptre, and after the death of Solomon Israel fell away from the house of David.

1 Kings 1:36, 37. Benaiah responded to the utterance of the royal will with the confirmatory “Amen, thus saith Jehovah the God of my lord the king;” i.e., may the word of the king become a word of Jehovah his God, who fulfils what He promises (Ps. 33:9); and added the pious wish, “May Jehovah be with Solomon, as He was with David, and glorify his throne above the throne of David,”—a wish which was not merely “flattery of his paternal vanity” (Thenius), but which had in view the prosperity of the monarchy, and was also fulfilled by God (cf. 3:11ff.).

1 Kings 1:38–40. The anointing of Solomon was carried out immediately, as the king had commanded. On the *Crethi* and *Plethi* see at 2 Sam. 8:18. “The oil-horn out of the tent” (i.e., a vessel made of horn and containing oil) was no doubt one which held the holy anointing oil,

with which the priests and the vessels of the sanctuary were anointed (see Ex. 30:22ff.). The tent (לְאֹהֶל), however, is not the tabernacle at Gibeon, but the tent set up by David for the ark of the covenant upon Mount Zion (2 Sam. 6:17). For even though Zadok was appointed high priest at the tabernacle at Gibeon, and Abiathar, who held with Adonijah, at the ark of the covenant, the two high priests were not so unfriendly towards one another, that Zadok could not have obtained admission to the ark of the covenant in Abiathar’s absence to fetch away the anointing oil.

1 Kings 1:40. All the people, i.e., the crowd which was present at the anointing, went up after him, i.e., accompanied Solomon to the citadel of Zion, with flutes and loud acclamation, so that the earth nearly burst with their shouting. תִּבְבֶּקַע, “to burst in pieces” (as in 2 Chron. 25:12), is a hyperbolic expression for quaking.

1 Kings 1:41–53. The noise of this shouting reached the ears of Adonijah and his guests, when the feast was just drawing to a close. The music, therefore, and the joyful acclamations of the people must have been heard as far off as the fountain of Rogel. When Joab observed the sound of the trumpet, knowing what these tones must signify, he asked “wherefore the sound of the city in an uproar” (i.e., what does it mean)? At that moment Jonathan the son of Abiathar arrived (see 2 Sam. 15:27; 17:17ff.). Adonijah called out to him: “Come, for thou art a brave man and bringest good tidings;” suppressing all anxiety with these words, as he knew his father’s will with regard to the succession to the throne, and the powerful and influential friends of Solomon (see vv. 5, 19, 26).

1 Kings 1:43ff. Jonathan replied: אָבִי, “yea but,” corresponding to the Latin *imo vero*, an expression of assurance with a slight doubt, and then related that Solomon had been anointed king by David’s command, and the city was in a joyous state of excitement in consequence (תִּהְיוּ as in Ruth 1:19), and that he had even ascended

the throne, that the servants of the king had blessed David for it, and that David himself had worshipped and praised Jehovah the God of Israel that he had lived to see his son ascend the throne. The repetition of וַגַּם three times (vv. 46–48) gives emphasis to the words, since every new point which is introduced with וַגַּם raises the thing higher and higher towards absolute certainty. The fact related in v. 47 refers to the words of Benaiah in vv. 36 and 37. The *Chethib* אֶלְהֵיָּךְ is the correct reading, and the *Keri* אֱלֹהֵיָּם an unnecessary emendation. The prayer to God, with thanksgiving for the favour granted to him, was offered by David after the return of his anointed son Solomon to the royal palace; so that it ought strictly to have been mentioned after v. 40. The worship of grey-headed David upon the bed recalls to mind the worship of the patriarch Jacob after making known his last will (Gen. 47:31).

1 Kings 1:49, 50. The news spread terror. All the guests of Adonijah fled, every man his way. Adonijah himself sought refuge from Solomon at the horns of the altar. The altar was regarded from time immemorial and among all nations as a place of refuge for criminals deserving of death; but, according to Ex. 21:14, in Israel it was only allowed to afford protection in cases of unintentional slaying, and for these special cities of refuge were afterwards provided (Num. 35). In the horns of the altar, as symbols of power and strength, there was concentrated the true significance of the altar as a divine place, from which there emanated both life and health (see at Ex. 27:19). By grasping the horns of the altar the culprit placed himself under the protection of the saving and helping grace of God, which wipes away sin, and thereby abolishes punishment (see Bähr, *Symbolik des Mos. Cult.* i. p. 474). The question to what altar Adonijah fled, whether to the altar at the ark of the covenant in Zion, or to the one at the tabernacle at Gibeon, or to the one built by David on the threshing-floor of Araunah, cannot be determined with certainty. It was probably to the first of these, however, as nothing is said

about a flight to Gibeon, and with regard to the altar of Araunah it is not certain that it was provided with horns like the altars of the two sanctuaries.

1 Kings 1:51, 52. When this was reported to Solomon, together with the prayer of Adonijah that the king would swear to him that he would not put him to death with the sword (אֶם before וַיִּמַּיֵּת, a particle used in an oath), he promised him conditional impunity: "If he shall be brave (בְּרוּחַיִל, *vir probus*), none of his hair shall fall to the earth," equivalent to not a hair of his head shall be injured (cf. 1 Sam. 14:45); "but if evil be found in him," i.e., if he render himself guilty of a fresh crime, "he shall die."

1 Kings 1:53. He then had him fetched down from the altar (הוֹרֵיד, inasmuch as the altar stood upon an eminence); and when he fell down before the king, i.e., did homage to him as king, he gave him his life and freedom in the words, "Go to thy house." The expression לָךְ לְבֵיתֶךָ does not imply his banishment from the court (compare 1 Kings 2:13 and 2 Sam. 14:24). Solomon did not wish to commence his own ascent of the throne by infliction of punishment, and therefore presented the usurper with his life on the condition that he kept himself quiet.

1 Kings 2

David's Last Instructions and Death. Solomon Ascends the Throne and Fortifies His Government

1 Kings 2. The anointing of Solomon as king, which was effected by David's command (1 Kings 1), is only briefly mentioned in 1 Chron. 23:1 in the words, "When David was old and full of days, he made his son Solomon king over Israel;" which serve as an introduction to the account of the arrangements made by David during the closing days of his life. After these arrangements have been described, there follow in 1 Chron. 28 and 29 his last instructions and his death. The aged king gathered together the tribe-princes and the rest of the dignitaries and superior officers to a diet

at Jerusalem, and having introduced Solomon to them as the successor chosen by God, exhorted them to keep the commandments of God, and urged upon Solomon and the whole assembly the building of the temple, gave his son the model of the temple and all the materials which he had collected towards its erection, called upon the great men of the kingdom to contribute to this work, which they willingly agreed to, and closed this last act of his reign with praise and thanksgiving to God and a great sacrificial festival, at which the assembled states of the realm made Solomon king a second time, and anointed him prince in the presence of Jehovah (1 Chron. 29:22).—A repetition of the anointing of the new king at the instigation of the states of the realm, accompanied by their solemn homage, had also taken place in the case of both Saul (2 Sam. 11) and David (2 Sam. 2:4 and 5:3), and appears to have been an essential requirement to secure the general recognition of the king on the part of the nation, at any rate in those cases in which the succession to the throne was not undisputed. In order, therefore, to preclude any rebellion after his death, David summoned this national assembly again after Solomon's first anointing and ascent of the throne, that the representatives of the whole nation might pay the requisite homage to king Solomon, who had been installed as his successor according to the will of God.—To this national assembly, which is only reported in the Chronicles, there are appended the last instructions which David gave, according to vv. 1–9 of our chapter, to his successor Solomon immediately before his death. Just as in the Chronicles, according to the peculiar plan of that work, there is no detailed description of the installation of David on the throne; so here the author of our books has omitted the account of this national diet, and the homage paid by the estates of the realm to the new king, as not being required by the purpose of his work, and has communicated the last personal admonitions and instructions of the dying king David instead.⁴

1 Kings 2:1–11. David's Last Instructions and Death.—Vv. 1–4. When David saw that his life

was drawing to a close, he first of all admonished his son Solomon to be valiant in the observance of the commandments of God. "I go the way of all the world" (as in Josh. 23:14), i.e., the way of death; "be strong and be a man,"—not "bear my departure bravely," as Thenius supposes, but prove thyself brave (cf. 1 Sam. 4:9) to keep the commandments of the Lord. Just as in 1 Sam. 4:9 the object in which the bravery is to show itself is appended simply by the copula *Vāv*; so is it here also with וְשָׁמַרְתָּ וְגו'. The phrase "שָׁמַר אֶת־מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְיָ", to keep the keeping of Jehovah, which so frequently occurs in the *Thorah*, i.e., to observe or obey whatever is to be observed in relation to Jehovah (cf. Gen. 26:5, Lev. 8:35; 18:30, etc.), always receives its more precise definition from the context, and is used here, as in Gen. 26:5, to denote obedience to the law of God in all its extent, or, according to the first definition, to walk in the ways of Jehovah. This is afterwards more fully expanded in the expression וְלִשְׁמֹר חֻקֵּי וְגו', to keep the ordinances, commandments, rights, and testimonies of Jehovah. These four words were applied to the different precepts of the law, the first three of which are connected together in Gen. 26:5, Deut. 5:28; 8:11, and served to individualize the rich and manifold substance of the demands of the Lord to His people as laid down in the *Thorah*. לְמַעַן תִּשְׁכַּחֲלֵךְ, that thou mayest act wisely and execute well, as in Deut. 29:8, Josh. 1:7.

1 Kings 2:4. Solomon would then experience still further this blessing of walking in the ways of the Lord, since the Lord would fulfil to him His promise of the everlasting possession of the throne. לְמַעַן יָקִים וְגו' is grammatically subordinate to לְמַעַן תִּשְׁכַּחֲלֵךְ in v. 3. The word which Jehovah has spoken concerning David (דְּבַר עָלִי) is the promise in 2 Sam. 7:12ff, the substance of which is quoted here by David with a negative turn, לֹא יִכָּרֵת וְגו', and with express allusion to the condition on which God would assuredly fulfil His promise, viz., if the descendants of David preserve their ways, to

walk before the Lord in truth. בְּאֵמֶת is more precisely defined by בְּכֹל ... נִפְשָׁם. For the fact itself see Deut. 5:5; 11:13, 18. The formula לֹא יִכָּרֵת וְגו' is formed after 1 Sam. 2:33 (compare also 2 Sam. 3:29 and Josh. 9:23). "There shall not be cut off to thee a man from upon the throne of Israel," i.e., there shall never be wanting to thee a descendant to take the throne; in other words, the sovereignty shall always remain in thy family. This promise, which reads thus in 2 Sam. 7:16, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be continual for ever before thee, and thy throne stand fast for ever," and which was confirmed to Solomon by the Lord Himself after his prayer at the consecration of the temple (1 Kings 8:25; 9:5), is not to be understood as implying that no king of the Davidic house would be thrust away from the throne, but simply affirms that the posterity of David was not to be cut off, so as to leave no offshoot which could take possession of the throne. Its ultimate fulfilment it received in Christ (see at 2 Sam. 7:12ff.). The second לֹא אֶמַח in v. 4 is not to be erased as suspicious, as being merely a repetition of the first in consequence of the long conditional clause, even though it is wanting in the Vulgate, the Arabic, and a Hebrew codex.

After a general admonition David communicated to his successor a few more special instructions; viz., first of all (vv. 5, 6), to punish *Joab* for his wickedness. "What Joab did to me:"—of this David mentions only the two principal crimes of Joab, by which he had already twice deserved death, namely, his killing the two generals. Abner (2 Sam. 3:27) and Amasa the son of Jether (2 Sam. 20:10). The name יֵתֶר is written יֵתֶרָא in 2 Sam. 17:25. Joab had murdered both of them out of jealousy in a treacherous and malicious manner; and thereby he had not only grievously displeased David and bidden defiance to his royal authority, but by the murder of Abner had exposed the king to the suspicion in the eyes of the people of having instigated the crime (see at

2 Sam. 3:28, 37). וַיִּשָּׂם דָּמַי מ' "and he made war-blood in peace," i.e., he shed in the time of peace blood that ought only to flow in war (שִׂים in the sense of making, as in Deut. 14:1, Ex. 10:2, etc.), "and brought war-blood upon his girdle which was about his loins, and upon his shoes under his feet," sc. in the time of peace. This was the crime therefore: that Joab had murdered the two generals in a time of peace, as one ought only to slay his opponent in time of war. *Girdle and shoes*, the principal features in oriental attire when a man is preparing himself for any business, were covered with blood, since Joab, while saluting them, had treacherously stabbed both of them with the sword. David ought to have punished these two crimes; but when Abner was murdered, he felt himself too weak to visit a man like Joab with the punishment he deserved, as he had only just been anointed king, and consequently he did nothing more than invoke divine retribution upon his head (2 Sam. 3:29). And when Amasa was slain, the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba had crippled the power of David too much, for him to visit the deed with the punishment that was due. But as king of the nation of God, it was not right for him to allow such crimes to pass unpunished: he therefore transferred the punishment, for which he had wanted the requisite power, to his son and successor.

1 Kings 2:6. "Do according to thy wisdom ("mark the proper opportunity of punishing him"—Seb. Schmidt), and let not his grey hair go down into hell (the region of the dead) in peace (i.e., punished)." The punishment of so powerful a man as Joab the commander-in-chief was, required great wisdom, to avoid occasioning a rebellion in the army, which was devoted to him.

1 Kings 2:7. If the demands of justice required that Joab should be punished, the duty of gratitude was no less holy to the dying king. And Solomon was to show this to the sons of *Barzillai* the Gileadite, and make them companions of his table; because Barzillai had supplied David with provisions on his flight

from Absalom (2 Sam. 17:27ff., 19:32ff.). וְהָיוּ בְּאֹכְלֵי שְׁלֹחֶנֶד, “let them be among those eating of thy table;” i.e., not, “let them draw their food from the royal table,”—for there was no particular distinction in this, as all the royal attendants at the court received their food from the royal kitchen, as an equivalent for the pay that was owing,—but, “let them join in the meals at the royal table.” The fact that in 2 Sam. 9:10, 11, 13, we have אָכַל עַל-שְׁלֹחַן to express this, makes no material difference. According to 2 Sam. 19:38, Barzillai had, it is true, allowed only one son to follow the king to his court. “For so they drew near to me,” i.e., they showed the kindness to me of supplying me with food; compare 2 Sam. 17:27, where Barzillai alone is named, though, as he was a man of eighty years old, he was certainly supported by his sons.

1 Kings 2:8. On the other hand, *Shimei* the Benjamite had shown great hostility to David (cf. 2 Sam. 16:5–8). He had cursed him with a vehement curse as he fled from Absalom (נִמְרָצוֹת, vehement, violent, not ill, *heillos*, from the primary meaning to be sick or ill, as Thenius supposes, since it cannot be shown that מָרַץ has any such meaning); and when David returned to Jerusalem and Shimei fell at his feet, he had promised to spare his life, because he did not want to mar the joy at his reinstatement in his kingdom by an act of punishment (2 Sam. 19:19–24), and therefore had personally forgiven him. But the insult which Shimei had offered in his person to the anointed of the Lord, as king and representative of the rights of God, he could not forgive. The instruction given to his successor (אַל-תִּגְנָקֶהוּ, let him not be guiltless) did not spring from personal revenge, but was the duty of the king as judge and administrator of the divine right.⁵ It follows from the expression עִמָּךְ, with thee, i.e., in thy neighbourhood, that Shimei was living at that time in Jerusalem (cf. v. 36).

1 Kings 2:10, 11. After these instructions David died, and was buried in the city of David, i.e., upon Mount Zion, where the sepulchre of

David still existed in the time of Christ (Acts 2:29).⁶ On the length of his reign see 2 Sam. 5:5.

1 Kings 2:12–46. Accession of Solomon and Establishment of his Government.—V. 12 is a heading embracing the substance of what follows, and is more fully expanded in 1 Chron. 29:23–25. Solomon established his monarchy first of all by punishing the rebels, Adonijah (vv. 13–25) and his adherents (vv. 26–35), and by carrying out the final instructions of his father (vv. 36–46).

1 Kings 2:13–25. *Adonijah forfeits his life.*—Vv. 13–18. Adonijah came to Bathsheba with the request that she would apply to king Solomon to give him Abishag of Shunem as his wife. Bathsheba asked him, “Is peace thy coming?” i.e., comest thou with a peaceable intention? (as in 1 Sam. 16:4), because after what had occurred (1 Kings 1:5ff.) she suspected an evil intention. He introduced his petition with these words: “Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and all Israel had set its face upon me that I should be king, then the kingdom turned about and became my brother’s; for it became his from the Lord.” The throne was his, not because he had usurped it, but because it belonged to him as the eldest son at that time, according to the right of primogeniture. Moreover it might have been the case that many of the people wished him to be king, and the fact that he had found adherents in Joab, Abiathar, and others, confirms this; but his assertion, that all Israel had set its eyes upon him as the future king, went beyond the bounds of truth. At the same time, he knew how to cover over the dangerous sentiment implied in his words in a very skilful manner by adding the further remark, that the transfer of the kingdom to his brother had come from Jehovah; so that Bathsheba did not detect the artifice, and promised to fulfil his request (vv. 16ff.) to intercede with king Solomon for Abishag to be given him to wife. אַל-תִּשְׁבִּי אֶת-פָּנַי, “do not turn back my face,” i.e., do not refuse my request.

1 Kings 2:19. When Bathsheba came to Solomon, he received her with the reverence due to the queen-mother: “*he rose up to meet*

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her" (a pregnant expression for "he rose up and went to meet her"), made a low bow, then sat upon his throne again, and bade her sit upon a throne at his right hand. The seat at the right hand of the king was the place of honour among the Israelites (cf. Ps. 110:1), also with the ancient Arabian kings (cf. Eichhorn, *Monumenta Antiq. Hist. Arab.* p. 220), as well as among the Greeks and Romans.

1 Kings 2:20ff. To her request, "Let Abishag of Shunem be given to Adonijah thy brother for a wife" (אֵת אֲבִישָׁג, cf. Ges. § § 143, 1, a.), which she regarded in her womanly simplicity as a very small one (קִטְנָה), he replied with indignation, detecting at once the intrigues of Adonijah: "And why dost thou ask Abishag of Shunem for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom, for he is my elder brother; and indeed for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the son of Zeruah." The repetition of לוֹ in לוֹ (v. 22), for the purpose of linking on another clause, answers entirely to the emotional character of the words. "For him, and for Abiathar and Joab:" Solomon said this, because these two men of high rank had supported Adonijah's rebellion and wished to rule under his name. There is no ground for any such alterations of the text as Thenius proposes.—Although Abishag had been only David's nurse, in the eyes of the people she passed as his concubine; and among the Israelites, just as with the ancient Persians (Herod. iii. 68), taking possession of the harem of a deceased king was equivalent to an establishment of the claim to the throne (see at 2 Sam. 12:8 and 3:7, 8). According to 2 Sam. 16:21, this cannot have been unknown even to Bathsheba; but as Adonijah's wily words had disarmed all suspicion, she may not have thought of this, or may perhaps have thought that Abishag was not to be reckoned as one of David's concubines, because David had not known her (1 Kings 1:4).

1 Kings 2:23ff. Solomon thereupon solemnly swore (the formula of an oath, and the כִּי introducing the oath, as in 1 Sam. 14:44, etc.),

"Adonijah has spoken this word against his own life." בְּנַפְשׁוֹ, at the cost of his life, as in 2 Sam.

23:17, i.e., at the hazard of his life, or to his destruction. V. 24. "And now, as truly as Jehovah liveth, who hath established me and set me on the throne of my father David, and hath made me a house, as He said (*verbatim*, 2 Sam. 7:11): yea, to-day shall Adonijah be put to death." Jehovah established Solomon, or founded him firmly, by raising him to the throne in spite of Adonijah's usurpation. In וַיִּשְׁבֵּי the central י has got into the text through a copyist's error. וַיִּשְׁבֵּה לִי בֵּית, i.e., He has bestowed upon me a family or posterity. Solomon had already one son, viz., Rehoboam, about a year old (compare 11:42 with 1 Kings 14:21 and 2 Chron. 12:13).⁷

1 Kings 2:25. Solomon had this sentence immediately executed upon Adonijah by Benaiah, the chief of the body-guard, according to the oriental custom of both ancient and modern times. The king was perfectly just in doing this. For since Adonijah, even after his first attempt to seize upon the throne had been forgiven by Solomon, endeavoured to secure his end by fresh machinations, duty to God, who had exalted Solomon to the throne, demanded that the rebel should be punished with all the severity of the law, without regard to blood-relationship.

1 Kings 2:26, 27. Deposition of Abiathar.—The conduct of Solomon towards the high priest Abiathar is a proof how free his actions were from personal revenge or too great severity. Abiathar had also forfeited his life through the part he took in Adonijah's conspiracy; but Solomon simply sent him to Anathoth (i.e., Anata; see at Josh. 18:24), to his own fields, i.e., to his property there, telling him, "Thou art indeed a man of death," i.e., thou hast deserved to die, "but I will not put thee to death to-day, because thou hast borne the ark of Jehovah," namely, both on the occasion of its solemn conveyance to Jerusalem (1 Chron. 15:11ff.) and also on David's flight from Absalom (2 Sam. 15:24, 29), that is to say, because of his high-

priestly dignity, and because thou didst endure all that my father endured, i.e., thou didst share all his afflictions and sufferings, both in the period of Saul's persecution (1 Sam. 22:20ff., 23:8ff.), and during the rebellion of Absalom (2 Sam. 15:24ff.). בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה (to-day) puts a limit upon the pardon, because Solomon could not foresee whether Abiathar would always keep quiet, and not forfeit his life again by fresh crimes.⁸

1 Kings 2:27. The banishment of Abiathar to his own private possession involved his deposition from the priesthood. And, as the historian adds, thus was the word of the Lord concerning the house of Eli fulfilled (1 Sam. 2:30–33). לְמִלָּא corresponds to the New Testament ἵνα πληρωθῆ. For further remarks on this prophecy and its fulfilment, see at 1 Sam. 2:30ff.⁹ Thus was the high-priesthood of the house of Eli extinguished, and henceforth this dignity passed through Zadok into the sole possession of the line of Eleazar.

1 Kings 2:28–34. Execution of Joab.—When the report (of the execution of Adonijah and the deposition of Abiathar) came to Joab, he fled to the tent of Jehovah (not to the tabernacle, but to the holy tent upon Zion) to seek protection at the altar (see at 1 Kings 1:50). The words כִּי יִזְאָב ... לֹא נָטָה are introduced as a parenthesis to explain Joab's flight: "for Joab had leaned after Adonijah," i.e., taken his side (נָטָה אַחֲרָי), as in Ex. 23:2, Judg. 9:3), "but not after Absalom."¹⁰ There is no foundation in the biblical text for the conjecture, that Joab had given Adonijah the advice to ask for Abishag as his wife, just as Ahithophel had given similar advice to Absalom (2 Sam. 16:21). For not only is there no intimation of anything of the kind, but Solomon punished Joab solely because of his crimes in the case of Abner and Amasa. Moreover, Abiathar was also deposed, without having any fresh machinations in favour of Adonijah laid to his charge. The punishment of Adonijah and Abiathar was quite sufficient to warn Joab of his approaching fate, and lead him to seek to save his life by fleeing to the altar. It is true that,

according to Ex. 21:13, 14, the altar could afford no protection to a man who had committed two murders. But he probably thought no more of these crimes, which had been committed a long time before, but simply of his participation in Adonijah's usurpation; and he might very well hope that religious awe would keep Solomon from putting him to death in a holy place for such a crime as that. And it is very evident that this hope was not altogether a visionary one, from the fact that, according to v. 30, when Joab refused to leave the altar at the summons addressed to him in the name of the king, Benaiah did not give him the death-blow at once, but informed Solomon of the fact and received his further commands. Solomon, however, did not arrest the course of justice, but ordered him to be put to death there and afterwards buried. The burial of the persons executed was a matter of course, as, according to Deut. 21:23, even a person who had been hanged was to be buried before sunset. When, therefore, Solomon gives special orders for the burial of Joab, the meaning is that Benaiah is to provide for the burial with distinct reference to the services which Joab had rendered to his father. "And take away the blood, which Joab shed without cause, from me and my father's house." So long as Joab remained unpunished for the double murder, the blood-guiltiness rested upon the king and his house, on whom the duty of punishment devolved (cf. Num. 35:30, 31; Deut. 19:13). דְּמֵי הַנֶּפֶשׁ, blood without cause, i.e., blood shed in innocence. On the connection of the adverb with the substantive, at which Thenius takes offence, comp. Ges. § 151, 1, and Ewald, § 287, d.—For V. 32, compare v. 5. The words of Solomon in v. 33a point back to the curse which David uttered upon Joab and his descendants after the murder of Abner (2 Sam. 3:28, 29). "But to David, and his seed, and his house, and his throne, let there be salvation for ever from Jehovah." This wish sprang from a conviction, based upon 2 Sam. 7:14, that the Lord would not fulfil His promise to David unless his successors upon the throne exercised right and justice according to the command of the Lord.

1 Kings 2:34. Benaiah went up (וַיַּעַל), inasmuch as the altar by the ark of the covenant stood higher up Mount Zion than Solomon's house. Joab was buried "in his house" (i.e., in the tomb prepared in his house, either in the court or in the garden: cf. 1 Sam. 25:1), "in the desert," probably the wilderness of Judah, as Joab's mother was a step-sister of David, and therefore probably dwelt in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem.

1 Kings 2:35. Solomon appointed Benaiah commander-in-chief in the place of Joab, and put Zadok in Abiathar's place (cf. 1 Kings 1:8, 9).

1 Kings 2:36–46. *Punishment of Shimei.*—Solomon thereupon ordered Shimei to come, probably from Bahurim, where his home was (2 Sam. 16:5), and commanded him to build himself a house in Jerusalem to dwell in, and not to leave the city "any whither" (אֵינָהּ וְאֵינָהּ), threatening him with death if ever he should cross the brook Kidron. The valley of Kidron is mentioned as the eastern boundary of the city with an allusion to the fact, that Bahurim was to the east of Jerusalem towards the desert.

1 Kings 2:38. Shimei vowed obedience, and that on oath, as is supplementarily observed in v. 42, though it has been arbitrarily interpolated by the LXX here; and he kept his word a considerable time.

1 Kings 2:39, 40. But after the lapse of three years, when two slaves fled to Gath to king Achish, with whom David had also sought and found refuge (1 Sam. 27:2, compare 1 Kings 21:11ff.), he started for Gath as soon as he knew this, and fetched them back.

1 Kings 2:41ff. When this was reported to Solomon, he sent for Shimei and charged him with the breach of his command: "Did I not swear to thee by Jehovah, and testify to thee, etc.? Why hast thou not kept the oath of Jehovah (the oath sworn by Jehovah) ...?"

1 Kings 2:44. He then reminded him of the evil which he had done to his father: "Thou knowest all the evil, which thy heart knoweth (i.e., which thy conscience must tell thee); and now

Jehovah returns the evil upon thy head," namely, by decreeing the punishment of death, which he deserved for blaspheming the anointed of the Lord (2 Sam. 16:9).

1 Kings 2:45. "And king Solomon will be blessed, and the throne of David be established before Jehovah for ever," namely, because the king does justice (compare the remark on v. 33).

1 Kings 2:46. Solomon then ordered him to be executed by Benaiah. This punishment was also just. As Solomon had put Shimei's life in his own hand by imposing upon him confinement in Jerusalem, and Shimei had promised on oath to obey the king's command, the breach of his oath was a crime for which he had no excuse. There is no force at all in the excuses which some commentators adduce in his favour, founded upon the money which his salves had cost him, and the wish to recover possession of them, which was a right one in itself. If Shimei had wished to remain faithful to his oath, he might have informed the king of the flight of his slaves, have entreated the king that they might be brought back, and have awaited the king's decision; but he had no right thus lightly to break the promise given on oath. By the breach of his oath he had forfeited his life. And this is the first thing with which Solomon charges him, without his being able to offer any excuse; and it is not till afterwards that he adduces as a second fact in confirmation of the justice of his procedure, the wickedness that he practised towards his father.—The last clause, "and the kingdom was established by (בְּיַד) Solomon," is attached to the following chapter in the Cod. Al. of the LXX (in the Cod. Vat. it is wanting, or rather its place is supplied by a long interpolation), in the Vulgate, and in the Syriac; and indeed rightly so, as Thenius has shown, not merely because of the קך in 1 Kings 3:2, but also because of its form as a circumstantial clause, to which the following account (1 Kings 3:1ff.) is appended.

1 Kings 3**Solomon's Marriage; Worship and Sacrifice at Gibeon; And Wise Judicial Sentence (Ch. 3.)**

1 Kings 3. The establishment of the government in the hands of Solomon having been noticed in 1 Kings 2, the history of his reign commences with an account of his marriage to an Egyptian princess, and with a remark concerning the state of the kingdom at the beginning of his reign (vv. 1–3). There then follows a description of the solemn sacrifice and prayer at Gibeon, by which Solomon sought to give a religious consecration to his government, and to secure the assistance of the Lord and His blessing upon it, and obtained the fulfilment of his desire (vv. 4–15). And then, as a practical proof of the spirit of his government, we have the sentence through which he displayed the wisdom of his judicial decisions in the sight of all the people (vv. 16–28).

1 Kings 3:1–3. *Solomon's marriage and the religious state of the kingdom.*—V. 1. When Solomon had well secured his possession of the throne (1 Kings 2:46), he entered into alliance with Pharaoh, by taking his daughter as his wife. This Pharaoh of Egypt is supposed by Winer, Ewald, and others to have been *Psusennes*, the last king of the twenty-first (Tanitic) dynasty, who reigned thirty-five years; since the first king of the twenty-second (Bubastic) dynasty, *Sesonchis* or *Sheshonk*, was certainly the Shishak who conquered Jerusalem in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (1 Kings 14:25, 26). The alliance by marriage with the royal family of Egypt presupposes that Egypt was desirous of cultivating friendly relations with the kingdom of Israel, which had grown into a power to be dreaded; although, as we know nothing more of the history of Egypt at that time than the mere names of the kings (as given by Manetho), it is impossible to determine what may have been the more precise grounds which led the reigning king of Egypt to seek the friendship of Israel. There is, at any rate, greater probability in this supposition than in that of Thenius, who

conjectures that Solomon contracted this marriage because he saw the necessity of entering into a closer relationship with this powerful neighbour, who had a perfectly free access to Palestine. The conclusion of this marriage took place in the first year of Solomon's reign, though probably not at the very beginning of the reign, but not till after his buildings had been begun, as we may infer from the expression עַד כָּלְתוֹ לְבָנוֹת (until he had made an end of building). Moreover, Solomon had already married Naamah the Ammonitess before ascending the throne, and had had a son by her (compare 1 Kings 14:21 with 11:42, 43).—Marriage with an Egyptian princess was not a transgression of the law, as it was only marriages with Canaanitish women that were expressly prohibited (Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3), whereas it was allowable to marry even foreign women taken in war (Deut. 21:10ff.). At the same time, it was only when the foreign wives renounced idolatry and confessed their faith in Jehovah, that such marriages were in accordance with the spirit of the law. And we may assume that this was the case even with Pharaoh's daughter; because Solomon adhered so faithfully to the Lord during the first years of his reign, that he would not have tolerated any idolatry in his neighbourhood, and we cannot find any trace of Egyptian idolatry in Israel in the time of Solomon, and, lastly, the daughter of Pharaoh is expressly distinguished in 1 Kings 11:1 from the foreign wives who tempted Solomon to idolatry in his old age. The assertion of Seb. Schmidt and Thenius to the contrary rests upon a false interpretation of 1 Kings 11:1.—“And he brought her into the city of David, till he had finished the building of his palace,” etc. Into the city of David: i.e., not into the palace in which his father had dwelt, as Thenius arbitrarily interprets it in opposition to 2 Chron. 8:11, but into a house in the city of David or Jerusalem, from which he brought her up into the house appointed for her after the building of his own palace was finished (1 Kings 9:24). The building of the house of Jehovah is mentioned as well, because the sacred tent for the ark of the covenant was set up in the palace

of David until the temple was finished, and the temple was not consecrated till after the completion of the building of the palace (see at 1 Kings 8:1). By the building of “the wall of Jerusalem” we are to understand a stronger fortification, and possibly also the extension of the city wall (see at 1 Kings 11:27).

1 Kings 3:2. “Only the people sacrificed upon high places, because there was not yet a house built for the name of Jehovah until those days.” The limiting רק, *only*, by which this general account of the existing condition of the religious worship is appended to what precedes, may be accounted for from the antithesis to the strengthening of the kingdom by Solomon mentioned in 1 Kings 2:46. The train of thought is the following: It is true that Solomon’s authority was firmly established by the punishment of the rebels, so that he was able to ally himself by marriage with the king of Egypt; but just as he was obliged to bring his Egyptian wife into the city of David, because the building of his palace as not yet finished, so the people, and (according to v. 3) even Solomon himself, were only able to sacrifice to the Lord at that time upon altars on the high places, because the temple was not yet built. The participle מִזְבְּחִים denotes the continuation of this religious condition (see Ewald, § 168, c.). The בָּמוֹת, or high places,¹¹ were places of sacrifice and prayer, which were built upon eminences of hills, because men thought they were nearer the Deity there, and which consisted in some cases probably of an altar only, though as a rule there was an altar with a sanctuary built by the side (בֵּית בָּמוֹת, 1 Kings 13:32; 2 Kings 17:29, 32; 23:19), so that בָּמָה frequently stands for בֵּית בָּמָה (e.g., 1 Kings 11:7; 14:23; 2 Kings 21:3; 23:8), and the בָּמָה is also distinguished from the מִזְבֵּחַ (2 Kings 23:15; 2 Chron. 14:2). These *high places* were consecrated to the worship of Jehovah, and essentially different from the high places of the Canaanites which were consecrated to Baal. Nevertheless sacrificing upon these high places

was opposed to the law, according to which the place which the Lord Himself had chosen for the revelation of His name was the only place where sacrifices were to be offered (Lev. 17:3ff.); and therefore it is excused here on the ground that no house (temple) had yet been built to the name of the Lord.

1 Kings 3:3. Even Solomon, although he loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, i.e., according to 1 Kings 2:3, in the commandments of the Lord as they are written in the law of Moses, sacrificed and burnt incense upon high places. Before the building of the temple, more especially since the tabernacle had lost its significance as the central place of the gracious presence of God among His people, through the removal of the ark of the covenant, the worship of the high places was unavoidable; although even afterwards it still continued as a forbidden *cultus*, and could not be thoroughly exterminated even by the most righteous kings (1 Kings 22:24; 2 Kings 12:4; 14:4; 15:4, 35).

1 Kings 3:4–15. Solomon’s Sacrifice and Dream at Gibeon (cf. 2 Chron. 1:1–13).—To implore the divine blessing upon his reign, Solomon offered to the Lord at Gibeon a great sacrifice—a thousand burnt-offerings; and, according to 2 Chron. 1:2, the representatives of the whole nation took part in this sacrificial festival. At that time the great or principal *bamah* was at Gibeon (the present *el Jib*; see at Josh. 9:3), namely, the Mosaic tabernacle (2 Chron. 1:3), which is called הַבְּמָה, because the ark of the covenant, with which Jehovah had bound up His gracious presence, was not there now. “Upon that altar,” i.e., upon the altar of the great *bamah* at Gibeon, the brazen altar of burnt-offering in the tabernacle (2 Chron. 1:6).

1 Kings 3:5ff. The one thing wanting in the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, viz., the ark of the covenant with the gracious presence of Jehovah, was supplied by the Lord in the case of this sacrifice by a direct revelation in a dream, which Solomon received in the night following the sacrifice. There is a connection between the question which God addressed to Solomon in the dream, “What shall I give thee?” and the

object of the sacrifice, viz., to seek the help of God for his reign. Solomon commences his prayer in v. 6 with an acknowledgment of the great favour which the Lord had shown to his father David, and had continued till now by raising his son to his throne (בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה, as it is this day: cf. 1 Sam. 22:8, Deut. 8:18, etc.); and then, in vv. 7–9, in the consciousness of his incapacity for the right administration of government over so numerous a people, he asks the Lord for an obedient heart and for wisdom to rule His people. וְעֵתָּה introduces the petition, the reasons assigned for which are, (1) his youth and inexperience, and (2) the greatness or multitude of the nation to be governed. I am, says he, נַעַר קָטָן, i.e., an inexperienced youth (Solomon was only about twenty years old): “I know not to go out and in,” i.e., how to behave myself as king, or govern the people (for צֵאת וְבֵא compare the note on Num. 27:17). At v. 8 he describes the magnitude of the nation in words which recall to mind the divine promises in Gen. 13:16 and 32:13, to indicate how gloriously the Lord has fulfilled the promises which He made to the patriarchs.

1 Kings 3:9. וְנָתַתָּה, therefore give. The prayer (commencing with וְעֵתָּה in v. 7) is appended in the form of an apodosis to the circumstantial clauses וְאֶנְכִי וְגו' and וְעַבְדְּךָ וְגו', which contain the grounds of the petition. לֵב שֹׁמֵעַ, a hearing heart, i.e., a heart giving heed to the law and right of God, “to judge Thy people, (namely) to distinguish between good and evil (i.e., right and wrong).” “For who could judge this Thy numerous people,” sc. unless Thou gavest him intelligence? כְּבֵד, heavy in multitude: in the Chronicles this is explained by גְּדוֹל.

1 Kings 3:10ff. This prayer pleased God well. “Because thou hast asked this, and hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life (i.e., the destruction) of thy foes,” all of them good things, which the world seeks to obtain as the greatest prize, “but intelligence to hear judgment (i.e., to foster it, inasmuch as the

administration of justice rests upon a conscientious hearing of the parties), behold I have done according to thy word” (i.e., fulfilled thy request: the perfect is used, inasmuch as the hearkening has already begun; for הִנֵּה in this connection compare Ewald, § 307, e.), “and given thee a wise and understanding heart.” The words which follow, “so that there has been none like thee before thee,” etc., are not to be restricted to the kings of Israel, as Clericus supposes, but are to be understood quite universally as applying to all mankind (cf. 1 Kings 5:9–11).

1 Kings 3:13, 14. In addition to this, according to the promise that to him who seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness all other things shall be added (Matt. 6:33), God will also give him the earthly blessings, for which he has not asked, and that in great abundance, viz., riches and honour such as no king of the earth has had before him; and if he adhere faithfully to God’s commandments, long life also (וְהֶאָרַכְתִּי, in this case I have lengthened). This last promise was not fulfilled, because Solomon did not observe the condition (cf. 1 Kings 11:42).

1 Kings 3:15. Then Solomon awoke, and behold it was a dream; i.e., a dream produced by God, a revelation by dream, or a divine appearance in a dream. הָלֹוֹם as in Num. 12:6.— Solomon thanked the Lord again for this promise after his return to Jerusalem, by offering burnt-offerings and thank-offerings before the ark of the covenant, i.e., upon the altar at the tent erected for the ark upon Zion, and prepared a meal for all his servants (viz., his court-servants), i.e., a sacrificial meal of the שְׁלָמִים.—This sacrificial festival upon Zion is omitted in the Chronicles, as well as the following account in vv. 16–28; not, however, because in the chronicler’s opinion no sacrifices had any legal validity but such as were offered upon the altar of the Mosaic tabernacle, as Thenius fancies, though without observing the account in 1 Chron. 21:26ff., which overthrows this assertion, but because this sacrificial

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festival had no essential significance in relation to Solomon's reign.

1 Kings 3:16–28. Solomon's Judicial Wisdom.—As a proof that the Lord had bestowed upon Solomon unusual judicial wisdom, there is appended a decision of his in a very difficult case, in which Solomon had shown extraordinary intelligence. Two harlots living together in one house had each given birth to a child, and one of them had "overlaid" her child in the night while asleep (אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבָה עָלָיו, because she had lain upon it), and had then placed her dead child in the other one's bosom and taken her living child away. When the other woman looked the next morning at the child lying in her bosom, she saw that it was not her own but the other woman's child, whereas the latter maintained the opposite. As they eventually referred the matter in dispute to the king, and each one declared that the living child was her own, the king ordered a sword to be brought, and the living child to be cut in two, and a half given to each. Then the mother of the living child, "because her bowels yearned upon her son," i.e., her maternal love was excited, cried out, "Give her (the other) the living child, but do not slay it;" whereas the latter said, "It shall be neither mine nor thine, cut it in pieces."

1 Kings 3:27. Solomon saw from this which was the mother of the living child, and handed it over to her.¹²

1 Kings 3:28. This judicial decision convinced all the people that Solomon was endowed with divine wisdom for the administration of justice.

1 Kings 4

Solomon's Ministers of State. His Regal Splendour and Wisdom (Ch. 4–5:14)

1 Kings 4. Ch. 4 contains a list of the chief ministers of state (vv. 2–6), and of the twelve officers placed over the land (vv. 7–20), which is inserted here to give an idea of the might and glory of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon's reign. So far as the contents are concerned, this list belongs to the middle portion of the reign of Solomon, as we may see from the fact that two

of the officers named had daughters of Solomon for their wives (vv. 11, 15), whom they could not possibly have married till the later years of Solomon's life.

1 Kings 4:1–6. The Chief Ministers of State.—The list is introduced in v. 1 by the general remark, that "king Solomon was king over all Israel."

1 Kings 4:2. The first of the שָׂרִים, princes, i.e., chief ministers of state or dignitaries, mentioned here is not the commander-in-chief, as under the warlike reign of David (2 Sam. 8:16; 20:23), but, in accordance with the peaceful rule of Solomon, the administrator of the kingdom (or prime minister): "Azariah the son of Zadok was בֶּהֱן," i.e., not the priest, but the administrator of the kingdom, the representative of the king before the people; like בֶּהֱן in v. 5, where this word is interpreted by רִעָה הַמְלִיךָ, with this difference, however, arising from the article before בֶּהֱן, that Azariah was the *Kohen par excellence*, that is to say, held the first place among the confidential counsellors of the king, so that his dignity was such as befitted the office of an administrator of the kingdom. Compare the explanation of בֶּהֱן at 2 Sam. 8:18. The view of the Vulgate, Luther, and others, which has been revived by Thenius, namely, that בֶּהֱן is to be connected as a genitive with בְּן־צָדוֹק in opposition to the accents, "Azariah the son of Zadok the priest," is incorrect, and does not even yield any sense, since the connection of these words with the following *Elichoreph*, etc., is precluded by the absence of the copula *Vav*, which would be indispensable if Azariah had held the same office as the two brothers Elichoreph and Achijah.¹³ Moreover, Azariah the son of Zadok cannot be a grandson of Zadok the high priest, i.e., a son of Ahimaaz the son of Zadok, as many infer from 1 Chron. 5:34, 35 (1 Kings 6:8, 9); for, apart from the fact that Zadok's grandson can hardly have been old enough at the time for Solomon to invest him with the chief dignity in the kingdom, which would surely be conferred

upon none but men of mature years, we can see no reason why the Azariah mentioned here should not be called the son of Ahimaaz. If the Zadok referred to here was the high priest of that name, Azariah can only have been a brother of Ahimaaz. And there is no real difficulty in the way, since the name Azariah occurs three times in the line of high priests (1 Chron. 5:36, 39), and therefore was by no means rare.

1 Kings 4:3. *Elichoreph* and *Achijah*, sons of *Shisha*, who had held the same office under David, were secretaries of state (סִפְרִים: see at 2 Sam. 8:17 and 20:25, where the different names שִׁשָּׁא = שִׁישָׁא and שְׁרָיָה are also discussed).—

Jehoshaphat the son of *Ahilud* was the chancellor, as he had already been in the time of David (2 Sam. 8:17 and 20:24). The rendering of Thenius, “whilst *Jehoshaphat* was chancellor,” is grammatically impossible.

1 Kings 4:4. On *Benaiah*, compare 1 Kings 2:35 and the Commentary on 2 Sam. 23:20. On *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, see at 2 Sam. 8:17. It appears strange that *Abiathar* should be named as priest, i.e., as high priest, along with *Zadok*, since Solomon had deposed him from the priestly office (1 Kings 2:27, 35), and we cannot imagine any subsequent pardon. The only possible explanation is that proposed by *Theodoret*, namely, that Solomon had only deprived him of the ἀρχή, i.e., of the priest’s office, but not of the ἱερωσύνη or priestly dignity, because this was hereditary.¹⁴

1 Kings 4:5. *Azariah* the son of *Nathan* was over the נְצֻבִים, i.e., the twelve officers named in vv. 7ff. *Zabud* the son of *Nathan* was בְּהֵן (not the son of “*Nathan* the priest,” as *Luther* and many others render it). בְּהֵן is explained by the epithet appended, רֵעֵה הַמְלֶכֶד: privy councillor, i.e., confidential adviser of the king. *Nathan* is not the prophet of that name, as *Thenius* supposes, but the son of *David* mentioned in 2 Sam. 5:14. *Azariah* and *Zabud* were therefore nephews of *Solomon*.

1 Kings 4:6. *Ahishar* was עַל הַבַּיִת, over the palace, i.e., governor of the palace, or minister of the king’s household (compare 1 Kings 16:9, 2 Kings 18:18, and Isa. 22:15), an office met with for the first time under *Solomon*. *Adoniram*, probably the same person as *Adoram* in 2 Sam. 20:24, was chief overseer of the tributary service. He was so in the time of *David* also.

1 Kings 4:7–19. *Solomon’s Official Persons and Their Districts.*—V. 7. *Solomon* had (appointed) twelve נְצֻבִים over all *Israel*, who provided (בְּלִלְוֵי) for the king and his house, i.e., supplied provisions for the necessities of the court. These prefects are not to be regarded as “chamberlains,” or administrators of the royal domains (*Michaelis* and *Ewald*), for these are mentioned in 1 Chron. 27:25ff. under a different title. They are “general receivers of taxes,” or “chief tax-collectors,” as *Rosenmüller* expresses it, who levied the king’s duties or taxes, which consisted in the East, as they still do to the present time, for the most part of natural productions, or the produce of the land, and not of money payments as in the West, and delivered them at the royal kitchen (*Rosenmüller*, *A. und N. Morgenland*, iii. p. 166). It cannot be inferred from the explanation given by *Josephus*, ἡγεμόνες καὶ στρατηγοί, that they exercised a kind of government, as *Thenius* supposes, since this explanation is nothing but a subjective conjecture. “One month in the year was it every one’s duty (הִיָּהָה עַל אֶחָד) to provide.” The districts assigned to the twelve prefects coincide only partially with the territories of the tribes, because the land was probably divided among them according to its greater or smaller productiveness. Moreover, the order in which the districts are enumerated is not a geographical one, but probably follows the order in which the different prefects had to send the natural productions month by month for the maintenance of the king’s court. The description begins with *Ephraim* in v. 8, then passes over in v. 9 to the territory of *Dan* to the

west of it, in v. 10 to the territory of Judah and Simeon on the south, in vv. 11 and 12 to the territory of Manasseh on this side from the Mediterranean to the Jordan, then in vv. 13 and 14 to the territory of Manasseh on the other side of the Jordan, thence back again in vv. 15 and 16 to the northern parts of the land on this side, viz., the territories of Naphtali and Asher, and thence farther south to Issachar in v. 17, and Benjamin in v. 18, closing at last in v. 19 with Gilead.

1 Kings 4:8ff. In the names of the prefects we are struck with the fact, that in the case of five of them the names given are not their own but their fathers' names. It is very improbable that the proper names should have dropped out five times (as Clericus, Michaelis, and others suppose); and consequently there is simply the assumption left, that the persons in question bore their fathers' names with *Ben* prefixed as their own proper names: *Benhur*, *Bendeker*, etc., after the analogy of *Benchanan* in 1 Chron. 4:20 and others, although such a proper name as *Ben-Abinadab* (v. 11) appears very strange. *Benhur* was stationed on the mountains of Ephraim. These mountains, here only the mountainous district of the tribe of Ephraim, were among the most fruitful portions of Palestine (see at Josh. 17:14, 15).

1 Kings 4:9. *Bendeker* was in *Makaz*, a city only mentioned here, the situation of which is unknown, but which is at any rate to be sought for in the tribe of Dan, to which the other cities of this district belong. *Shaalbim* has probably been preserved in the present *Selbit*, to the north-west of *Yâlo* (see at Josh. 19:42). *Bethshemesh*, the present *Ain-Shems* (see at Josh. 15:10). *Elon* (אֵילֹן), which is distinguished from *Ajalon* (Josh. 19:42 and 43) by the epithet *Bethchanan*, and belonged to the tribe of Dan, has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. 19:43). The LXX have arbitrarily interpolated ἔωϛ before *Bethchanan*, and Thenius naturally takes this under his protection, and consequently traces *Bethchanan* in the village of *Beit Hunûn* (Rob. Pal. ii. p. 371), but without

considering that ἔωϛ yields no reasonable sense unless preceded by מִן, ἐκ (from; cf. v. 12).

1 Kings 4:10. *Benhesed* was in *Arubboth*, which does not occur again, so that its situation, even if it should be identical with *Arab* in Josh. 15:52, as Böttcher conjectures, can only be approximatively inferred from the localities which follow. To him (לָוִי), i.e., to his district, belonged *Sochoh* and all the land of *Hepher*. From *Sochoh* we may see that *Benhesed's* district was in the tribe of Judah. Of the two *Sochohs* in Judah, that still exist under the name of *Shuweikeh*, it is impossible to determine with certainty which is intended here, whether the one upon the mountains (Josh. 15:48) or the one in the plain (Josh. 15:35). The fact that it is associated with the land of *Hepher* rather favours the latter. The land of *Hepher*, which must not be confounded with the city of *Gath-Hepher* in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. 19:13; 2 Kings 14:25), but was the territory of one of the Canaanitish kings who were defeated by Joshua, was probably situated in the plain (see at Josh. 12:17).

1 Kings 4:11. *Ben-Abinadab* had the whole of the high range of *Dor* (גְּבֹל דֹּר, Josh. 12:23), i.e., the strip of coast on the Mediterranean Sea below the promontory of Carmel, where the city of *Dor*, which has been preserved in the village of *Tantura* or *Tortura*, nine miles to the north of Caesarea, was situated (see at Josh. 11:2). Whether this district embraced the fruitful plain of Sharon is not so clearly made out as Thenius supposes. בְּנֵי אֲבִינָדָב stands at the head absolutely, without any grammatical connection with כָּל-גְּבֹל דֹּר: "Abinadab: the whole of the high range of Dor," etc. The person named was probably a son of David's eldest brother but one (1 Sam. 16:8; 17:13), and therefore Solomon's cousin; and he had married Solomon's daughter.

1 Kings 4:12. *Baana* the son of Ahilud was most likely a brother of Jehoshaphat the chancellor (v. 3). This district embraced the cities on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, and extended to the Jordan. *Taanach*

and *Megiddo*, which have been preserved in the villages of *Taanuk* and *Lejun*, were situated on the south-western border of this plain, and belonged to the Manassites (see at Josh. 12:21; 17:11). "And all Bethshean," in other words, the whole of the district of Bethshean, i.e., Beisan, at the eastern end of the valley of Jezreel, where it opens into the Jordan valley (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 740ff.), "which (district was situated) by the side of Zarthan below Jezreel, from (the town of) Bethshean (see at Josh. 17:11) to Abel-Mecholah, on the other side of Jokmeam." *Zarthan*, also called *Zereda* (compare 1 Kings 7:46 with 2 Chron. 4:17), has probably been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in *Kurn Sartabeh*, in the neighbourhood of which the old city probably stood, about five miles to the south of Beisan, at a point where the Jordan valley contracts (see at Josh. 3:16). The expression "below Jezreel" refers to "all Bethshean," and may be explained from the elevated situation of Jezreel, the present *Zerîn* (see at Josh. 19:18). According to Rob. iii. p. 163, this is "comparatively high, and commands a wide and noble view, extending down the broad low valley on the east of Beisan and to the mountains of Ajlun beyond the Jordan." The following words, "from Bethshean to Abel-Mecholah," give a more precise definition of the boundary. The LXX have erroneously inserted καὶ before מְבִית־שָׁאן, and Thenius and Böttcher defend it on the strength of their erroneous interpretations of the preceding statements. *Abel-Mecholah* was in the Jordan valley, according to the *Onomast.*, ten Roman miles to the south of Beisan (see at Judg. 7:22). The last clause is not quite intelligible to us, as the situation of the Levitical city *Jokmeam* (1 Chron. 6:53, or *Kibzaim*, a different place from the *Jokneam* on Carmel, Josh. 12:22; 21:34) has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. 21:22). According to this, Baanah's district in the Jordan valley did not extend so far as *Kurn Sartabeh*, but simply to the neighbourhood of Zarthan, and embraced the whole of the tribe-territory of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan.

1 Kings 4:13. *Bengeber* was in *Ramoth* of Gilead in the tribe of Gad (Josh. 20:8), probably on the site of the modern *Szalt* (see at Deut. 4:43). "To him belonged the *Havvoth Jair* (Jair's-lives) in Gilead, to him the region of *Argob* in Bashan, sixty great cities with walls and brazen bolts." If we look at this passage alone, the region of *Argob* in Bashan appears to be distinct from the *Havvoth Jair* in Gilead. But if we compare it with Num. 32:40, 41, Deut. 3:4, 5, and 13, 14, and Josh. 13:30, it is evident from these passages that the *Jair's-lives* are identical with the sixty large and fortified cities of the region of *Argob*. For, according to Deut. 3:4, these sixty fortified cities, with high walls, gates, and bars, were all fortified cities of the kingdom of *Og* of Bashan, which the Israelites conquered under Moses, and to which, according to Num. 32:41, *Jair* the Manassite, who had conquered them, gave the name of *Havvoth Jair*. Hence it is stated in Josh. 13:30, that the sixty *Jair-towns* were situated in Bashan. Consequently the לֹו הַקְּבֵל אַר in our verse is to be taken as a more precise definition of לֹו הַחַוּת יְאִיר וּגַר, or a clearer description of the district superintended by *Bengeber*, so that *Gilead* is used, as is frequently the case, in the broader sense of *Peraea*. Compare with this the Commentary on Deut. 3:4 and 13, 14, where the names אֶרְגֹב and חַוּת are explained, and the imaginary discrepancy between the sixty *Jair's-towns* in the passages cited, and the twenty-three and thirty cities of *Jair* in 1 Chron. 2:22 and Judg. 10:4, is discussed and solved. And when Thenius objects to this explanation on the ground that the villages of *Jair* cannot be identical with the sixty fortified cities, because villages of nomads and strongly fortified cities could not be one and the same, this objection falls to the ground with the untenable interpretation of חַוּת as applying to nomad villages.

1 Kings 4:14. *Ahinadab* the son of *Iddo* received as his district *Mahanaim*, a fortified and probably also a very important city to the north of the *Jabbok*, on the border of the tribe

of Gad, which may perhaps have been preserved in the ruin of *Mahneh* (see at Josh. 13:26 and Gen. 32:3). מַחְנֵימָה, to Mahanaim (cf. Ewald, § 216, *a.*, note), with ה local, probably referring to the fact that Ahinadab was sent away to Mahanaim.

1 Kings 4:15. *Ahimaaz*, possibly Zadok's son (2 Sam. 15:27; 17:17ff.), in *Naphtali*. This does not denote generally "the most northern portion of the land, say from the northern end of the lake of Gennesaret into Coele-Syria," as Thenius supposes; for the tribe-territory of Asher, which had a prefect of its own, was not situated to the south-west of Naphtali, but ran along the west of Naphtali to the northern boundary of Canaan (see at Josh. 19:24–31). He also (like Ben-Abinadab, v. 11) had a daughter of Solomon, Basmath, as his wife.

1 Kings 4:16. *Baanah* the son of *Hushai*, probably the faithful friend and wise counsellor of David (2 Sam. 15:32ff., 17:5ff.), was in *Asher* and בְּעֵלוֹת, a name quite unknown. If ב forms part of the word (*Baaloth*, according to the LXX, Vulg., Syr., and Arab.), we must take it as a district, since the preposition ב would necessarily have been repeated if a district (*Asher*) had been connected with a town (*Baaloth*). In any case, it is not the city of Baaloth in the Negeb of Judah (Josh. 15:24) that is intended.

1 Kings 4:17. *Jehoshaphat* the son of Paruach, in *Issachar*; i.e., over the whole of the territory of that tribe in the plain of Jezreel, with the exception of the cities of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean, which were in the southern portion of it, and were allotted to the Manassites, and, according to v. 12, were put under the care of Baanah; and not merely in the northern part of Issachar, "with the exception of the plain of Jezreel," as Thenius erroneously maintains. Zebulun may possibly have also formed part of his district, if not entirely, yet in its southern portion, provided that the northern portion was assigned to Ahimaaz in Naphtali, since Zebulun had no prefect of its own.

1 Kings 4:18. *Shimei* the son of Elah, possibly the one mentioned in 1 Kings 1:8, in *Benjamin*.

1 Kings 4:19. *Geber* the son of Uri, in the land of *Gilead*, i.e., as the apposition "the land of Sihon ... and of Og ..." clearly shows, the whole of the Israelitish land on the east of the Jordan, as in Deut. 34:1, Judg. 20:1, etc., with the simple exception of the districts placed under Bengeber and Ahinadab (vv. 13 and 14). נָצִיב אֶתְּךָ, "one president was it who (was) in the land (of Gilead)." נָצִיב cannot signify a military post or a garrison here, as in 1 Sam. 10:5; 13:3, etc., but is equivalent to נָצַב, the president (v. 7). The meaning is, that notwithstanding the great extent of this district, it had only one prefect.

1 Kings 4:20. In v. 20 the account of Solomon's officers is closed by a general remark as to the prosperous condition of the whole nation; though we miss the copula *Vav* at the commencement. The words, "Judah and Israel were numerous as the sand by the sea," indicate that the promise given to the patriarchs (Gen. 22:17, cf. 32:13) had been fulfilled. To this there is appended in 1 Kings 5:1 the remark concerning the extent of Solomon's sway, which prepares the way for what follows, and shows how the other portion of the promise, "thy seed will possess the gates of its enemies," had been fulfilled.—The first fourteen verses of 1 Kings 5 are therefore connected by the LXX, Vulg., Luther, and others with 1 Kings 4. It is not till 1 Kings 5:15 that a new section begins.

1 Kings 4:21–28 (1 Kings 5:1–8). Solomon's Regal Splendour.—V. 21. "Solomon was ruler over all the kingdoms from the river (Euphrates) onwards, over the land of the Philistines to the border of Egypt, who brought presents and were subject to Solomon his whole life long." Most of the commentators supply וְעַד before אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים (even to the land of the Philistines) after the parallel passage 2 Chron. 9:26, so that the following וְעַד גְּבוּל would give a more precise definition of the *terminus ad quem*. But it is by no means probable that וְעַד, which appears to be indispensable, should

have dropped out through the oversight of a copyist, and it is not absolutely necessary to supply it, inasmuch as פ may be repeated in thought before אָרְזָן פ from the preceding clause. The participle מְגִשִּׁים is construed *ad sensum* with מִמְלָכוֹת . Bringing presents is equivalent to paying tribute, as in 2 Sam. 8:2, etc.

1 Kings 4:22ff. The splendour of the court, the consumption in the royal kitchen (vv. 22–25), and the well-filled stables (vv. 26–28), were such as befitted the ruler of so large a kingdom.

1 Kings 4:22, 23. The daily consumption of לֶחֶם (food or provisions) amounted to thirty *cors* of fine meal ($\text{סֶלֶת הַטֵּיִם} = \text{סֶלֶת}$, fine sifted meal, Ex. 29:2; for סֶלֶת see also Lev. 2:2), and sixty *cors* of קֶמַח , ordinary meal, ten fattened oxen, twenty pasture oxen, which were brought directly from the pasture and slaughtered, and a hundred sheep, beside different kinds of game. בָּר , κορός , the later name for הַזְמָר , the largest dry and also liquid (1 Kings 5:11), measure of capacity, contained ten ephahs or baths, i.e., according to the calculation made by Thenius, 15,300 cubic inches (Dresden) = about $1\frac{7}{8}$ *scheffel*; ¹⁵ so that ninety *cors* would amount to 171 *scheffel*, from which 28,000 lbs. of bread could be baked (*Theol. Stud. und Krit.* 1846, pp. 132, 133). And “if we reckon 2 s. of bread to each person, there would be 14,000 persons in Solomon’s court,” The consumption of flesh would be quite in proportion to that of bread; for ten fattened oxen, twenty oxen from the pasture, and a hundred sheep, yield more than 21,000 lbs. of meat, that is to say, a pound and a half for each person, “assuming, according to the statements of those who are acquainted with the matter, that the edible meat of a fat ox amounts to 600 s., that of an ox from the pasture to 400 s., and that of a sheep to 70 s.” (Thenius *ut sup.*). This daily consumption of Solomon’s court will not appear too great, if, on the one hand, we compare it with the quantity consumed at other oriental courts both of ancient and modern

times,¹⁶ and if, on the other hand, we bear in mind that not only the numerous attendants upon the king and his harem, but also the royal adjutants and the large number of officers employed about the court, were supplied from the king’s table, and that their families had also to be fed, inasmuch as the wages in oriental courts are all paid in kind. In addition to this, game was also supplied to the king’s table: viz., אֵיל stags, צִבִּי gazelles, יְחֻמוֹר fallow-deer, and אֲבוּסִים בְּרִבְרִים “fattened fowl.” The meaning of בְּרִבְרִים is doubtful. The earlier translators render it birds or fowl. Kimchi adopts the rendering “capons;” *Tanch. Hieroz.* “geese,” so called from their pure (בָּרָר) white feathers; and both Gesenius and Dietrich (*Lex.*) decide in favour of the latter. The word must denote some special kind of fowl, since edible birds in general were called צִפְּרִים (Neh. 5:18).

1 Kings 4:24, 25. Solomon was able to appropriate all this to his court, because (בִּי) he had dominion, etc.; ... and (v. 25) Israel and Judah enjoyed the blessings of peace during the whole of his reign. $\text{בְּכָל־עֵבֶר הַנְּהָר}$, “over all the other side of the river (Euphrates),” i.e., not the land on the east, but that on the west of the river. This usage of speech is to be explained from the fact that the author of our books, who was living in exile on the other side of the Euphrates, describes the extent of Solomon’s kingdom taking that as his starting-point. Solomon’s power only extended to the Euphrates, from *Tiph-sach* in the north-east to *Gaza* in the south-west. תַּפְּסַח (crossing, from פָּסַח) is *Thapsacus*, a large and wealthy city on the western bank of the Euphrates, at which the armies of the younger Cyrus and Alexander crossed the river (Xen. *Anab.* i. 4; Arrian, *Exped. Alex.* iii. 7). *Gaza*, the southernmost city of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh*; see at Josh. 13:3. The $\text{מְלְכֵי עֵבֶר הַנְּהָר}$ are the kings of Syria who were subjugated by David (2 Sam. 8:6 and 10:19), and of the Philistines (2 Sam. 8:1). “And he had peace on all sides round about.” This

statement does not “most decidedly contradict 1 Kings 11:23ff.,” as Thenius maintains; for it cannot be proved that according to this passage the revolt of Damascus had taken place before Solomon’s reign (Ewald and others; see at 1 Kings 11:23ff.).

1 Kings 4:25. “Judah and Israel sat in safety, every one under his vine and his fig-tree.” This expresses the undisturbed enjoyment of the costly productions of the land (2 Kings 18:31), and is therefore used by the prophets as a figure denoting the happiness of the Messianic age (Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10). “From Dan to Beersheba,” as in Judg. 20:1, etc.

1 Kings 4:26. This verse is not to be regarded “as a parenthesis according to the intention of the editor,” but gives a further proof of the peace and prosperity which the kingdom and people enjoyed under Solomon. Solomon had a strong force of war chariots and cavalry, that he might be able to suppress every attempt on the part of the tributary kings of Syria and Philistia to revolt and disturb the peace. “Solomon had 4000 racks of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 riding horses,” which were kept partly in Jerusalem and partly in cities specially built for the purpose (1 Kings 9:19; 10:26; 2 Chron. 1:14; 9:25). אַרְבַּעִים (40) is an old copyist’s error for אַרְבָּעָה (4), which we find in the parallel passage 2 Chron. 9:25, and as we may also infer from 1 Kings 10:26 and 2 Chron. 1:14, since according to these passages Solomon had 1400 רָכָב or war chariots. For 4000 horses are a very suitable number for 1400 chariots, though not 40,000, since two draught horses were required for every war chariot, and one horse may have been kept as a reserve. אַרְוָה does not mean a team (Ges.), but a rack or box in a stable, from אָרָה, *carpere*. According to Vegetius, i. 56, in Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. p. 112, ed. Ros.), even in ancient times every horse had its own crib in the stable just as it has now. Böttcher (*n. ex. Krit. Aehrenl.* ii. p. 27) is wrong in supposing that there were several horses,

say at least ten, to one rack. מְרָכָב is used collectively for “chariots.”

1 Kings 4:27. “And” = a still further proof of the blessings of peace—“those prefects (vv. 7ff.) provided for king Solomon, and all who came to the king’s table, i.e., who were fed from the royal table, every one his month (see at v. 7), so that nothing was wanting (v. 28), and conveyed the barley (the ordinary food of cattle in Palestine and the southern lands, where oats are not cultivated) and the straw for the horses and coursers to the place where it ought to be. To אֲשֶׁר יְהִיָּה שָׁם the LXX, Vulg., and others supply הַמְלֶכֶת as the subject: wherever *the king* might stay. This is certainly more in harmony with the imperfect יְהִיָּה than it would be to supply הַרְכָּשׁ, as Bochart and others propose; still it is hardly correct. For in that case לְסוּסִים וְלָרָכָב could only be understood as referring to the chariot horses and riding horses, which Solomon kept for the necessities of his court, and not to the whole of the cavalry; since we cannot possibly assume that even if Solomon changed his residence according to the season and to suit his pleasure, or on political grounds, as Thenius supposes, though this cannot by any means be inferred from 1 Kings 9:18 and 19, he took 16,000 horses about with him. But this limitation of the clause is evidently at variance with the context, since לְסוּסִים וְלָרָכָב too plainly refer back to v. 6. Moreover, “if the king were intended, he would certainly have been mentioned by name, as so many other subjects and objects have come between.” For these reasons we agree with Böttcher in taking יְהִיָּה indefinitely: “where it (barley and straw) was wanted, according to the distribution of the horses.” רָכָשׁ probably denotes a very superior kind of horse, like the German *Renner* (a courser or race-horse). אִישׁ כְּמִשְׁפָּטוֹ, every one according to his right, i.e., whatever was appointed for him as right.

1 Kings 4:29–34. Solomon’s Wisdom.—V. 29. According to His promise in 1 Kings 3:12, God

gave Solomon wisdom and very much insight and רָחֵב לֵב, “breadth of heart,” i.e., a comprehensive understanding, as sand by the sea-shore,—a proverbial expression for an innumerable multitude, or great abundance (cf. 1 Kings 4:20, Gen. 41:49, Josh. 11:4, etc.). חֲכָמָה signifies rather practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious and useful course to pursue; תְּבוּנָה, rather keenness of understanding to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems; רָחֵב לֵב, mental capacity to embrace the most diverse departments of knowledge.

1 Kings 4:30. His wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the sons of the East, and all the wisdom of the Egyptians. בְּנֵי קֶדֶם (sons of the East) are generally the Arabian tribes dwelling in the east of Canaan, who spread as far as to the Euphrates (cf. Judg. 6:3, 33; 7:12; 8:10, Job 1:3, Isa. 11:14, etc.). Hence we find אֶרֶץ קֶדֶם used in Gen. 25:6 to denote Arabia in the widest sense, on the east and south-east of Palestine; whereas in Gen. 29:1 אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי קֶדֶם signifies the land beyond the Euphrates, viz., Mesopotamia, and in Num. 23:7, הַרְרֵי קֶדֶם, the mountains of Mesopotamia. Consequently by “the sons of the East” we are to understand here primarily the Arabians, who were celebrated for their gnomic wisdom, more especially the Sabaeans (see at 1 Kings 10), including the Idumaeans, particularly the Temanites (Jer. 49:7; Obad. 8); but also, as לָל requires, the Chaldaeans, who were celebrated both for their astronomy and astrology. “All the wisdom of the Egyptians,” because the wisdom of the Egyptians, which was so greatly renowned as almost to have become proverbial (cf. Isa. 19:11; 31:2, and Acts 7:22; Joseph. Ant. viii. 2, 5; Herod. ii. 160), extended over the most diverse branches of knowledge, such as geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and astrology (Diod. Sic. i. 73 and 81), and as their skill in the preparation of ointments from vegetable and animal sources, and their extensive acquaintance with medicine, clearly prove, embraced natural

science as well, in which Solomon, according to v. 33, was very learned.

1 Kings 4:31. “He was wiser than all men (of his time), than Ethan the Ezrachite and Heman, Chalcol and Darda, the sons of Machol.” These four persons are most probably the same as the “sons of Zerach” (Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Dara) mentioned in 1 Chron. 2:6, since the names perfectly agree, with the exception of דָרָע for דָרְדַע, where the difference is no doubt attributable to a copyist’s error; although, as the name does not occur again, it cannot be decided whether *Dara* or *Darda* is the correct form. *Heman* and *Ethan* are also called Ezrachites (הֶאֱזַרְחִי) in Ps. 88:1 and 89:1; and אֶזְרָחִי is another form of זֶרַחִי, the name of the family of *Zerach* the son of Judah (Num. 26:13, 20), lengthened by א prosthet. But they were both Levites—*Heman* a Korahite of the line of Kohath and a grandson of Samuel (1 Chron. 6:18, 19), and *Ethan* a Merarite (1 Chron. 6:29–32; 15:17) and the president of the Levitical vocal choirs in the time of David (1 Chron. 15:19); and *Heman* was also “the king’s seer in the words of God” (1 Chron. 25:5). Their Levitical descent is not at variance with the epithet Ezrachite. For as the Levite in Judg. 17:7 is spoken of as belonging to the family of Judah, because he dwelt in Bethlehem of Judah, and as Samuel’s father, Elkanah the Levite, is called an Ephraimite in 1 Sam. 1:1, because in his civil capacity he was incorporated into the tribe of Ephraim, so *Heman* and *Ethan* are called Ezrachites because they were incorporated into the Judaeon family of *Zerach*. It by no means follows from 1 Chron. 2:6 that they were lineal descendants of *Zerach*. The whole character of the genealogical fragment contained in 1 Chron. 2:6ff. shows very clearly that it does not give the lineal posterity of *Zerach* with genealogical exactness, but that certain persons and households of that family who had gained historical renown are grouped together without any more precise account of their lineal descent. *Calcol* and *Darda* (or *Dara*) are never met with again. It is no doubt to these two that

the expression מְהוֹלֵי דָבָר refers, though it cannot be determined whether מְהוֹלֵי is a proper name or an appellative noun. In support of the appellative meaning, “sons of the dance,” in the sense of *sacras choreas ducendi periti*, Hiller (in the *Onomast.* p. 872) appeals to Eccles. 12:4, “daughters of song.”—“And his name was,” i.e., he was celebrated, “among all the nations round about” (cf. 1 Kings 10:1, 23, 24).

1 Kings 4:32. “He spoke three thousand proverbs, and there were a thousand and five of his songs.” Of these proverbs we possess a comparatively small portion in the book of Proverbs, probably a selection of the best of his proverbs; but of the songs, besides the Song of Songs, we have only two psalms, viz., Ps. 72 and 127, which have his name, and justly bear it.

1 Kings 4:33. “And he spoke of trees, from the cedar on Lebanon to the hyssop which grows upon the wall.” The cedar and hyssop are placed in antithesis, the former as the largest and most glorious of trees, the latter as the smallest and most insignificant of plants, to embrace the whole of the vegetable kingdom. Thenius maintains that by צִיָּת we are not to understand the true hyssop, nor the *Wohlgemuth* or *Dosten* (ὀρίγανον), according to the ordinary view (see at Ex. 12:22), because they are neither of them such small plants as we should expect in an antithesis to the cedar, but “one of the wall-mosses growing in tufts, more especially the *orthotrichum saxatile* (Oken), which forms a miniature hyssop with its lancet-shaped leaves, and from its extreme minuteness furnishes a perfect antithesis to the cedar.” There is much to favour this view, since we can easily imagine that the Hebrews may have reckoned a moss, which resembled the hyssop in its leaves, as being itself a species of hyssop.—“And of beasts and birds, of creeping things and fishes;” the four principal classes into which the Hebrews divided the animal kingdom. *Speaking* of plants and animals presupposes observations and researches in natural science, or botanical and zoological studies.

1 Kings 4:34. The widespread fame of his wisdom brought many strangers to Jerusalem, and all the more because of its rarity at that time, especially among princes. The coming of the queen of Sheba to Jerusalem (1 Kings 10) furnishes a historical proof of this.¹⁷

1 Kings 5

Preparations for Building the Temple. (Ch. 5:15–32)

1 Kings 5. Immediately after the consolidation of his kingdom, Solomon commenced the preparations for the building of a temple, first of all by entering into negotiations with king Hiram of Tyre, to procure from him not only the building materials requisite, viz., cedars, cypresses, and hewn stones, but also a skilled workman for the artistic work of the temple (vv. 1–12); and, secondly, by causing the number of workmen required for this great work to be raised out of his own kingdom, and sending them to Lebanon to prepare the materials for the building in connection with the Tyrian builders (vv. 13–18).—We have a parallel passage to this in 2 Chron. 2, which agrees with the account before us in all the leading points, but differs in many of the details, omitting several things which were not essential to the main fact, and communicating others which are passed over in our account, e.g., Solomon’s request that a Tyrian workman might be sent. This shows that the two accounts are extracts from a common and more elaborate source, the historical materials being worked up in a free and independent manner according to the particular plan adopted by each of the two authors. (For further remarks on the mutual relation of the two narratives, see my *apologetischer Versuch über die Bücher der Chronik*, pp. 216ff.)

1 Kings 5:1–12. *Solomon’s negotiations with Hiram of Tyre.*—V. 1. When king Hiram of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in the place of David, he sent his servants, i.e., an embassy, to Solomon, to congratulate him (as the Syriac correctly explains) on his ascent of the throne, because he had been a friend of

David the whole time (כָּל־יְהִימִים, i.e., as long as both of them [David and Hiram] were kings). On *Hiram* and the length of his reign, see the remarks on 2 Sam. 5:11. This is passed over in the Chronicles as having no essential bearing upon the building of the temple.

1 Kings 5:2-6. Solomon thereupon communicated to Hiram, by means of an embassy, his intention to carry out the building of the temple which his father projected, and asked him for building wood from Lebanon for the purpose. From the words, "Thou knowest that my father David could not build," etc., it is evident that David had not only been busily occupied for a long time with the plan for building a temple, but that he had already commenced negotiations with Hiram on the matter; and with this 1 Chron. 22:4 agrees. "To the name of Jehovah." this expression is based upon Deut. 12:5 and 11: "the place which the Lord shall choose to put His name there, or that His name may dwell there." The name of Jehovah is the manifestation of the divine nature in a visible sign as a real pledge of His presence (see at 12:5), and not merely *numen Jovae quatenus ab hominibus cognoscitur, colitur, celebratur* (Winer, Thenius). Hence in 2 Sam. 7, to which Solomon refers, בָּנָה לִי בַיִת (vv. 5 and 7) alternates with בָּנָה בַיִת לְשָׂמִי (v. 13). On the obstacle which prevented it, "because of the war, with which they (the enemies) had surrounded me," see at 2 Sam. 7:9ff. On the construction, כָּבַב with a double accusative, compare the very similar passage, Ps. 109:3, which fully establishes the rendering we have given, so that there is no necessity to assume that מִלְחָמָה, war, stands for enemies (Ewald, § 317, b.).

1 Kings 5:4. "And now Jehovah my God has given me rest roundabout," such as David never enjoyed for a permanency (cf. 2 Sam. 7:1). "No adversary is there." This is not at variance with 1 Kings 11:14, for Hadad's enterprise belonged to a later period (see the comm. on that passage). "And no evil occurrence:" such as the rebellions of Absalom and Sheba, the pestilence

at the numbering of the people, and other events which took place in David's reign.

1 Kings 5:5. "Behold, I intend to build." אָמַר followed by an infinitive, as in Ex. 2:14, 2 Sam. 21:16. "As Jehovah spake to David," viz., 2 Sam. 7:12 and 13.

1 Kings 5:6. "And now command that they fell me cedars from Lebanon." We may see from v. 8 that Solomon had also asked for cypresses; and according to the parallel passage 2 Chron. 2:6ff., he had asked for a skilful artist, which is passed over here, so that it is only in 1 Kings 7:13, 14 that we find a supplementary notice that Hiram had sent one. It is evident from this request, that that portion of Lebanon on which the cedars suitable for building wood grew, belonged to the kingdom of Hiram. The cedar forest, which has been celebrated from very ancient times, was situated at least two days' journey to the north of Beirut, near the northernmost and loftiest summits of the range, by the village of *Bjerreh*, to the north of the road which leads to Baalbek and not far to the east of the convent of *Canobin*, the seat of the patriarch of the Maronites, although Seetzen, the American missionaries, and Professor Ehrenberg found cedars and cedar groves in other places on northern Lebanon (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 440, 441, and *Bibl. Res.* pp. 588ff.). The northern frontier of Canaan did not reach as far as *Bjerreh* (see at Num. 34:8, 9). "My servants shall be with thy servants," i.e., shall help them in the felling of the wood (see at vv. 28, 29). "And the wages of thy servants will I give to thee altogether as thou sayest" (see at vv. 25, 26). "For thou knowest that no one among us is skilful in felling trees like the Sidonians." This refers to the knowledge of the most suitable trees, of the right time for felling, and of the proper treatment of the wood. The expression *Sidonians* stands for Phoenicians generally, since Sidon was formerly more powerful than Tyre, and that portion of Lebanon which produced the cedars belonged to the district of Sidon. The inhabitants of Sidon were celebrated from time immemorial as skilful builders, and well versed in mechanical arts (compare Rob.

Pal. iii. 421ff., and *Movers, Phoenizier*, ii. 1, pp. 86ff.).

Hiram rejoiced exceedingly at this proposal on the part of Solomon, and praised Jehovah for having given David so wise a son as his successor (v. 21). It must have been a matter of great importance to the king of Tyre to remain on good terms with Israel, because the land of Israel was a granary for the Phoenicians, and friendship with such a neighbour would necessarily tend greatly to promote the interests of the Phoenician commerce. The praise of Jehovah on the part of Hiram does not presuppose a full recognition of Jehovah as the only true God, but simply that Hiram regarded the God of Israel as being as real a God as his own deities. Hiram expresses a fuller acknowledgment of Jehovah in 2 Chron. 2:11, where he calls Jehovah the Creator of heaven and earth; which may be explained, however, from Hiram's entering into the religious notions of the Israelites, and does not necessarily involve his own personal belief in the true deity of Jehovah.

1 Kings 5:8, 9. Hiram then sent to Solomon, and promised in writing (בְּכֶתֶב, 2 Chron. 2:10) to comply with his wishes. אֵת אֲשֶׁר שְׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי, "that which thou hast sent to me," i.e., hast asked of me by messenger. בְּרוֹשִׁים are not firs, but cypresses. "My servants shall bring down (the trees) from Lebanon to the sea, and I will make them into rafts (i.e., bind them into rafts and have them floated) upon the sea to the place which thou shalt send (word) to me, and will take them (the rafts) to pieces there, and thou wilt take (i.e., fetch them thence)." The Chronicles give *Yafu*, i.e., Joppa, Jaffa, the nearest harbour to Jerusalem on the Mediterranean Sea, as the landing-place (see at Josh. 19:46). "And thou wilt do all my desire to give bread for my house," i.e., provisions to supply the wants of the king's court. "The שֶׁכֶר mentioned in v. 6 was also to be paid" (Thenius). This is quite correct; but Thenius is wrong when he proceeds still further to assert, that the chronicler erroneously supposed this

to refer to the servants of Hiram who were employed in working the wood. There is not a word of this kind in the Chronicles; but simply Solomon's promise to Hiram (v. 9): "with regard to the hewers (the fellers of the trees), I give thy servants wheat 20,000 cors, and barley 20,000 cors, and wine 20,000 baths, and oil 20,000 baths." This is omitted in our account, in which the wages promised in v. 6 to the Sidonian fellers of wood are not more minutely defined. On the other hand, the payment for the wood delivered by Solomon to Hiram, which is not mentioned in the Chronicles, is stated here in v. 11. "Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food (מִכְלֵת, a contraction of מִזְבַּחֵת, from אֶבֶל; cf. Ewald, § 79, b.) for his house (the maintenance of his royal court), and 20 cors of beaten oil; this gave Solomon to Hiram year by year," probably as long as the delivery of the wood or the erection of Solomon's buildings lasted. These two accounts are so clear, that Jac. Capp., Gramt., Mov., Thenius, and Bertheau, who have been led by critical prejudices to confound them with one another, and therefore to attempt to emend the one from the other, are left quite alone. For the circumstance that the quantity of wheat, which Solomon supplied to Hiram for his court, was just the same as that which he gave to the Sidonian workmen, does not warrant our identifying the two accounts. The fellers of the trees also received barley, wine, and oil in considerable quantities; whereas the only other thing which Hiram received for his court was oil, and that not common oil, but the finest olive oil, namely 20 cors of שֶׁמֶן כֹּתִית, i.e., beaten oil, the finest kind of oil, which was obtained from the olives when not quite ripe by pounding them in mortars, and which had not only a whiter colour, but also a purer flavour than the common oil obtained by pressing from the ripe olives (cf. Celsii *Hierobot.* ii. pp. 349f., and Bähr, *Symbolik*, i. p. 419). Twenty cors were 200 baths, i.e., according to the calculations of Thenius, about ten casks (1 cask = 6 pails; 1 pail = 72 cans). If we bear in mind that this was the finest kind of oil, we cannot speak of disproportion to the

quantity of wheat delivered. Thenius reckons that 20,000 cors of wheat were about 38,250 resden *scheffeln* (? sacks).

1 Kings 5:12. The remark that “the Lord gave Solomon wisdom” refers not merely to the treaty which Solomon made with Hiram, through which he obtained materials and skilled workmen for the erection of the house of God (Thenius), but also to the wise use which he made of the capacities of his own subjects for this work. For this verse not only brings to a close the section relating to Solomon’s negotiations with Hiram, but it also forms an introduction to the following verses, in which the intimation given by Solomon in v. 6, concerning the labourers who were to fell wood upon Lebanon in company with Hiram’s men, is more minutely defined.

1 Kings 5:13–18. *The tributary labourers out of Israel.*—Vv. 13, 14. Solomon raised a tribute (מַס, tribute-labourers, as in 1 Kings 4:6) out of all Israel, i.e., out of the whole nation (not “out of the whole territory of Israel,” as Ewald supposes), 30,000 men, and sent them up to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in rotation; one month they were on Lebanon (doing tribute work), two months at home (looking after the cultivation of their own ground). וַיַּעַל, from הֶעָלָה, does not mean *in tabulas referre*, in support of which appeal is made to 1 Chron. 27:24, though on insufficient ground, but *ascendere fecit*, corresponding to the German *ausheben* (to raise). He raised them out of the nation, to send the up Lebanon (cf. 1 Kings 9:25). These 30,000 Israelitish labourers must be distinguished from the remnants of the Canaanites who were made into tribute-slaves (v. 15 and 1 Kings 9:20). The latter are called מַס עֲבָד, tribute-slaves, in 1 Kings 9:21 as in Josh. 16:10. That the Israelites were not to render the service of bondsmen is evident from the fact, that they only rendered tribute for four months of the year, and were at home for eight months; and the use of the epithet מַס is not at variance with this. For even if this word is applied elsewhere to the Canaanitish bondsmen

(e.g., Josh. 17:13, Judg. 1:28, 30, and 2 Chron. 8:8), a distinction is decidedly made in our account of Solomon between מַס and מַס עֲבָד, inasmuch as in 1 Kings 9:22, after the Canaanitish bondsmen have been mentioned, it is expressly stated that “of Israel Solomon made no one a slave” (עֲבָד). The 30,000 Israelitish tribute-servants are “to be thought of as free Israelites, who simply performed the less severe work of felling trees in fellowship with and under the direction of the subjects of Hiram (see at v. 6), according to the command of the king, and probably not even that without remuneration” (Thenius). For *Adoniram* see at 1 Kings 4:6.

1 Kings 5:15. And Solomon had 70,000 bearers of burdens and 80,000 hewers of stone on the mountains (of Lebanon). חֹצֵב is understood by the older translators as referring simply to hewers of stone. This is favoured both by the context, since v. 18 speaks of stone-mason’s work, and also by the usage of the language, inasmuch as חֹצֵב is mostly applied to the quarrying and cutting of stones (Deut. 6:11; Isa. 5:2; Prov. 9:1; 2 Kings 12:13), and only occurs in Isa. 10:15 in connection with the cutting of wood. The hewing and preparing of the wood were amply provided for by 30,000 Israelites. That the 150,000 bearers of burdens and hewers of stone were not taken from the Israelites, is evident from the fact that they are distinguished from the latter, or at all events are not described as Israelites. We obtain certainty on this point from the parallel passages, 1 Kings 9:20, 21, 2 Chron. 2:16, 17, and 2 Chron. 8:1–9, according to which Solomon pressed the Canaanites who were left in the land to this bond-service.

1 Kings 5:16. “Beside (לְבַד), i.e., without reckoning, the princes, Solomon’s officers, who were over the work (i.e., the chiefs appointed by Solomon as overlookers of the work), 3300, who ruled over the people who laboured at the work.” שָׂרֵי הַנְּצִבִים, as Thenius correctly observes, cannot be the chief of the

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overlookers, i.e., the head inspectors, as there is no allusion made to subordinate inspectors, and the number given is much too large for head inspectors. שָׂרֵי הַנְּצָבִים, which is governed by שָׂרֵי in the construct state, is to be taken as defining the substantive: *principes qui praefecti erant* (Vatabl.; cf. Ewald, § 287, a.). Moreover, at the close of the account of the whole of Solomon's buildings (1 Kings 9:23), 550 more שָׂרֵי הַנְּצָבִים are mentioned as presiding over the people who did the work. The accounts in the Chronicles differ from these in a very peculiar manner, the number of overseers being given in 2 Chron. 2:17 and 3600, and in 2 Chron. 8:10 as 250. Now, however natural it may be, with the multiplicity of errors occurring in numerical statements, to assume that these differences have arisen from copyists' errors through the confounding together of numerical letters resembling one another, this explanation is overthrown as an improbable one, by the fact that the sum-total of the overseers is the same in both accounts (3300 + 550 = 3850 in the books of Kings, and 3600 + 250 = 3850 in the Chronicles); and we must therefore follow J. H. Michaelis, and explain the differences as resulting from a different method of classification, namely, from the fact that in the Chronicles the Canaanitish overseers are distinguished from the Israelitish (viz., 3600 Canaanites and 250 Israelites), whereas in the books of Kings the *inferiores et superiores praefecti* are distinguished. Consequently Solomon had 3300 inferior overseers and 550 superior (or superintendents), of whom 250 were selected from the Israelites and 300 from the Canaanites. In 2 Chron. 2:16, 17, it is expressly stated that the 3600 were taken from the גָּרִים, i.e., the Canaanites who were left in the land of Israel. And it is equally certain that the number given in 1 Kings 9:23 and 2 Chron. 8:10 (550 and 250) simply comprises the superintendents over the whole body of builders, notwithstanding the fact that in both passages (1 Kings 5:16 and 1 Kings 9:23) the same epithet שָׂרֵי הַנְּצָבִים is used. If, then, the number of overseers is given in 1 Kings 9:23

and 550, i.e., 300 more than in the parallel passage of the Chronicles, there can hardly be any doubt that the number 550 includes the 300, in which the number given in our chapter falls short of that in the Chronicles, and that in the 3300 of our chapter the superintendents of Canaanitish descent are not included.¹⁸

1 Kings 5:17. And the king had large, costly stones broken, "to lay the foundation of the house with hewn stones." יְקָרוֹת does not mean heavy (Thenius), for this would be a perfectly superfluous remark, inasmuch as large stones are always heavy, but costly, valuable stones, *qui multa pecunia constabant* (Cler.); compare 1 Kings 10:2, where the word

1 Kings 6

Building of the Temple (Ch. 6)

1 Kings 6. The account of the building of the temple commences with a statement of the date of the building (v. 1); and this is followed by a description of the plan and size of the temple-house (vv. 2–10), to which there is also appended the divine promise made to Solomon during the erection of the building (vv. 11–13). After this we have a further account of the internal fittings and decorations of the sanctuary (vv. 14–36), and in 1 Kings 7:1–12 a description of the royal palace which was built after the temple; and, finally, a description of the pillars of the court which were executed in metal by the Tyrian artist, and of the different vessels of the temple (1 Kings 7:13–51).²⁰ We have a parallel to this in 2 Chron. 3 and 4, though here the description is differently arranged. In the Chronicles the external building of the temple-house is not separated from the internal decoration and furnishing; but after the period of erection and the size of the temple-house have been given in 2 Chron. 3:1–3, there follows a description, *a.* of the court (v. 4); *b.* of the Holy Place with its internal decorations (vv. 5–7); *c.* of the most Holy Place, with special reference to its size and decorations, also of the colossal cherubim placed therein and the curtain in front of it, which is not mentioned in our account (vv. 8–

14); *d.* of the brazen pillars in front of the court (vv. 15–17); *e.* of the altar of burnt-offering (2 Chron. 4:1), which is passed over in the account before us; *f.* of the brazen sea (vv. 2–5); *g.* of the brazen lavers, the golden candlesticks, the tables of shewbread, and the golden basons (vv. 6–8); and *h.* of the courts (v. 9). The account is then closed with a summary enumeration of the different vessels of the temple (vv. 10–22), which agrees almost word for word with 1 Kings 7:40–50.

1 Kings 6:1–10. The Outside of the Building.—V. 1. The building of the temple, a fixed and splendid house of Jehovah as the dwelling-place of His name in the midst of His people, formed an important epoch so far as the Old Testament kingdom of God was concerned, inasmuch as, according to the declaration of God made through the prophet Nathan, an end would thereby be put to the provisional condition of the people of Israel in the land of Canaan, since the temple was to become a substantial pledge of the permanent possession of the inheritance promised by the Lord. The importance of this epoch is indicated by the fact, that the time when the temple was built is defined not merely in relation to the year of Solomon's reign, but also in relation to the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt. "In the 480th year after the exodus of the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the second month of the year, Solomon built the house of the Lord." The correctness of the number 480, as contrasted with the 440th year of the LXX and the different statements made by Josephus, is now pretty generally admitted; and we have already proved at Judg. 3:7 that it agrees with the duration of the period of the Judges when rightly estimated.²¹ The name of the month *Ziv*, brilliancy, splendour, probably so called from the splendour of the flowers, is explained by the clause, "that is, the second month," because the months had no fixed names before the captivity, and received different names after the captivity. The second month was called *Jyar* after the captivity.—The place where the temple was built is not given in our account, as having been sufficiently well

known; though it is given in the parallel text, 2 Chron. 3:1, namely, "Mount *Moriah*, where the Lord had appeared to David" at the time of the pestilence, and where David had built an altar of burnt-offering by divine command (see at 2 Sam. 24:25).

1 Kings 6:2–4. *Plan and dimensions of the temple-house.*—The measure of the temple-house and its several subdivisions are all given in the clear, i.e., as the spaces were seen. The *house*, i.e., the main building of the temple (lit., as for the house, or shell of the building), its length was sixty cubits, its breadth twenty cubits, and its height thirty cubits, and that, according to 2 Chron. 3:3, "after the earlier measure," i.e., after the old Mosaic or sacred cubit, which was a hand-breadth longer, according to Ezek. 40:5 and 43:13, than the civil cubit of the time of the captivity. The Mosaic cubit, according to the investigations of Thenius, was 214,512 Parisian lines long, i.e., 20 1/2 resden inches, or 18 1/2 Rhenish inches (see at Gen. 6:10).

1 Kings 6:3. The *porch* (lit., *hall*) in the face of (עַל-פָּנָי, i.e., before) the Holy Place of the house was twenty cubits long, before (עַל-פָּנָי) the breadth of the house, i.e., it was just the same breadth as the house. The longer line, which ran parallel to the breadth of the house, is called here אַרְבָּעֵי, the length, though from our point of view we should call it the width. And ten cubits was its breadth, i.e., its depth in front of the house. The height of the court is not given in our text; but in 2 Chron. 3:4 it is said to have been 120 cubits. This is certainly an error, although Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 300) still joins with Stieglitz (*Baukunst*, p. 126, and *Beitrr. zur Gesch. der Bauk.* i. p. 70) in defending its correctness. For an erection of such a height as this could not possibly have been designated as אֹרְחַם (a hall or porch), but would have been called מִגְדָּל, a *tower*. But even a tower of 120 cubits in height in front of a temple which was only thirty cubits high, would have shown a greater disproportion than our loftiest church towers;²² and such a funnel-like erection with a

base of only ten cubits in breadth or depth would hardly have possessed sufficient stability. We cannot certainly think of an intentional exaggeration of the height in the Chronicles, since the other measures agree with the account before us; but the assumption that there has been a corruption of the text is rendered natural enough by many other errors in the numerical statements. This still leaves it undecided whether the true height was twenty or thirty cubits; for whereas the Syriac, Arabic, and LXX (Cod. Al.) have twenty cubits, the height of thirty cubits is favoured partly by the omission of any statement of the height from our text, which is much easier to explain if the porch was of the same height as the temple-house than if the heights were different, and partly by the circumstance that the side building had an external height of twenty cubits, and therefore the porch would not have stood out with any especial prominence if its elevation had been just the same.

1 Kings 6:4. After the account of the proportionate spaces in the temple-house, the windows through which it received light and air are mentioned. חֲלוֹנֵי שְׁקָפִים אֲטָמִים does not mean *fenestras intus latae, foris angustae* (Chald., Ar., Rabb., Luther, and others), but windows with closed beams, i.e., windows the lattice-work of which could not be opened and closed at pleasure, as in ordinary dwelling-houses (2 Kings 13:17; Dan. 6:11). For שְׁקָפִים signifies beams overlaid in 1 Kings 7:4, and שְׁקָרִים beams in 1 Kings 7:5. The opening of the windows was probably narrower without than within, as in the older Egyptian buildings, as the walls were very strong; and in that case such windows would more thoroughly answer their purpose, viz., to admit light and air, and let out the smoke, so that the interpretation given by the Chaldee is most likely founded upon an ancient tradition, and is in accordance with the fact, though not with the words. It is a disputed point among the commentators where the windows were placed: whether merely in the front over the porch, provided, that is to say, that this was ten cubits lower than the temple-

house, or on the side walls above the side stories, which were at the most about twenty cubits high, in which case the Most Holy Place, which was only twenty cubits high, remained quite dark, according to 1 Kings 8:12. We regard the latter view as the correct one, inasmuch as the objections to it rest upon assumptions which can be proved to be false.

1 Kings 6:5-8. The side building.—V. 5. “He built against the wall of the house an outwork round about (i.e., against the two longer sides and against the hinder wall, and not against the front also, where the porch was built), against the walls of the house round about, against the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, and he made side chambers round about.” יִצְוֶה (written constantly יִצְוֶה in the *Keri*) signifies literally *stratum*, here the lower building or outwork erected against the rooms mentioned. The word is *gen. comm.*, but so construed that the masculine is used in a collective sense to denote the whole of the outworks, consisting as they did of three stories, whereas the feminine is used for one single story of the building (v. 6). On this use of the masculine and feminine genders to distinguish the whole mass and the individual parts, which is very common in Arabic, though it is rare in Hebrew, in which the distinction is generally expressed by a peculiar feminine form. as for example אֲנִי a fleet, and אֲנִיָּה a single ship, compare Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Spr.* § 175, *d.*, and 176, *a.*, and *gramm. crit. ling. arab.* i. § 295. אֶת־קִירוֹת does not mean *cum parietibus* (Seb. Schmidt and J. H. Michaelis), but אֶת is a sign of the accusative, “as for the walls,” and introduces the more precise definition. צְלָעוֹת signifies, both here and in Ezek. 41:6ff., side chambers or side stories, from צָלַע, to incline to one side, hence to limp, i.e., to lean constantly to one side. From this there were derived for צָלַע the meanings side, side piece or side wall, e.g., of the ark, Ex. 25:12, 14, etc., of the dwelling, Ex. 26:20, 26, etc., of the altar, Ex. 27:7, 30, etc., the side wall or slope of a mountain, 2 Sam. 16:13, the side portion of

the human body, i.e., the rib, Gen. 2:21, 22, the sides or leaves of a door in v. 34 of the present chapter, and when used of buildings, the side pieces or portions built out which lean against the main building; and lastly, the idea of a piece which shows a large side, i.e., a broad plank (1 Kings 6:15, 16). The meaning planks or beams, as it were ribs or rib-work, is unfounded.

1 Kings 6:6. The (internal) breadth of the lower side story was five cubits, that of the middle one six, and that of the third seven cubits; “for he (they) had made shortenings (i.e., rebates) against the house round about on the outside, that (there might be) no insertion into the walls of the (temple-) house.” The meaning is that rebates were attached against the temple wall, at the point where the lower beams of the different side stories were to be placed, so that the heads of these beams rested upon the rebates and were not inserted in the actual wall of the temple-house. These rebates are called very descriptively *מִגְרָעוֹת*, deductions or contractions of the thickness of the wall. We may assume that there were four such rebates: three for the three floors of the side stories, and one for the roof. It still remains doubtful, however, whether these rebates were merely laid along the temple wall, or along the outer wall of the side building as well, so as to ensure symmetry and make each of the two walls half a cubit thinner or weaker at every rebate. The former is the more probable. And accordingly the temple wall was one cubit weaker at each rebate, that is to say, in four places. If, therefore, it still remained two cubits thick at the top, it must have been six cubits thick below. This extraordinary thickness, however, would be quite in keeping with the remains of buildings of great antiquity, the walls of which have generally a colossal thickness, and also with the size of the square stones of which the wall was constructed, as described in 1 Kings 7:10.

1 Kings 6:7. V. 7 contains a circumstantial clause, inserted as an explanation of v. 6: “The house, (namely) when building, was built of perfectly finished stones of the quarry, and hammer and axe; no kind of instrument

whatever was heard at the house when it was building.” *אֲבָן שְׁלֵמָה מִסָּע* (on the construction see Ges. § 114, 1, Erl., and Ewald, § 339, b.) does not mean stones quite unhewn, which God had so caused to grow that they did not require to be hewn (Theodoret); for although *אֲבָנִים שְׁלֵמוֹת* is used in Deut. 27:6 (compare with Ex. 20:25) to signify uninjured, i.e., unhewn stones, yet this meaning is precluded here by the context (cf. 5:32). *שְׁלֵם* signifies finished here, that is to say, stones which were so perfectly tooled and prepared when first broken in the quarry, that when the temple walls were built no iron instruments were required to prepare them any further. *גִּרְזֵן*, an axe, here a stone-mason’s cutting tool corresponding to the axe.—In v. 8 the description of the side building is continued. “A door (*פֶּתַח*, a opening for the entrance) to the middle side chamber (of the lower story) was on the right side (the southern side) of the house, and a winding staircase led up into the middle (room of the middle story) and out of the middle into the third rooms,” i.e., the rooms of the third story. This is the rendering according to the Masoretic text; and the only thing that appears strange is the use of *הַתִּיכְנָה* first of all for the middle room of the lower story and then for the middle story; and the conjecture is a very natural one, that the first *הַתִּיכְנָה* may have been an error of the pen for *הַתְּחִתָּנָה*, in which case *הַצֵּלַע* does not signify the side room, but is used in a collective sense for the row of side rooms in one story, as in Ezek. 41:5, 9, 11. That this door was made from the outside, i.e., in the outer wall of the side building, and did not lead into the side rooms “from the interior of the Holy Place,” would hardly need a remark, if Böttcher (*Proben alttestl. Schriffterkl.* p. 339) and Schnaase (*Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, Bd. 1) had not really supported this view, which is so thoroughly irreconcilable with the dignity of the sanctuary.²³ The only question is, whether it was made in the middle of the right side or in the front by the side of the porch. If the

Masoretic text is correct, there is no doubt about the former. But if we read הַתְּהִתָּנָה, the text leaves the question undecided. The winding staircase was not constructed in the outer wall itself, because this was not thick enough for the purpose, and the text states pretty clearly that it led from the lower story into the middle one, and thence still higher, so that it was in the centre of the building.

1 Kings 6:9, 10. In vv. 9 and 10 the description of the exterior of the temple building is brought to a close. "So he built the house, and finished it, and covered the house with beams and boards of cedar." וַיִּסְפֵּן is not to be understood as relating to the internal panelling of the temple-house, for this is spoken of first in the section which follows (v. 15), but to the roofing; סָפַן means to conceal (Deut. 33:21) and cover in all the other passages, even in Hag. 1:4 and Jer. 22:14, where סָפַן is generally, though incorrectly, translated "panelled." As a verb signifying clothing, it is construed with the accusative. גְּבִים does not mean boards, but beams, though not "an arched covering" (Thenius), because beams cut in the form of an arch would have been too weak in the middle, nor yet rafters (Böttcher), because the roofs of oriental buildings are flat. שְׂדֵרֹת בְּאַרְזִים, "rows, i.e., tablets (consisting) of cedars," i.e., cedar tablets, which were inserted in rows between the beams. This cedar-work was certainly provided with a strong covering to protect the roof and the building itself against rain; and at the sides it had no doubt a parapet, as in the case of dwelling-houses (Deut. 22:8).

1 Kings 6:10. "And he built the outbuildings to the whole house (i.e., all round the temple-house, with the exception of the front: see v. 5); five cubits was its height," i.e., the height of each story, the suffix in קוֹמָתוֹ being made to agree with הַיְצוּעַ through an inaccuracy which has arisen from condensation, although, as in v. 5, it denotes the whole of the side buildings, which consisted of three stories. The height given must also be understood as referring to the

height within. Consequently the side buildings had an internal height of 3 × 5 cubits, and reckoning the floorings and the roof of the whole building an external height of 18 or 20 cubits; so that the temple-house, which was thirty cubits high within and about thirty-two without, rose about twelve or fourteen cubits above the side building, and there was plenty of room for the windows in the side walls. וַיִּאָהֶז וַיִּגַּר: "and it (the side building) held to the house with cedar beams." The meaning is, that the building was fastened to the house by the joists of the cedar beams belonging to the different stories, which rested upon rebates of the temple wall, so that it was firmly attached to the temple-house, without any injurious insertions into the sanctuary itself. This is apparently the only explanation, that can be grammatically sustained, of words that have received such different interpretations. For the translation given by Thenius, which coincides with this,—viz., "he fastened it (each separate story of the building) to the temple-house with cedar wood, namely, with the cedar beams which formed the flooring and roofing of the three stores,"—is exposed to this grammatical objection, that the suffix is wanting in וַיִּאָהֶז, and that וַיִּאָהֶז is never followed by וַיִּאָהֶז in the sense of *with*. All the other explanations are unsuitable. וַיִּאָהֶז signifies neither "he covered the house" (Chald., Vulg., Luther), nor "he overlaid the house;" moreover, the roofing of the house has been already mentioned in v. 9, and there is no trace to be found of any overlaying or covering of the outside with cedar wood.

If, therefore, we reckon the thickness of the temple wall at six cubits, and that of the outer wall of the side building and the front wall of the porch at three cubits each, the whole building would be ninety-three cubits long (externally) and forty-eight cubits broad. The height of the temple-house was about thirty-two cubits externally, and that of the side stories from eighteen to twenty cubits, without the socle upon which the whole building rested. This is not mentioned indeed, as being a

subordinate matter, but would certainly not be omitted.²⁴ The number of rooms in the side buildings is not given, but may be set down at thirty in each story, if their length corresponded to their breadth in the lower story. These rooms had of course windows, although they are not mentioned in the account, but each one would have only a small window sufficient to give it the requisite light. And as to the number of the temple windows also, we can simply make conjectures. We can hardly assume that there were more than six on each side, and there were probably none at the back.

1 Kings 6:11–13. Promise of God during the Building of the Temple.—In what way this promise was communicated to Solomon is not more precisely stated. But the expression “And the word of Jehovah came” seems to point to a prophetic medium. And this is in harmony with 1 Kings 9:2, according to which Jehovah only revealed Himself to Solomon twice by an actual appearance.

1 Kings 6:12. הַבַּיִת וגו' is placed at the head absolutely: “As for the house which thou art building (בְּנֵה, a participle), if thou walkest in my statutes, ... I will set up my word, which I spake to thy father David.” The reference is to the promise in 2 Sam. 7:12ff. of the everlasting establishment of this throne. God would fulfil this for Solomon if he would walk in the commandments of the Lord, as his father had already urged upon him when he handed over the kingdom (1 Kings 2:3). The promise in v. 13, “I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel,” does not contain a second promise added to the one given in 2 Sam. 7:12ff., but simply a special application of it to the building of the temple which had already been commenced. The eternal establishment of the throne of David involved the dwelling of God among His people, or rather is founded upon it. This dwelling of God is now to receive a new and lasting realization. The temple is to be a pledge that the Lord will maintain for His people His covenant of grace and His gracious presence. In this respect the promised, “I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel, and

not forsake my people Israel,” is a confirmation of the word which Jehovah had spoken to David, although, so far as the actual words are concerned, it is more closely connected with Lev. 26:11, when the highest blessing attendant upon the faithful observance of the commandments of God is summed up in the promise, “I will make my abode among you, and my soul will not despise you.”

1 Kings 6:14–35. The Internal Arrangements of the Temple-House.—Vv. 14–22. *Internal covering of the house, and division into Holy and Most Holy.*—V. 14 (cf. v. 9) resumes the description of the building of the temple, which had been interrupted by the divine promise just communicated.

1 Kings 6:15. “He built (i.e., so far as the sense is concerned, he covered) the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the walls of the ceiling he overlaid it with wood within, and overlaid the floor with cypress boards.” The expression קִירוֹת הַסֵּפֶן, “walls of the ceiling,” is very striking here, and renders it probable that קִירוֹת is only a copyist’s error for קוֹרוֹת, “beams of the ceiling.” The whole of the inside of the house was covered with wood, so that nothing was to be seen of the stone wall (v. 18). On the other hand, the biblical text knows nothing of any covering of the outer walls also with wood, as many have assumed.

1 Kings 6:16, 17. “And he built אֶת־עֲשָׂרִים אַמָּה, the twenty cubits (i.e., the space of twenty cubits), of the hindermost side of the house with boards of cedar,” from the floor to the beams (of the roof). עַד־הַקִּירוֹת is to be explained from עַד קִירוֹת הַסֵּפֶן in v. 15. “And built them for it (the house—לוֹ pointing back to הַבַּיִת) into the hinder room, into the Most Holy.” דְּבַיִר is more precisely defined by the apposition הַקֹּדֶשִׁים, and therefore denotes the Most Holy Place. But there is a doubt as to its derivation and true meaning. Aquila and Symmachus render it χρηματιστήριον, Jerome λαλητήριον, or in the

Vulg. *oraculum*, so that they derive it from דָּבַר, to speak; and Hengstenberg adopts this derivation in Ps. 28:2: דָּבִיר, lit., that which is spoken, then the place where the speaking takes place. Most of the more recent commentators, on the other hand, follow the example of C. B. Michaelis and J. Simonis, and render it, after the Arabic, the hinder portion or back room, which is favoured by the antithesis הַיִּכְלֵל לְפָנָי, the front sanctuary (v. 17). The words of the text, moreover, are not to be understood as referring to a cedar wall in front of the Most Holy Place which rose to the height of twenty cubits, but to all four walls of the Most Holy Place, so that the wall which divided the hinder room from the Holy Place is not expressly mentioned, simply because it is self-evident. The words also imply that the *whole* of the hinder space of the house to the length of twenty cubits was cut off for the Most Holy Place, and therefore the party wall must also have filled the whole height of the house, which was as much as thirty cubits, and reached, as is expressly stated, from the floor to the roof. There remained therefore forty cubits of the house (in length) for הַיִּכְלֵל לְפָנָי, the front palace, i.e., the Holy Place of the temple (v. 17). לְפָנָי, *anterior*, formed from לָפָנָי (cf. Ewald, § 164, a.).—In v. 18 there is inserted in a circumstantial clause the statement as to the internal decoration of both rooms; and the further description of the Most Holy Place is given in vv. 19ff. “And cedar wood was (placed) against the house inside, sculpture of gourds (*colocynthides*) and open buds.” מְקֻלְעוֹת is in apposition to אֲרָז, containing a more minute description of the nature of the covering of cedar. מְקֻלְעוֹת signifies sculpture, half-raised work (*basso relievo*); not, however, “that kind of bas-relief in which the figures, instead of rising above the surface on which they are wrought, are simply separated from it by the chiselling out of their outlines, and their being then rounded off according to these outlines” (Thenius). For although the expression פְּתוּחֵי

מְקֻלְעוֹת (v. 29) appears to favour this, yet “merely engraved work” does not harmonize with the decorations of the brazen stands in 1 Kings 7:31, which are also called מְקֻלְעוֹת פְּקָעִים are figures resembling the פְּקָעוֹת, or wild gourds (2 Kings 4:39), i.e., oval ornaments, probably running in straight rows along the walls. פְּתוּחֵי צְצִים are open flower-buds; not hangings or garlands of flowers (Thenius), for this meaning cannot be derived from פָּטַר in the sense of loosening or setting free, so as to signify flowers loosened or set free (= garlands), which would be a marvellous expression! The objection that, “according to Num. 17:23, flowers not yet opened, i.e., flower-buds, were not פְּתוּחֵי, but פְּרָחִים,” rests upon a false interpretation of the passage referred to.

1 Kings 6:19. “And (= namely) he prepared a hinder room in the house within, to place the ark of the covenant of Jehovah there.” תָּתִין, as 1 Kings 17:14 shows, is not a future (*ut reponeres*), but the infinitive תִּת with a repeated syllable תִּן (see Ewald, § 238, c.).

1 Kings 6:20. “And the interior of the hinder room was twenty cubits the length, twenty cubits the breadth, and twenty cubits its height.” The word לְפָנָי I agree with Kimchi in regarding as the construct state of the noun לְפָנָי, which occurs again in v. 29 in the sense of the inner part or interior, as is evident from the antithesis לְחִיצוֹן (on the outside). “And he overlaid it with fine gold.” זָהָב סָגוּר (= סָגוּר in Job 28:15) unquestionably signifies fine or costly gold, although the derivation of this meaning is still questionable; viz., whether it is derived from סָגַר in the sense of to shut up, i.e., gold shut up or carefully preserved, after the analogy of כְּתָם; or is used in the sense of taking out or selecting, i.e., gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, i.e., gold selected or pure; or in the sense of closed, i.e., gold condensed or

unadulterated (Fürst and Delitzsch on Job 28:15).

The Most Holy Place had therefore the form of a perfect cube in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, only on an enlarged scale. Now, as the internal elevation of the house, i.e., of the whole of the temple-house, the hinder portion of which formed the Most Holy Place, was thirty cubits, there was a space of about ten cubits in height above the Most Holy Place and below the roof of the temple-house for the upper rooms mentioned in 2 Chron. 3:9, on the nature and purpose of which nothing is said in the two accounts.²⁵ "And he overlaid (clothed) the altar with cedar wood." There is something very striking in the allusion to the altar in this passage, since the verse itself treats simply of the Most Holy Place; and still more striking is the expression *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לְדָבִיר*, "the altar belonging to the *Debir*," in v. 22, since there was no altar in the Most Holy Place. We cannot remove the strangeness of these sentences by such alterations as Thenius and Böttcher propose, because the alterations suggested are much too complicated to appear admissible. The allusion to the altar in both these verses is rather to be explained from the statements in the Pentateuch as to the position of the altar of incense; viz., Ex. 30:6, "Thou shalt place it before the curtain, which is above the ark of the testimony before the capporeth over the testimony;" and Ex. 40:5, "before the ark of the testimony;" whereby this altar, although actually standing "before the inner curtain," i.e., in the Holy Place, according to Ex. 40:26, was placed in a closer relation to the Most Holy Place than the other two things which were in the Holy Place. The clothing of the altar with cedar presupposes that it had a heart of stone; and the omission of the article before *מִזְבֵּחַ* may be explained on the ground that it is mentioned here for the first time, just as in v. 16, where *דָּבִיר* was first mentioned, it had no article.

1 Kings 6:21. To the gilding of the Most Holy Place, and the allusion to the altar of incense, which in a certain sense belonged to it, there is

now appended in v. 21 the gilding of the Holy Place. "Solomon overlaid the house from within with fine gold." *מִפְּנֵימָה הַבַּיִת* cannot be the party wall between the Holy Place and the Most Holy, as I formerly supposed, but is the Holy Place as distinguished from the Most Holy. The following words *וַיַּעֲבֵר וְגו'* are very obscure. If we rendered them, "he caused to pass over in (with) golden chains before the hinder room," we could only think of an ornament consisting of golden chains, which ran along the wall in front of the hinder room and above the folding doors. But this would be very singularly expressed. We must therefore take *עָבַר*, as Gesenius, de Wette, and many of the earlier commentators do, according to the Chaldaean usage in the sense of bolting or fastening: "he bolted (fastened) with golden chains before the hinder room;" and must assume with Merz and others that the doors into the Most Holy Place (except on the day of atonement) were closed and fastened with golden chains, which were stretched across the whole breadth of the door and stood out against the wall.²⁶—The following expression, *וַיִּצְפֹּהוּ זָהָב*, "and he overlaid it with gold," can only refer to the altar mentioned in the previous verse, the gilding of which has not yet been noticed, however surprising the separation of these words from v. 20 may be.—In v. 22 what has already been stated with regard to the gilding is repeated once more in a comprehensive manner, which brings this subject to a close. The whole house (*כָּל-הַבַּיִת*) is the Holy Place and the Most Holy, but not the porch or hall, as this is expressly distinguished from the house. *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ*, the whole altar, not merely a portion of it.

1 Kings 6:23–28. *The large cherub-figures in the Most Holy Place.*—V. 23. He made (caused to be made) in the hinder room two cherubs of olive wood, i.e., wood of the *oleaster* or wild olive-tree, which is very firm and durable, and, according to 2 Chron. 3:10, *מִטְעֵשֶׁה צִטְעָעִים*, i.e., according to the Vulgate, *opus statuarium*, a peculiar kind of sculpture, which cannot be

more precisely defined, as the meaning of צינע is uncertain. "Ten cubits was the height of it" (i.e., of the one and of the other). The figures had a human form, like the golden cherubs upon the ark of the covenant, and stood upright upon their feet (2 Chron. 3:13), with extended wings of five cubits in length, so that one wing of the one reached to one wing of the other in the centre of the room, and the other wing of each reached to the opposite wall, and consequently the four extended wings filled the entire breadth of the Most Holy Place (a breadth of twenty cubits), and the two cherubs stood opposite to one another and ten cubits apart. The wings were evidently fastened to the back and placed close to one another upon the shoulder-blades, so that the small space between their starting-points is not taken into consideration in the calculation of their length. The figures were completely overlaid with gold. The ark of the covenant was placed between these cherubs, and under the wings which pointed towards one another. As they were made like those upon the ark, they had evidently the same meaning, and simply served to strengthen the idea which was symbolized in the cherub, and which we have expounded in the Commentary on Ex. 25:20ff. Only their faces were not turned towards one another and bent down towards the ark, as in the case of the golden cherubim of the ark; but, according to 2 Chron. 3:13, they were turned לְבַיִת, towards the house, i.e., the Holy Place, so as to allow of the extension of the wings along the full length of the Most Holy Place.

1 Kings 6:29–35. *Ornaments of the walls; the floors and doors.*—V. 29. All the walls of the house (the Holy Place and the Most Holy) round about (מִסָּבִיב, adverb) he made engraved work (carving) of cherubs, palms, and open flowers from within to the outside (i.e., in the Most Holy as well as in the Holy Place). אֵל ... מִן ... וְלִ ... מִן; and לְפָנֶימָה as in v. 20. This completes the account of the nature of the covering of wood. In addition to the oval figures and open flowers (v. 18), there were also figures of cherubim and

palm-trees carved in the wooden panels. Nothing is said as to the distribution of these figures. But a comparison with Ezek. 41:18 shows at any rate so much, that the palm-trees alternated with the cherubs, so that there was always one cherub standing between two palm-trees. The gourd-shaped figures and the open flowers probably formed the upper and lower setting of the rows of palms and cherubs, the flowers hanging in the form of garlands above the palms and cherubs, and the rows of gourds arranged in bars constituting the boundary lines both above and below. It is a disputed question whether there was only one row of palms and cherubs running round the walls, or whether there were two, or possibly even three. There is more probability in the second or third of these assumptions than in the first, inasmuch as on the walls of the Egyptian temples there were often three or four rows of mythological characters in relief arranged one above another (compare my work on the Temple, pp. 70ff.).

1 Kings 6:30. The floor of the house he overlaid with gold within and without, i.e., in the Most Holy Place and in the Holy Place also.

1 Kings 6:31, 32. He made the entrance to the back room, doors (i.e., consisting of doors; cf. Ewald, § 284, a, β) of olive wood, which moved, according to 1 Kings 7:50, on golden hinges.

הָאֵיל וְגַרְגָּרָה, "the projection of the door-posts was fifth" (מִזְוֹזֹת) is construed freely as an

explanatory apposition to הָאֵיל, to which it is really subordinate; cf. Ewald, § 290, e.). These obscure words, which have been interpreted in very different ways (see Ges. *Thes.* pp. 43f.), can hardly have any other meaning than this: the projecting framework of the doors occupied the fifth part of the breadth of the wall. For the explanation given by Böttcher and Thenius, "the entrance framework with posts of fifth strength," has no real support in Ezek. 41:3. To justify the rendering given to הַמְשִׁיית (fifth strength), הָאֵיל is supplied, though not in the sense of projection, but in the thoroughly unwarranted sense of strength or thickness of the wall; and in addition to this, a wall two

cubits thick is postulated between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, in direct contradiction to v. 16. The further evidence, which Thenius finds in 1 Kings 8:8, in support of this explanation, has been already rejected by Böttcher as unsustainable. It would indeed be extremely strange for the thickness of the door-posts which formed the setting of the entrance to be given, whereas nothing is said about the size of the doors. According to our explanation, "a fifth of the breadth of the wall," the entrance was four cubits broad including the projecting door-posts, and each of the two wings of the folding doors about a cubit and a half broad, if we reckon the projecting framework on either side at half a cubit in breadth.

1 Kings 6:32. "And two doors (i.e., folding doors, sc. he made; וּשְׁתֵּי is also governed by עָשָׂה in v. 31) of olive wood, and carved upon them carved work," etc., as upon the walls (v. 29), "and overlaid them with gold, spreading the gold upon the cherubs and palms" (וַיִּרְדֵּם, *hiphil* of רָדַד), i.e., he spread gold-leaf upon them, so that, as Rashi observes, all the figures, the elevations and depressions of the carved work, were impressed upon the coating of gold-leaf, and were thus plainly seen. Thenius infers from this explanatory clause, that the gilding upon the walls and doors was most probably confined to the figures engraved, and did not extend over the whole of the walls and doors, because, if the doors had been entirely overlaid with gold, the gilding of the carved work upon them would have followed as a matter of course. But this inference is a very doubtful one. For if it followed as a matter of course from the gilding of the entire doors that the carved work upon them was overlaid with gold, it would by no means follow that the overlaying was such as to leave the carved work visible or prominent, which this clause affirms. Moreover, a partial gilding of the walls would not coincide with the expression כָּל־הַבַּיִת עֲדָתָם in v. 22, since these words, which are used with emphasis, evidently affirm more than "that such (partial) gilding was carried out everywhere throughout the

temple proper." The doors in front of the Most Holy Place did not render the curtain mentioned in 2 Chron. 3:14 unnecessary, as many suppose. This curtain may very well have been suspended within the doors; so that even when the doors were opened outwards on the entrance of the high priest, the curtain formed a second covering, which prevented the priests who were ministering in the Holy Place and court from looking in.²⁷

1 Kings 6:33, 34. "And thus he made upon the door of the Holy Place posts of olive wood from a fourth (of the wall)," i.e., a framework which occupied a fourth of the breadth of the wall, or was five cubits broad (see at v. 31), "and two doors of cypress wood, two leaves each door turning," i.e., each of the folding doors consisting of two leaves, each of which was made to turn by itself, so that it could be opened and shut alone (without the other; וְצִלְעִים is probably only a copyist's error for וְצִלְעִים). Cypress wood was chosen for the folding doors of the Holy Place, and not olive wood, as in the case of the Most Holy Place, probably because it is lighter in weight, and therefore less likely to sink. It is questionable here what idea we are to form of the division of each folding door into two leaves, each of which turned by itself: whether we are to think of each wing as divided lengthwise into two narrow leaves, or as divided half way up, so that the lower half could be opened without the upper. I agree with Merz in thinking the latter the more probable assumption; for the objection made by Thenius, on the ground that doors of this kind are only seen in the houses of the peasantry, is an idle assertion which cannot be proved. In a doorway of five cubits in breadth, after reckoning the doorposts the width of the two wings could not be more than two cubits each. And if such a door had been divided into two halves, each half would have been only one cubit wide, so that when open it would not have furnished the requisite room for one man conveniently to pass through. On the other hand, we may assume that a folding door of four cubits in breadth, if made in just

proportions, would be eight cubits high. And a door of such a height might easily be divided into two halves, so that only the lower half (of two cubits in breadth and about four in height) was opened for the daily entrance of the priests into the Holy Place. These doors probably opened outwards, like those in front of the Most Holy Place.

1 Kings 6:35. Carving and gilding: as upon the doors before the hinder room. The gold was levelled or smoothed over that which had been engraved, i.e., it was beaten out thin and laid upon the carving in such a manner that the gold plate fitted closely to the figures. Gilding was generally effected in ancient times by the laying on of gold plate, which was fastened with tacks (compare 2 Chron. 3:9).

1 Kings 6:36. *The courts.*—"He built the inner court three rows of hewn stones and one row of hewn cedar beams." The epithet inner court applied to the "court of the priests" (2 Chron. 4:9) presupposes an outer one, which is also mentioned in 2 Chron. 4:9, and called "the great court." The inner one is called the *upper* (higher) court in Jer. 36:10, from which it follows that it was situated on a higher level than the outer one, which surrounded it on all sides. It was enclosed by a low wall, consisting of three rows of hewn stones, or square stones, laid one upon another, and a row of hewn cedar beams, which were either laid horizontally upon the stones, after the analogy of the panelling of the temple walls on the inside, or placed upright so as to form a palisading, in order that the people might be able to see through into the court of the priests. According to 2 Chron. 4:9, the outer court had gates lined with brass, so that it was also surrounded with a high wall. Around it there were chambers and cells (2 Kings 23:11; Jer. 35:4; 36:10) for the priests and Levites, the plans for which had already been made by David (1 Chron. 28:12). The principal gate was the east gate (Ezek. 11:1). Other gates are mentioned in 2 Kings 11:6, 2 Chron. 23:5, Jer. 20:2 2 Kings 12:10, 2 Chron. 24:8. The size of these courts is not given. At the same time, following the analogy

of the tabernacle, and with the reduplication of the rooms of the tabernacle which is adopted in other cases in the temple, we may set down the length of the court of the priests from east to west at 200 cubits, and the breadth from south to north at 100 cubits; so that in front of the temple-building on the east there was a space of 100 cubits in length and breadth, or 10,000 square cubits, left free for the altar of burnt-offering and the other vessels, in other words, for the sacrificial worship. The outer or great court will therefore, no doubt, have been at least twice as large, namely, 400 cubits long and 200 cubits broad, i.e., in all, 80,000 square cubits; so that the front space before the court of the priests (on the eastern side) was 150 cubits long from east to west, and 200 cubits broad from south to north, and 50 cubits in breadth or depth still remained for the other three sides.

1 Kings 6:37, 38. *The time consumed in building.*—The foundation was laid in the fourth year in the month Ziv (see v. 1), and it was finished in the eleventh year in the month *Bul*, i.e., the eighth month, so that it was built in seven years, or, more precisely, seven years and a half, "according to all its matters and all its due." *בּוֹל* for *יְבוּל* signifies *proventus*; *בּוֹל יֶרֶח* is therefore the fruit month, the month of tree fruits. The name probably originated with the Phoenicians, with whom the fruit ripened later; and it is said to be found upon the great Sidonian inscription (compare Dietrich on Ges. *Lex. s. v.*). For the other explanations see Ges. *Thes.* p. 560. In comparison with other large buildings of antiquity,²⁸ and also of modern times, the work was executed in a very short time. But we must bear in mind that the building was not a very large one, notwithstanding all its splendour; that an unusually large number of workmen were employed upon it; and that the preparation of the materials, more especially the hewing of the stones, took place at Lebanon, and for the most part preceded the laying of the foundation of the temple, so that this is not to be included in the seven years and a half.

Moreover, the period mentioned probably refers to the building of the temple-house and court of the priests only, and to the general arrangement of the outer court, and does not include the completion of the underground works which were necessary to prepare the space required for them, and of which only a portion may have been carried out by Solomon.²⁹

The importance of the temple is clearly expressed in 1 Kings 8:13, 27; 9:3, 2 Chron. 6:2, and other passages. It was to be a house built as the dwelling-place for Jehovah, a place for His seat for ever; not indeed in any such sense as that the house could contain God within its space, when the heavens of heavens cannot contain Him (1 Kings 8:27), but a house where the name of Jehovah is or dwells (1 Kings 8:16ff.; 2 Chron. 6:5; cf. 2 Sam. 7:13, etc.), i.e., where God manifests His presence in a real manner to His people, and shows Himself to them as the covenant God, so that Israel may there worship Him and receive an answer to its prayers. The temple had therefore the same purpose as the tabernacle, whose place it took, and which it resembled in its fundamental form, its proportions, divisions, and furniture. As the glory of the Lord entered into the tabernacle in the cloud, so did it into the temple also at its dedication, to sanctify it as the place of the gracious presence of God (1 Kings 8:10; 2 Chron. 5:14). The temple thereby became not only a visible pledge of the lasting duration of the covenant, by virtue of which God would dwell among His people, but also a copy of the kingdom of God, which received at its erection an embodiment answering to its existing condition at the time. As the tabernacle, with its resemblance to a nomad's tent, answered to the time when Israel had not yet found rest in the promised land of the Lord; so was the temple, regarded as an immovable house, a pledge that Israel had not acquired its lasting inheritance in Canaan, and that the kingdom of God on earth had obtained a firm foundation in the midst of it.—This relation between the temple and the tabernacle will serve to explain all the points of difference which present

themselves between these two sanctuaries, notwithstanding their agreement in fundamental forms and in all essential particulars. As a house or palace of Jehovah, the temple was not only built of solid and costly materials, with massive walls of square stones, and with floors, ceilings, walls, and doors of cedar, cypress, and olive woods—these almost imperishable kinds of wood—but was also provided with a hall like the palaces of earthly kings, and with side buildings in three stories in which to keep the utensils requisite for a magnificent ceremonial, though care was taken that there adjoining and side buildings were not attached directly to the main building so as to violate the indestructibility and perfectness of the house of God, but merely helped to exalt it and elevate its dignity. And the increased size of the inner rooms, whilst the significant forms and measures of the tabernacle were preserved, was also essentially connected with this. Whereas the length and breadth of the dwelling were doubled, and the height of the whole house tripled, the form of a cube was still retained for the Most Holy Place as the stamp of the perfected kingdom of God (see *Comm. on Pent.* p. 441), and the space was fixed at twenty cubits in length, breadth, and height. On the other hand, in the case of the Holy Place the sameness of height and breadth were sacrificed to the harmonious proportions of the house or palace, as points of inferior importance; and the measurements were thirty cubits in height, twenty cubits in breadth, and forty cubits in length; so that ten as the number of perfectness was preserved as the standard even here. And in order to exhibit still further the perfectness and glory of the house of God, the walls were not constructed of ordinary quarry-stone, but of large square stones prepared at the quarry, and the walls were panelled within with costly wood after the manner of the palaces of Hither Asia, the panelling being filled with carved work and overlaid with gold plate. And whereas the overlaying of the whole of the interior with gold shadowed forth the glory of the house as the residence of the heavenly King, the idea of this house of God was still more distinctly

expressed in the carved work of the walls. In the tabernacle the walls were decorated with tapestries in costly colours and interwoven figures of cherubim; but in the temple they were ornamented with carved work of figures of cherubim, palms, and opening flowers. To the figures of cherubim, as representations of the heavenly spirits which surround the Lord of glory and set forth the psychical life at its highest stage, there are thus added flowers, and still more particularly palms, those “princes of the vegetable kingdom,” which, with their fine majestic growth, and their large, fresh, evergreen leaves, unite within themselves the whole of the fulness and glory of the vegetable life; to set forth the sanctuary (probably with special reference to Canaan as the land of palms, and with an allusion to the glory of the King of peace, inasmuch as the palm is not only the sign of Palestine, but also the symbol of peace) “as a place that was ever verdant, abiding in all the freshness of strength, and enfolding within itself the fulness of life,” and thereby to make it a scene of health and life, of peace and joy, a “paradise of God,” where the righteous who are planted there flourish, and blossom, and bear fruit to old age (Ps. 92:13). And this idea of the house, as an immovable dwelling-place of God, is in perfect harmony with the setting up of two colossal cherubim in the Most Holy Place, which filled the whole space with their outspread wings, and overshadowed the ark of the covenant, to show that the ark of the covenant with its small golden cherubim upon the Capporeth, which had journeyed with the people through the desert to Canaan, was henceforth to have there a permanent and unchangeable abode.

1 Kings 7

Solomon’s Palace and the Furniture of the Temple (Ch. 7)

1 Kings 7:1–12. *Erection of the royal palace.*—V. 1 is closely connected in form with 1 Kings 6:38, and contains a summary account of the building, which is more minutely described in vv. 2–12. “And Solomon built his house (his

palace) in thirteen years, and finished (in that time) all his house.” The thirteen years are to be reckoned after the completion of the temple in seven years, so that the two buildings were executed in twenty years (1 Kings 9:10). The expression *כָּל-בֵּיתוֹ* is used, because the palace consisted of several buildings connected together; namely, (1) the house of the forest of Lebanon (vv. 2–5); (2) the pillar-hall with the porch (v. 6); (3) the throne-room and judgment-hall (v. 7); (4) the king’s dwelling-house and the house of Pharaoh’s daughter (v. 8). That all these buildings were only different portions of the one royal palace, and the house of the forest of Lebanon was not a summer residence of Solomon erected on Lebanon itself, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, is indisputably evident, not only from the first verse when correctly interpreted, but also and still more clearly from the fact that when the buildings of Solomon are spoken of afterwards (see 1 Kings 9:1, 10, 15, and 10:12), we only read of the house of Jehovah and the house of the king, that is to say, of the temple and one palace. The description of the several portions of this palace is so very brief, that it is impossible to form a distinct idea of its character. The different divisions are given in vv. 1–8 in their natural order, commencing at the back and terminating with the front (v. 8), and there then follows in vv. 9–12 the description of the stones that were used.

1 Kings 7:2–5. *The house of the forest of Lebanon.*—This building—so named because it was built, so to speak, of a forest of cedar pillars—is called in the Arabic the “house of his arms,” because, according to 1 Kings 10:17, it also served as a keeping-place for arms:” it is hardly to be regarded, however, as simply an arsenal, but was probably intended for other purposes also. He built it “a hundred cubits its length, fifty cubits its breadth, and thirty cubits its height, on four rows of cedar pillars, and hewn cedar beams (were) over the pillars.” As the building was not merely a hall of pillars, but, according to v. 3, had side-rooms (*תַּלְעָצ*, cf. 1 Kings 6:5) above the pillars, the construction

of it can hardly be represented in any other way than this, that the rooms were built upon four rows of pillars, which ran round all four sides of the building, which was 100 cubits long and fifty cubits broad in the inside, and thus surrounded the inner courtyard on all sides. Of course the building could not rest merely upon pillars, but was surrounded on the outside with a strong wall of hewn square stones (v. 9), so that the hewn beams which were laid upon the pillars had their outer ends built into the wall, and were supported by it, so as to give to the whole building the requisite strength.³⁰

1 Kings 7:3. “And roofing in (of) cedar was above the over the side-rooms upon the pillars, five and forty; fifteen the row.” **כִּפְּזֵי** is to be understood of the roofing, as in 1 Kings 6:15 (compare **כִּפְּזֵי**, 1 Kings 6:15). The numbers “forty-five and fifteen the row” cannot refer to **הַעֲמֻדִים**, but must refer, as Thenius assumes, to **הַצֵּלְעָה** as the main idea, which is more precisely defined by **עַל הַעֲמֻדִים**. If we took it as referring to the pillars, as I myself have formerly done, we should have to assume that there were only galleries or pillar-halls above the lower rows of pillars, which is at variance with **הַצֵּלְעָה**. There were forty-five side-rooms, therefore, built upon the lower rows of pillars, in rangers of fifteen each. This could only be done by the ranges of rooms being built, not side by side, but one over the other, in other words, by the forty-five side-rooms forming three stories, as in the side buildings of the temple, so that each story had a “row” of fifteen side-rooms round it. This view receives support from v. 4: “and beam-layers (**שְׁקָפִים**, beams, as in 1 Kings 6:4) were three rows, and outlook against outlook three times;” i.e., the rows of side-rooms were built one over the other by means of layers of beams, so that the rooms had windows opposite to one another three times; that is to say, the windows looking out upon the court were so arranged in the three stories that those on the one side were *vis à vis* to those on the opposite side of the building. The expression in

v. 5, **מִוֶּל מַחְזָה אֶל־מַחְזָה**, “window over against window,” compels us to take **אֶל־מַחְזָה** in the sense of “opposite to the window” (**אֶל**, *versus*), and not, as Thenius proposes, “outlook against outlook,” according to which **אֶל** is supposed to indicate that the windows were only separated from one another by slender piers. **מַחְזָה**, which only occurs here, is different from **חַלּוֹן**, the ordinary window, and probably denotes a large opening affording a wide outlook.

1 Kings 7:5. “And all the doorways and mouldings were square of beams” (**שְׁקָרָה** is an accusative of free subordination, denoting the material or the mode of execution; cf. Ewald, § 284, *a*, β). “Square with a straight upper beam” (Thenius) cannot be the correct rendering of **רִבְעִים שְׁקָרָה**. Thenius proposes to read **וְהַמְּחֻזָּת** for **וְהַמְּחֻזָּת**, after the reading $\alpha\iota\ \chi\omega\rho\alpha\iota$ of the Seventy, who have also rendered **מַחְזָה** in v. 4 by $\chi\omega\rho\alpha$, a broad space. It may be pleaded in support of this, that **רִבְעִים** is less applicable to the doorposts or mouldings than to the doorways and outlooks (windows), inasmuch as, if the doorways were square, the square form of the moulding or framework would follow as a matter of course. **הַפְּתָחִים** are both the doors, through which the different rooms were connected with one another, and also those through which the building and its stories were reached, of course by stairs, probably winding staircases, as in the side stories of the temple. The stairs were placed, no doubt, at the front of the building. The height given is thirty cubits, corresponding to that of the whole building (v. 2). If we reckon the height of the lower pillars at eight cubits, there were twenty-two cubits left for the stories; and assuming that the roofing of each was one cubit in thickness, there remained eighteen cubits in all for the rooms of the three stories; and this, if equally distributed, would give an internal height of six cubits for each story, or if arranged on a graduated scale, which would probably be

more appropriate, a height of seven, six, and five cubits respectively.

1 Kings 7:6–8. *The other buildings.*—V. 6. “And he made the *pillar-hall*, fifty cubits its length, and thirty cubits its breadth, and a hall in front of them, and pillars and a threshold in front of them.” With regard to the situation of this hall in relation to the other parts of the building, which is not precisely defined, we may infer, from the fact that it is mentioned between the house of the forest of Lebanon and the throne and judgment halls, that it stood between these two. The length of this building (fifty cubits) corresponds to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon; so that, according to the analogy of the temple-hall (1 Kings 6:3), we might picture to ourselves the length given here as running parallel to the breadth of the house of the forest of Lebanon, and might therefore assume that the pillar-hall was fifty cubits broad and thirty cubits deep. But the statement that there was a hall *in front of* the pillar-hall is irreconcilable with this assumption. We must therefore understand the length in the natural way, as signifying the measurement from back to front, and regard the pillar-hall as a portico fifty cubits long and thirty cubits broad, in front of which there was also a porch as an entrance. **עַל־פְּנֵיהֶם**, in front of them, i.e., in front of the pillars which formed this portico. The last words, “and pillars and threshold in front of them,” refer to the porch. This had also pillars, probably on both sides of the doorway, which carried the roof; and in front of them was **עָב**, i.e., according to the Chaldee **סְקִפְתָּא**, the moulding or framework of the threshold, a threshold-like entrance, with steps.

1 Kings 7:7. “And the *throne-hall*, where he judged, the judgment-hall, he made and (indeed) covered with cedar, from floor to floor.” The throne-hall and the judgment-hall are therefore one and the same hall, which was both a court of judgment and an audience-chamber, and in which, no doubt, there stood and splendid throne described in 1 Kings 10:18–20. But it is distinguished from the

pillar-hall by the repetition of **עֲשָׂה**. It probably followed immediately upon this, but was clearly distinguished from it by the fact that it was covered with cedar **עַד הַקִּרְקַע**. These words are very obscure. The rendering given by Thenius, “panelled from the floor to the beams of the roof,” is open to these objections: (1) that **קָפַן** generally does not mean to *panel*, but simply to *cover*, and that **קָפַן בְּאֶרְזוֹ** is particular cannot possibly be taken in a different sense here from that which it bears in v. 3, where it denotes the roofing of the rooms built above the portico of pillars; and (2) that the alteration of the second **הַקִּרְקַע** into **הַקּוֹרוֹת** has no critical warrant in the rendering of the Syriac, *a fundamento ad coelum ejus usque*, or in that of the Vulgate, *a pavimento usque ad summitatem*, whereas the LXX and Chald. both read **עַד הַקִּרְקַע**. But even if we were to read **הַקּוֹרוֹת**, this would not of itself signify the roof beams, inasmuch as in 1 Kings 6:16 **הַקִּירֹת** or **הַקּוֹרוֹת** receives its more precise definition from the expression **קִירֹת הַסָּפֵן** (קוֹרוֹת) in v. 15. The words in question cannot have any other meaning than this: “from the one floor to the other,” i.e., either from the floor of the throne-hall to the floor of the pillar-hall (described in v. 6), or more probably from the lower floor to the upper, inasmuch as there were rooms built over the throne-room, just as in the case of the house of the forest of Lebanon; for **קִרְקַע** may denote not only the lower floor, but also the floor of upper rooms, which served at the same time as the ceiling of the lower rooms. So much, at any rate, may be gathered from these words, with all their obscurity, that the throne-hall was not an open pillar-hall, but was only open in front, and was shut in by solid walls on the other three sides.

1 Kings 7:8. After (behind) the throne and judgment hall then followed the king’s own palace, the principal entrance to which was probably through the throne-hall, so that the king really delivered judgment and granted

audiences in the gate of his palace. "His house, where he dwelt, in the other court inwards from the (throne) hall was like this work," i.e., was built like the throne-hall; "and a (dwelling) house he made for the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Solomon had taken, like this hall." The construction of the dwelling-places of the king and queen cannot be ascertained from these words, because the hall with which its style is compared is not more minutely described. All that can be clearly inferred from the words, "in the other court inside the hall," is, that the abode of the king and his Egyptian wife had a court of its own, and when looked at from the entrance, formed the hinder court of the whole palace. The house of Pharaoh's daughter was probably distinct from the dwelling-place of the king, so that the palace of the women formed a building by itself, most likely behind the dwelling-house of the king, since the women in the East generally occupy the inner portion of the house. The statement that the dwelling-place of the king and queen formed a court by itself within the complex of the palace, warrants the further inference, that the rest of the buildings (the house of the forest of Lebanon, the pillar-hall, and the throne-hall) were united together in one first or front court.

1 Kings 7:9-12. "All these (viz., the whole of the buildings described in vv. 2-8) were costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, sawn with the saw within and without (i.e., on the inner and outer side of the halls and buildings), and from the foundation to the corbels, and from without to the great court," תְּפָחוֹת, the corbels, upon which the beams of the roof rest. The LXX renders it ἕως τῶν γεισῶν. Thenius understands by this the battlements which protected the flat roofs, and therefore interprets תְּפָחוֹת as signifying the stone border of the roof of the palace. But γεισός, or γεισσοῦ γεισσον, merely signifies the projection of the roof, and, generally speaking, every projection in a building resembling a roof, but not the battlement-like protection or border of the flat roof, which is called מַעְקָה in Deut. 22:8. חוץ, the outside in distinction from the great court, can

only be the outer court; and as הַחֵצֵר הַגְּדוֹלָה is no doubt identical with הַחֵצֵר הַאֲחֵרָה (v. 8), and therefore refers to the court surrounding the king's dwelling-house, חוץ is to be understood as relating to the court-yard or fore-court surrounding the front halls.

1 Kings 7:10, 11. "And the foundation was laid with costly, large stones of ten and eight cubits (sc., in length, and of corresponding breadth and thickness). And above (the foundation, and therefore the visible walls, were) costly stones, after the measure of that which is hewn, and cedars."

1 Kings 7:12. And (as for) the great court, there were found it three rows (i.e., it was formed of three rows) of hewn stones and a row of hewn cedar beams, as in the inner court of the house of Jehovah (see at 1 Kings 6:36) and the hall of the house. וּלְחֵצֵר signifies "and so with the court," Vav serving as a comparison, as in Prov. 25:30, 20, and frequently in Proverbs (see Dietrich in Ges. *Lex. x.v. 1*, and Ewald, § 340, *b.*), so that there is no necessity for the un-Hebraic conjecture of Thenius, לְאוֹלָם כְּלַחֲצֵר. הַבַּיִת in all probability refers not to the temple-hall, but to the pillar-hall of the palace, the surrounding wall of which was of the same nature as the wall of the great, i.e., the other or hinder, court.³¹

1 Kings 7:13-51. The Metallic Vessels of the Temple (compare 2 Chron. 2:13, 14, and 3:15-5:1).—Vv. 13, 14. To make these vessels king Hiram had sent to Solomon, at his request (2 Chron. 2:6), a workman named *Hiram* of Tyre. V. 13 contains a supplementary remark, in which וַיִּשְׁלַח must be rendered in the pluperfect (compare the remarks on Gen. 2:19). King Solomon had sent and fetched *Hiram* from Tyre. This artisan bore the same name as the king, חִירָם or חִירָם (v. 40), in 2 Chron. 2:13 חִירָם (Hiram), with the epithet אָבִי, i.e., my father, אָב being a title of honour equivalent to master or counsellor, as in Gen. 45:8. He was the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father

was אִישׁ צָרִי, i.e., a Tyrian by birth. According to 2 Chron. 2:13, his mother was “of the daughters of Dan,” i.e., of the tribe of Dan. Both statements may easily be united thus: she was a Danite by birth, and married into the tribe of Naphtali. When her husband died, she was married again as the widow of a Naphtalite, and became the wife of a Tyrian, to whom she bore a son, *Hiram*. This explanation is also adopted by Bertheau (on the Chronicles); and the conjecture of Lundius, Thenius, and others, that the mother was an Israelitish widow of the city of Dan in the tribe of Naphtali, which was quite close to Tyre, is less in harmony with the expression “of the daughters of Dan.” חָרָשׁ נְחֹשֶׁת, “a brass-worker,” refers to הוּא (he), i.e., *Hiram*, and not to his father (Thenius). The skill of Hiram is described in almost the same terms as that of Bezaleel in Ex. 31:3ff., with this exception, that Bezaleel’s skill is attributed to his being filled with the Spirit of God, i.e., is described rather as a supernatural gift, whereas in the case of Hiram the more indefinite expression, “he was filled with wisdom, etc.,” is used, representing it rather as a natural endowment. In the account given here, Hiram is merely described as a worker in brass, because he is only mentioned at the commencement of the section which treats of the preparation of the brazen vessels of the temple. According to 2 Chron. 2:14, he was able to work in gold, silver, brass, iron, stone, wood, purple, etc. There is nothing improbable in this extension of his skill to wood and to the art of weaving. Bezaleel also combined in himself all these talents. Of course Hiram was merely a foreman or leader of these different branches of art; and he certainly did not come alone, but brought several assistants with him, who carried out the different works under his superintendence.—The enumeration of them commences with the pillars of the temple-hall.

1 Kings 7:15–22. *The brazen pillars of the porch* (compare 2 Chron. 3:15–17).—He formed the two brazen pillars, which were erected, according to 2 Chron. 3:15, “before the (temple) house, i.e., in front of the hall of the temple. One

was eighteen cubits high, and a thread of twelve cubits surrounded (spanned) the other pillar.” The statement of the height of the one pillar and that of the circumference of the other is to be understood as an abbreviated expression, signifying that the height and thickness mentioned applied to the one as well as to the other, or that they were alike in height and circumference. According to the Chronicles, they were thirty-five cubits long; which many expositors understand as signifying that the length of the two together was thirty-five cubits, so that each one was only 17 1/2 cubits long, for which the full number 18 is substituted in our text. But this mode of reconciling the discrepancy is very improbable, and is hardly in harmony with the words of the Chronicles. The number 35 evidently arose from confounding the numeral letters יח = 18 with לה = 35. The correctness of the number 18 is confirmed by 2 Kings 25:17 and Jer. 52:21. The pillars were hollow, the brass being four finger-breadths in thickness (Jer. 52:21); and they were cast in the Jordan valley (v. 46).

1 Kings 7:16. “And he made two capitals (בְּתָרוֹת), to set them on the heads of the pillars, cast in brass, five cubits the height of the one and of the other capital.” If, on the other hand, in 2 Kings 25:17 the height of the capital is said to have been three cubits, this discrepancy cannot be explained on the supposition that the capitals had been reduced two cubits in the course of time; but the statement rests, like the parallel passage in Jer. 52:22, upon an error of the text, i.e., upon the substitution of ג (3) for ה (5).

1 Kings 7:17. “Plait (i.e., ornaments of plait), plait-work and cords (twist, resembling) chain-work, were on the capitals, which were upon the heads of the pillars, seven on the one capital and seven on the other capital.” Consequently this decoration consisted of seven twists arranged as festoons, which were hung round the capitals of the pillars.

1 Kings 7:18. “And he made pomegranates, and indeed two rows round about the one twist, to

cover the capitals which were upon the head of the pillars; and so he did with the other capital." In the Masoretic text the words **הָעֲמֻדִים** and **הָרִמְנִים** are confused together, and we must read, as some of the Codd. do, in the first clause **אֶת־הָעֲמֻדִים** for **אֶת־הָרִמְנִים**, and in the middle clause **עַל־רֹאשׁ הָרִמְנִים** for **עַל־רֹאשׁ הָעֲמֻדִים**. This is not only required by the sense, but sustained by a comparison with v. 19. The relation between the two rows of pomegranates and the plaited work is indeed not precisely defined; but it is generally and correctly assumed, that one row ran round the pillars below the plaited work and the other above, so that the plaited work, which was formed of seven cords plaited together in the form of festoons, was enclosed above and below by the rows of pomegranates. If we compare with this the further statements in vv. 41 and 42, 2 Chron. 3:16 and 4:12, 13, and Jer. 52:23, **הַבְּתָרֶת** is there more precisely designated **גְּלוֹת הַבְּתָרֶת**, "bowls of the capitals," from which it is evident that the lower portion of the capitals, to which the braided work was fastened, was rounded in the form of a pitcher or caldron. the number of the pomegranates on the two festoons is given at 400, so that there were 200 on each capital, and consequently each row contained 100 (2 Chron. 3:16); and according to Jer. (*l.c.*) there were 96 **רוֹחָה**, "windwards," and in all 100 on the braided work round about. **רוֹחָה**, "windwards," can hardly be taken in any other sense than this: in the direction of the wine, i.e., facing the four quarters of the heavens. This meaning is indisputably sustained by the use of the word **רוֹחָה**, to denote the quarters of the heavens, in statements of the aspect of buildings (Ezek. 42:16–18), whereas there is no foundation whatever for such meanings as "airwards = uncovered" (Böttcher, Thenius), or hanging freely (Ewald).³²

1 Kings 7:19, 20. In vv. 19 and 20 a second decoration of the capitals of the pillars is mentioned, from which we may see that the rounding with the chain-like plaited work and

the pomegranates enclosing it did not cover the capital to the very top, but only the lower portion of it. The decoration of the upper part is described in v. 19: "And capitals, which were upon the top of the pillars, were (or, Hiram made) lily-work after the manner of the hall, four cubits." The lily-work occupied, according to v. 20, the upper portion of the capitals, which is here called **בְּתָרֶת**, as a crown set upon the lower portion. It was lily-work, i.e., sculpture in the form of flowering lilies. The words **בְּאוֹלָם** **אֶרְבַּע אַמּוֹת** are obscure. According to Böttcher and Thenius, **בְּאוֹלָם** is intended to indicate the position of the pillars within the hall, so that their capitals sustained the lintel of the doorway. But even if **בְּאוֹלָם** were rendered, within the hall, as it is by Böttcher, it is impossible to see how this meaning could be obtained from the words "capitals upon the head of the pillars lily-work within the hall." In that case we must at least have "the pillars within the hall;" and **בְּאוֹלָם** would be connected with **הָעֲמֻדִים**, instead of being separated from it by **מִעֵשֶׂה שׁוֹשָׁן**. Even if we were to introduce a stop after **שׁוֹשָׁן** and take **בְּאוֹלָם** by itself, the expression "in (or at) the hall" would not in itself indicate the position of the pillars in the doorway, to say nothing of the fact that it is only in v. 21 that anything is said concerning the position of the pillars. Again, the measurement "four cubits" cannot be understood, as it is by Thenius, as denoting the diameter of the capitals of the pillars; it must rather indicate the measure of the lily-work, that is to say, it affirms that there were four cubits of lily-work on the capitals, which were five cubits high,—in other words, the lily-work covered the four upper cubits of the capitals; from which it still further follows, that the plaited work which formed the decoration of the lower portion of the capitals was only one cubit broad or high. Consequently **בְּאוֹלָם** cannot be understood in any other sense than "in the manner of or according to the hall," and can only express the thought, that there was lily-

work on the capitals of the pillars as there was on the hall. For the vindication of this use of כָּ see Ges. *Lex.* by Dietrich, s.v. כָּ.³³ There is no valid objection to the inference to which this leads, namely, that on the frontispiece of the temple-hall there was a decoration of lily-work. For since the construction of the hall is not more minutely described, we cannot expect a description of its decorations.—In v. 20 a more precise account is given of the position in which the crowns consisting of lily-work were placed on the capitals of this columns, so that this verse is to be regarded as an explanation of v. 19: namely, capitals upon the pillars (did he make) also above near the belly, which was on the other side of the plait-work.” הַבֶּטֶן, the belly, i.e., the belly-shaped rounding, can only be the rounding of the lower portion of the capitals, which is called גִּלְהָ in vv. 41, 42. Hence לְעֵבֶר הַשִּׁבְכָה (*Keri*), “on the other side of the plaited work,” can only mean behind or under the plait, since we cannot suppose that there was a belly-shaped rounding above the caldron-shaped rounding which was covered with plaited work, and between this and the lily-work. The belly-shaped rounding, above or upon which the plaited work lay round about, might, when looked at from without, be described as being on the other side of it, i.e., behind it. In the second half of the verse: “and the pomegranates two hundred in rows round about on the second capital,” the number of the pomegranates placed upon the capitals, which was omitted in v. 18, is introduced in a supplementary form.³⁴

1 Kings 7:21. “And he set up the pillars at the hall of the Holy Place, and set up the right pillar, and called its name *Jachin*, and ... the left ... *Boaz*.” Instead of לְאֵלֵם הַהֵיכָל we have in 2 Chron. 3:15 לְפָנֵי הַבַּיִת, and in v. 17 עַל-פְּנֵי הַהֵיכָל, “before the house,” “before the Holy Place.” This unquestionably implies that the two brazen pillars stood unconnected in front of the hall, on the right and left sides of it, and not within the hall as supporters of the roof. Nevertheless

many have decided in favour of the latter view. But of the four arguments used by Thenius in proof that this was the position of the pillars, there is no force whatever in the first, which is founded upon Amos 9:1, unless we assume, as Merz and others do, that the words of the prophet, “Smite the capital, that the thresholds may shake, and break them (the capitals of the pillars), that they may fall upon the head of all,” refer to the temple at Jerusalem, and not, as Thenius and others suppose, to the temple erected at Bethel for the calf-worship. For even if the temple at Bethel had really had a portal supported by pillars, it would by no means follow that the pillars Jachin and Boaz in Solomon’s temple supported the roof of the hall, as it is nowhere stated that the temple of Jeroboam at Bethel was an exact copy of that of Solomon. And even with the only correct interpretation, in which the words of Amos are made to refer to the temple at Jerusalem, the argument founded upon them in support of the position of the pillars as bearers of the hall rests upon the false idea, that the סָפִים, which are shaken by the smiting of the capital, are the beams lying upon the top of the pillars, or the *superliminaria* of the hall. It is impossible to prove that סָף has any such meaning. The beam over the entrance, or upon the doorposts, is called מִשְׁקוּף in Ex. 12:7, 22, 23, whereas סָף denotes the threshold, i.e., the lower part of the framework of the door, as is evident from Judg. 19:27. The words of the prophet are not to be interpreted architecturally, but to be taken in a rhetorical sense; “so that by the blow, which strikes the capital, and causes the thresholds to tremble, such a blow is intended as shakes the temple in all its joints” (Baur on Amos 9:1). “הַכְּפֹתוֹר, a kind of ornament at the top of the pillars, and הַסָּפִים, the thresholds, are opposed to one another, to express the thought that the building is to be shaken and destroyed *a summo usque ad imum, a capite ad calcem*” (Hengstenberg, *Chrisol.* i. p. 366 transl.). The other arguments derived from Ezek. 40:48 and 49, and from Josephus, Ant. viii. 3, 4, prove

nothing at all. From the words of Josephus, τούτων τῶν κίωνων τὸν μὲν ἕτερον κατὰ τὴν δεξιάν ἔστησε τοῦ προπυλαίου παραστάδα ... τὸν δὲ ἕτερον κ.τ.λ., it would only follow “that the pillars (according to the view of Josephus) must have stood in the doorway,” if it were the case that παραστάς had no other meaning than *doorpost*, and προπύλαιον could be understood as referring to the temple-hall generally. But this is conclusively disproved by the fact that Josephus always calls the temple-hall πρόναον (*L.c.*, and viii. 3, 2 and 3), so that προπύλαιον can only denote the fore-court, and παραστάς a pillar standing by itself. Consequently Josephus regarded the pillars Jachin and Boaz as *propylaea* erected in front of the hall. We must therefore adhere to the view expressed by Bähr (*d. Tempel*, p. 35ff.), that these pillars did not support the roof of the temple-hall, but were set up in front of the hall on either side of the entrance. In addition to the words of the text, this conclusion is sustained (1) by the circumstance that the two pillars are not mentioned in connection with the building of the temple and the hall, but are referred to for the first time here in the enumeration of the sacred vessels of the court that were made of brass. “If the pillars had formed an essential part of the construction and had been supporters of the hall, they would certainly have been mentioned in the description of the building, and not have been placed among the articles of furniture” (Schnaase); and moreover they would not have been made of metal like the rest of the vessels, but would have been constructed of the same building materials as the hall and the house, namely, of stone or wood (Bähr). And to this we may add (2) the monumental character of the pillars, which is evident from the names given to them. No architectural portion of the building received a special name.³⁵ *Jachin* (יָכִין): “he establishes,” *stabiliet templum* (Simonis *Onom.* p. 430); and *Boaz* (בֹּעַז), *ex boe in illo, sc. Domino, robur* (Sim. p. 460). Kimchi has correctly interpreted the first name thus: “Let this temple stand for ever;” and the second, “Solomon desired that

God would give it strength and endurance.” The pillars were symbols of the stability and strength, which not only the temple as an outward building, but the kingdom of God in Israel as embodied in the temple, received from the Lord, who had chosen the temple to be His dwelling-place in the midst of His people.³⁶

1 Kings 7:22. In v. 22 it is stated again that there was lily-work upon the head of the pillars,—a repetition which may be explained from the significance of this emblem of the capitals of the pillars; and then the words, “So was the work of the capitals finished,” bring the account of this ornament of the temple to a close.

1 Kings 7:23–26. *The brazen sea* (cf. 2 Chron. 4:2–5).—“He made the molten sea—a water-basin called יָם (*mare*) on account of its size—ten cubits from the one upper rim to the other,” i.e., in diameter measured from the upper rim to the one opposite to it, “rounded all round, and five cubits its (external) height, and a line of thirty cubits encircled it round about,” i.e., it was thirty cubits in circumference. The *Chethib* קוּה is to be read קוּה here and in Zech. 1:16 and Jer. 31:39, for which the *Keri* has קוּ in all these passages. קוּה or קוּ means a line for measuring, which is expressed in v. 15 by חוּט. The relation of the diameter to the circumference is expressed in whole numbers which come very near to the mathematical proportions. The more exact proportions would be as 7 to 22, or 113 to 355.

1 Kings 7:24. Any colocynths (gourds) ran round it under its brim, ten to the cubit, surrounding the sea in two rows; the colocynths “cast in its casting,” i.e., cast at the same time as the vessel itself. Instead of פְּקָעִים, gourds (see at 1 Kings 6:18), we find דְּמוֹת בְּקָרִים, figures of oxen, in the corresponding text of the Chronicles, and in the last clause merely הַבְּקָר, an evident error of the pen, בקרים being substituted by mistake for פְּקָעִים, and afterwards interpreted דְּמוֹת בקרים. The

assumption by which the early expositors removed the discrepancy, namely, that they were casts of bullocks' heads, is not to be thought of, for the simple reason that בקרים signifies oxen and not the *heads* of oxen. How far apart the two rows of gourd-like ornaments were, it is impossible to decide. Their size may be estimated, from the fact that there were ten within the space of a cubit, at a little over two inches in diameter.

1 Kings 7:25. This vessel stood (rested) upon twelve brazen oxen, three turning to the north, three to the west, three to the south, and three to the east, "and the sea above upon them, and all their backs (turned) inwards;" i.e., they were so placed that three of their heads were directed towards each quarter of the heavens. The size of the oxen is not given; but we must assume that it was in proportion to the size and height of the sea, and therefore about five cubits in height up to the back. These figures stood, no doubt, upon a metal plate, which gave them a fixed and immovable position (see the engraving in my *bibl. Archäol.* Taf. iii. fig. 1).

1 Kings 7:25. "And its thickness (i.e., the thickness of the metal) was a handbreadth" = four finger-breadths, as in the case of the brazen pillars (see at v. 15), "and its upper rim like work of a goblet (or of a goblet-rim, i.e., bent outwards), lily-blossom," i.e., ornamented with lily-flowers. It held 2000 baths; according to the Chronicles, 3000 baths. The latter statement has arisen from the confusion of ג (3) with ב (2); since, according to the calculation of Thenius, the capacity of the vessel, from the dimensions given, could not exceed 2000 baths. This vessel, which took the place of the laver in the tabernacle, was provided for the priests to wash themselves (2 Chron. 4:6), that is to say, that a supply of water might be kept in readiness to enable the priests to wash their hands and feet when they approached the altar to officiate, or were about to enter the Holy Place (Ex. 30:18ff.). There were no doubt taps by which the water required for this purpose was drawn off from the sea.³⁷—The artistic

form of the vessel corresponded to its sacred purpose. The rim of the basin, which rose upwards in the form of a lily, was intended to point to the holiness and loveliness of that life which issued from the sanctuary. The twelve oxen, on which it rested, pointed to the twelve tribes of Israel as a priestly nation, which cleansed itself here in the persons of its priests, to appear clean and holy before the Lord. Just as the number twelve unquestionably suggests the allusion to the twelve tribes of the covenant nation, so, in the choice of oxen or bullocks as supporters of the basin, it is impossible to overlook the significance of this selection of the first and highest of the sacrificial animals to represent the priestly service, especially if we compare the position of the lions on Solomon's throne (1 Kings 10:20).

1 Kings 7:27–39. The Brazen Stands and Their Basins.³⁸—He made ten stands of brass, each four cubits long, four cubits broad, and three cubits high. מְכַנּוֹת, stands or stools (Luther), is the name given to these vessels from their purpose, viz., to serve as supports to the basins which were used for washing the flesh of the sacrifices. They were square chests cast in brass, of the dimensions given.

1 Kings 7:28, 29. Their work (their construction) was the following: they had מְסָגְרוֹת, lit., surroundings, i.e., panels of flat sides, and that between שְׁלֻבִים, *commisuræ*, i.e., frames or borders, which enclosed the sides, and were connected together at the angles; and upon the panels within the borders (there were figures of) lions, oxen, and cherubim. The statement in Josephus, that each centre was divided into three compartments, has nothing to support it in the biblical text, nor is it at all probable in itself, inasmuch as a division of this kind would have rendered the figures placed upon them insignificantly small. "And upon the borders was a base above." בָּזֵי is a noun, and has been rendered correctly by the Chaldee בְּנֵתָא, *basis*. The meaning is, above, over the borders, there was a pedestal for the basin upon the chest, which is more fully described in v. 31. To

take כֵּן as an adverb does not give a suitable sense. For if we adopt the rendering, and upon the corner borders (or ledges) likewise above (De Wette and Ewald),—i.e., there were also figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim upon the corner borders,—it is impossible to tell what the meaning of מִמַּעַל can be, to say nothing of the fact that on the corner borders there could hardly be room for such figures as these. This last argument also tells against the rendering adopted by Thenius: “and upon the corner borders, above as well as below the lions and oxen, (there were) wreaths;” in which, moreover, it is impossible to attach any supportable meaning to the כֵּן. When, on the other hand, Thenius objects to our view that the pedestal in question is spoken of for the first time in v. 31, and that the expression “above the corner borders (ledges)” would be extremely unsuitable, since the pedestal in question was above the whole stand; the former remark is not quite correct, for v. 31 merely contains a more minute description of the character of the pedestal, and the latter is answered by the fact that the pedestal derived its strength from the corner borders or ledges. “And below the lions and oxen were wreaths, pendant work.” לַיּוֹת, here and at v. 36, is to be explained from לַיּוֹת in Prov. 1:9 and 4:9, and signifies twists or wreaths. מַעֲשֵׂה מוֹרֵד is not “work of sinking,” i.e., sunken work (Thenius), which never can be the meaning of מוֹרֵד, but pendant work, festoons, by which, however, we cannot understand festoons hanging *freely*, or floating in the air.

1 Kings 7:30. “Every stool had four brazen wheels and brazen axles, and the four feet thereof had shoulder-pieces; below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast, beyond each one (were) wreaths.” The meaning is that the square chests stood upon axles with wheels of brass, after the style of ordinary carriage wheels (v. 33), so that they could be driven or easily moved from one place to another; and that they did not rest directly upon the axles, but stood upon four feet, which were fastened

upon the axles. This raised the chest above the rim of the wheels, so that not only were the sides of the chest which were ornamented with figures left uncovered, but, according to v. 32, the wheels stood below the panels, and not, as in ordinary carriages, at the side of the chest. With regard to the connection between the axles and the wheels, Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 972) and Thenius suppose that the axles were fastened to the wheels, as in the Roman *plaustra* and at the present day in Italy, so as to turn with them; and Thenius argues in support of this, that לָהֶם is to be connected not only with what immediately precedes, but also with סָרְנֵי גֹחֲשָׁת. But this latter is unfounded; and the idea is altogether irreconcilable with the fact that the wheels had naves (חֲשָׁקִים, v. 33), from which we must infer that they revolved upon the axles. The words וְאֶרְבָּעָה פְּעֻמֹתָיו כְּתֹפֶת לָהֶם are ambiguous. They may either be rendered, “and its four feet had shoulder-pieces,” or, as Thenius supposes, “and its four feet served as shoulder-pieces.” פְּעֻמָּה means stepping foot, feet bent out as if for stepping (Ex. 25:12). The suffix attached to פְּעֻמֹתָיו refers to מְכוּנָה, the masculine being often used indefinitely instead of the feminine, as in לָהֶם in v. 28. Thenius compares these feet to the ἀμαξόποδες of the Greeks, and imagines that they were divided below, like fork-shaped upright contrivances, in which, as in forks, the wheels turned with the axles, so that the axle-peg, which projected outwards, had a special apparatus, instead of the usual pin, in the form of a stirrup-like and on the lower side hand-shaped holder (יָד), which was fastened to the lower rim of the מְכוּנָה, and descended perpendicularly so as to cover the foot, and the general arrangement of the wheels themselves received greater strength in consequence. These feet, which were divided in the shape of forks, are supposed to be called כְּתֹפֶת (shoulders), because they were not attached underneath at the edge of the stand, but being cast with the

corner rims passed down in the inner angles, so that their uppermost portion was *under the basin*, and the lowest portion was under the stand, which we are to picture to ourselves as without a bottom, and projecting as a split foot, held the wheel, and so formed its shoulder-pieces. But we cannot regard this representation as either in accordance with the text, or as really correct. Even if **כְּתִפּוֹת לְהֵם** could in any case be grammatically rendered, “they served them (the wheels and axles) as shoulders,” although it would be a very questionable course to take **לְהֵם** in a different sense here from that which it bears in the perfectly similar construction in v. 28, the feet which carried the stand could not possibly be called the shoulders of the wheels and their axles, since they did not carry the wheels, but the **מְכוּנָה**. Moreover, this idea is irreconcilable with the following words: “below the basin were the shoulder-pieces cast.” If, for example, as Thenius assumes, the *mechonah* had a cover which was arched like a dome, and had a neck in the centre into which the basin was inserted by its lower rim, the shoulder-pieces, supposing that they were cast upon the inner borders of the chest, would not be *below the basin*, but simply below the corners of the lid of the chest, so that they would stand in no direct relation whatever to the basin. We must therefore give the preference to the rendering, which is grammatically the most natural one, “and its feet had shoulder-pieces,” and understand the words as signifying that from the feet, which descended of course from the four corner borders of the chest down to the axles, there ascended shoulder-pieces, which ran along the outside of the chest and reached to the lower part of the basin which was upon the lid of the chest, and as shoulders either supported or helped to support it. According to v. 34, these shoulder-pieces were so cast upon the four corners of the chest, that they sprang out of it as it were. **אֵישׁ לְיָדָיו**, opposite to each one were wreaths. Where these festoons were attached, the various senses in which **מְעַבְרֵם** is

used prevent our deciding with certainty. At any rate, we must reject the alternation proposed by Thenius, of **לְיָדָיו** into **לְאַחַת**, for the simple reason that **אֵישׁ לְאַחַת** in the sense of “one to the other” would not be Hebraic.

1 Kings 7:31. In v. 31 we have a description of the upper portion of the *mechonah*, which formed the pedestal for the basin, and therewith an explanation of **לְכִיר**. “And the mouth of it (the basin) was within the crown and upwards with a cubit, and the mouth of it (the crown) was rounded, stand-work, a cubit and a half (wide), and on its mouth also there was engraved work, and its panels were square, not round.” To understand this verse, we must observe that, according to v. 35, the *mechonah* chest was provided at the top with a dome-shaped covering, in the centre of which there was an elevation resembling the capital of a pillar (**הַכֶּתֶרֶת**, the crown), supporting the basin, which was inserted into it by its lower rim. The suffix in **פִּיהוּ** (its mouth) is supposed by Thenius to refer to the *mechonah* chest, and he questions the allusion to the basin, on the ground that this was so flat that a *mouth*-like opening could not possibly be spoken of, and the basins were never within the *mechonah*. But however correct these two remarks may be in themselves, they by no means demonstrate the necessity of taking **פִּיהוּ** as referring to the *mechonah* chest. For **פֶּה** (the mouth) is not necessarily to be understood as denoting a mouth-like opening to the basin; but just as **פִּי רֵאשׁ** in Ex. 28:32 signifies the opening of the clothes for the head, i.e., for putting the head through when putting on the clothes, so may **פִּיהוּ** (its mouth) be the opening or mouth for the basin, i.e., the opening into which the basin fitted and was emptied, the water in the basin being let off into the *mechonah* chest through the head-shaped neck by means of a tap or plug. The mouth was really the lower or contracted portion of the shell-shaped basin, which was about a cubit in height within the neck and

upwards, that is to say, in all, inasmuch as it went partly into the neck and rose in part above it. The פִּיהָ (the mouth thereof) which follows is the (upper) opening of the crown-like neck of the lid of the *mechonah*. This was rounded, מְעִשָּׂה־כֶּן, stand-work, i.e., according to De Wette's correct paraphrase, formed after the style of the foot of a pillar, a cubit and a half in diameter. "And also upon the mouth of it (the *mechonah*) was carved work." The גַּם (also) refers to the fact that the sides of the *mechonah* were already ornamented with carving. מִסְגְּרֹתֶיהֶם (פְּתֻרָת) and its mouth (פִּיהָ) were square, like the panels of the sides of the *mechonah* chest. The fact that panels are spoken of in connection with this neck, may be explained on the assumption that with its height of one cubit and its circumference of almost five cubits (which follows from its having a diameter of a cubit and a half) it had stronger borders of brass to strengthen its bearing power, while between them it consisted of thinner plates, which are called fillings or panels.—In vv. 32, 33, the wheels are more minutely described. Every stool had four wheels under the panels, i.e., not against the sides of the chest, but under them, and יָדוֹת, hands or holders of the wheels, i.e., special contrivances for fastening the wheels to the axles, probably larger and more artistically worked than the linch-pins of ordinary carriages. These יָדוֹת were only required when the wheels turned upon the axles, and not when they were fastened to them. The height of the wheel was a cubit and a half, i.e., not half the height, but the whole. For with a half height of a cubit and a half the wheels would have been three cubits in diameter; and as the chest was only four cubits long, the hinder wheels and front wheels would almost have touched one another. The work (construction) of the wheels resembled that of (ordinary) carriage wheels; but everything about them (holders, felloes, spokes, and naves) was cast in brass.—In v. 34 the description passes to the upper portion of the *mechonah*. "And he made four shoulder-

pieces at the four corners of one (i.e., of every) stand; out of the stand were its shoulder-pieces." כְּתָפוֹת are the shoulder-pieces already mentioned in v. 30, which were attached to the feet below, or which terminated in feet. They were fastened to the corners in such a way that they seemed to come out of them; and they rose above the corners with a slight inclination (curve) towards the middle of the neck or capital, till they came under the outer rim of the basin which rested upon the capital of the lid of the chest, so as to support the basin, which turned considerably outwards at the top.

1 Kings 7:35. "And on the upper part of the stand (the *mechonah* chest) half a cubit high was rounded all round, and on the upper part were its holders, and its panels out of it. רֹאשׁ הַמְּכוּנָה is the upper portion of the square chest. This was not flat, but rounded, i.e., arched, so that the arching rose half a cubit high above the height of the sides. This arched covering (or lid) had יָדוֹת, holders, and panels, which were therefore upon the upper part of the מְכוּנָה. The *holders* we take to be strong broad borders of brass, which gave the lid the necessary firmness; and the fillings or panels are the thinner plates of brass between them. They were both מִמֶּנָּה, "out of it," out of the upper part of the *mechonah*, i.e., cast along with it. With regard to the decoration of it, v. 36 states that "he cut out (engraved) upon the plates of its holders, and upon its panels, cherubim, lions, and palms, according to the empty space of every one, and wreaths all round." We cannot determine anything further with regard to the distribution of these figures.

1 Kings 7:37, 38. "Thus he made the ten stools of one kind of casting, measure, and form, and also ten brazen basins (בַּיִרוֹת), each holding forty baths, and each basin four cubits." In a round vessel this can only be understood of the diameter, not of the height or depth, as the basins were set upon (עַל) the stands. בַּיִר אֶחָד עָלֶיהֶם is dependent upon וַיַּעַשׂ: he made ten

basins, ... one basin upon a stand for the ten stands, i.e., one basin for each stand. If then the basins were a cubit in diameter at the top, and therefore their size corresponded almost exactly to the length and breadth of the stand, whilst the crown-like neck, into which they were inserted, was only a cubit and a half in diameter (v. 31), their shape must have resembled that of widespreading shells. And the form thus given to them required the shoulder-pieces described in vv. 30 and 34 as supports beneath the outer rim of the basins, to prevent their upsetting when the carriage was wheeled about.³⁹

1 Kings 7:39. And he put the stands five on the right side of the house and five on the left; and the (brazen) sea he put upon the right side eastwards, opposite to the south. The right side is the south side, and the left the north side. Consequently the stands were not placed on the right and left, i.e., on each side of the altar of burnt-offering, but on each side of the house, i.e., of the temple-hall; while the brazen sea stood farther forward between the hall and the altar, only more towards the south, i.e., to the south-east of the hall and the south-west of the altar of burnt-offering. The basins upon the stands were for washing (according to 2 Chron. 4:6), namely, "the work of the burnt-offering," that is to say, for cleansing the flesh and fat, which were to be consumed upon the altar of burnt-offering. By means of the stands on wheels they could not only easily bring the water required near to the priests who were engaged in preparing the sacrifices, but could also let down the dirty water into the chest of the stand by means of a special contrivance introduced for the purpose, and afterwards take it away. As the introduction of carriages for the basins arose from the necessities of the altar-service, so the preparation of ten such stands, and the size of the basins, was occasioned by the greater extension of the sacrificial worship, in which it often happened that a considerable number of sacrifices had to be made ready for the altar at the same time. The artistic work of these stands and their decoration with figures were intended to show

that these vessels were set apart for the service of the sanctuary. The emblems are to some extent the same as those on the walls of the sanctuary, viz., cherubim, palms, and flowers, which had therefore naturally the same meaning here as they had there; the only difference being that they were executed there in gold, whereas here they were in brass, to correspond to the character of the court. Moreover, there were also figures of lions and oxen, pointing no doubt to the royal and priestly characters, which were combined, according to Ex. 19:6, in the nation worshipping the Lord in this place.

1 Kings 7:40–51. *Summary enumeration of the other vessels of the temple.*—In v. 40 the brazen vessels of the court are given. In vv. 41–47 the several portions of the brazen pillars, the stands and basins, the brazen sea and the smaller vessels of brass, are mentioned once more, together with notices of the nature, casting, and quantity of the metal used for making them. An *din* vv. 48–50 we have the golden vessels of the Holy Place. This section agrees almost word for word with 2 Chron. 4:11–5:1, where, moreover, not only is the arrangement observed in the previous description of the temple-building a different one, but the making of the brazen altar of burnt-offering, of the golden candlesticks, and of the table of shew-bread, and the arrangement of the great court (2 Chron. 4:7–9) are also described, to which there is no allusion whatever in the account before us; so that these notices in the Chronicles fill up an actual gap in the description of the building of the temple which is given here.

1 Kings 7:40a. *The smaller brazen vessels.*—Hiram made the pots, shovels, and bowls. הַכִּירֹת is a slip of the pen for הַסִּירֹת, pots, as we may see by comparing it with v. 45 and the parallel passages 2 Chron. 4:11 and 2 Kings 25:14. The pots were used for carrying away the ashes; הַיָּעִים, the shovels, for clearing the ashes from the altar; הַמְזִרְקוֹת were the bowls used for catching the blood, when the sacrificial animals

were slaughtered: compare Ex. 27:3 and Num. 4:14, where forks and fire-basins or coal-pans are also mentioned.

1 Kings 7:40b. V. 40*b* introduces the recapitulation of all the vessels made by Hiram. בֵּית יְהוָה, in the house of the Lord (cf. Ewald, § 300, *b.*); in 2 Chron. 4:11 more clearly, בְּבֵית יי; we find it also in v. 45, for which we have in 2 Chron. 4:16 לְבֵית יְהוָה, for the house of Jehovah. The several objects enumerated in vv. 41–45 are accusatives governed by לְעִשׂוֹת.

1 Kings 7:41–44. Vv. 41–44, the brazen pillars with the several portions of their capitals; see at vv. 15–22. The inappropriate expression עַל-פְּנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים (upon the face of the pillars) in v. 42 is probably a mistake for עַל-שְׁנֵי הָעַמֻּדִים, “upon the two pillars,” for it could not properly be said of the capitals that they were upon the surface of the pillars.

1 Kings 7:43. The ten stands and their basins: see at vv. 27–37; v. 44, the brazen sea: vid., vv. 23–26; lastly, v. 45, the pots, etc., as at v. 40. The *Chethîb* הַאֵהָל is a mistake for הָאֵלֶּה (*Keri*).⁴⁰ נְהַשֵּׁת מְמֹרֵט, of polished brass—accusative of the material governed by עָשָׂה.

1 Kings 7:46. “In the Jordan valley he cast them—in thickened earth between Succoth and Zarthan,” where the ground, according to Burckhardt, *Syr.* ii. p. 593, is marly throughout. בְּמַעֲבֵה הָאֲדָמָה, “by thickening of the earth,” the forms being made in the ground by stamping together the clayey soil. *Succoth* was on the other side of the Jordan,—not, however, at the ford near Bethsean (Thenius), but on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Judg. 8:5 and Gen. 33:17). *Zarthan* or *Zereda* was in the Jordan valley on this side, probably at *Kurn Sartabeh* (see at Judg. 7:22 and Josh. 3:16). The casting-place must have been on this side of the Jordan, as the (eastern) bank on the other side has scarcely any level ground at all. The circumstance that a place on the other side is mentioned in connection with one on this side, may be explained from the fact that the two

places were obliquely opposite to one another, and in the valley on this side there was no large place in the neighbourhood above Zarthan which could be appropriately introduced to define the site of the casting-place.

1 Kings 7:47. Solomon left all these vessels of excessive number unweighed. וַיִּנָּח does not mean he laid them down (= set them up: Movers), but he let them lie, i.e., unweighed, as the additional clause, “the weight of the brass was not ascertained,” clearly shows. This large quantity of brass, according to 1 Chron. 18:8, David had taken from the cities of Hadadezer, adding also the brass presented to him by Toi.

1 Kings 7:48–50. *The golden vessels of the Holy Place* (cf. 2 Chron. 4:19–22). The vessels enumerated here are divided, by the repetition of זָהָב קָגוֹר in vv. 49 and 50, into two classes, which were made of fine gold; and to this a third class is added in v. 50*b* which was made of gold of inferior purity. As זָהָב קָגוֹר is governed in both instances by וַיַּעַשׂ as an accusative of the material, the זָהָב (gold) attached to the separate vessels must be taken as an adjective. “Solomon made all the vessels in the house of Jehovah (i.e., had them made): the golden altar, and the golden table on which was the shew-bread, and the candlesticks ... of costly gold (קָגוֹר: see at 1 Kings 6:20). *The house of Jehovah* is indeed here, as in v. 40, the temple with its courts, and not merely the Holy Place, or the temple-house in the stricter sense; but it by no means follows from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים, “all the vessels,” includes both the brazen vessels already enumerated and also the golden vessels mentioned afterwards. A decisive objection to our taking the כָּל (all) as referring to those already enumerated as well as those which follow, is to be found in the circumstance that the sentence commencing with וַיַּעַשׂ is only concluded with זָהָב קָגוֹר in v. 49. It is evident from this that כָּל-הַכֵּלִים is particularized in the several vessels enumerated from מִזְבֵּחַ

onwards. These vessels no doubt belonged to the Holy Place or temple-house only; though this is not involved in the expression “the house of Jehovah,” but is apparent from the context, or from the fact that all the vessels of the court have already been enumerated in vv. 40–46, and were made of brass, whereas the *golden* vessels follow here. That there were intended for the Holy Place is assumed as well known from the analogy of the tabernacle. אֲשֶׁר בֵּית יְהוָה merely affirms that the vessels mentioned afterwards belonged to the house of God, and were not prepared for the palace of Solomon or any other earthly purpose. We cannot infer from the expression “Solomon made” that the golden vessels were not made by Hiram the artist, as the brazen ones were (Thenius). Solomon is simply named as the builder of the temple, and the introduction of his name was primarily occasioned by v. 47. The “golden altar” is the altar of incense in the Holy Place, which is called golden because it was overlaid with gold-plate; for, according to 1 Kings 6:20, its sides were covered with cedar wood, after the analogy of the golden altar in the tabernacle (Ex. 30:1–5). “And the table, upon which the shew-bread, of gold.” הַשֻּׁלְחָן זָהָב belongs to הַשֻּׁלְחָן, to which it stands in free subjection (vid., Ewald, § 287, h), signifying “the golden table.” Instead of הַשֻּׁלְחָן we have הַשֻּׁלְחָנוֹת in 2 Chron. 4:19 (the tables), because there it has already been stated in v. 8 that ten tables were made, and put in the Holy Place. In our account that verse is omitted; and hence there is only a notice of *the* table upon which the loaves of shew-bread generally lay, just as in 2 Chron. 29:18, in which the chronicler does not contradict himself, as Thenius fancies. The number ten, moreover, is required and proved to be correct in the case of the tables, by the occurrence of the same number in connection with the candlesticks. In no single passage of the Old Testament is it stated that there was only one table of shew-bread in the Holy Place of Solomon’s temple.⁴¹ The tables were certainly made of wood, like the Mosaic table of shew-bread, probably of cedar wood, and only overlaid with gold (see at

Ex. 25:23–30). “And the candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left, before the back-room.” These were also made in imitation of the Mosaic candlestick (see Ex. 25:31ff.), and were probably placed not near to the party wall in a straight line to the right and left of the door leading into the Most Holy Place, but along the two longer sides of the Holy Place; and the same with the tables, except that they stood nearer to the side walls with the candlesticks in front of them, so that the whole space might be lighted more brilliantly. The altar of burnt-offering, on the contrary, stood in front of and very near to the entrance into the Most Holy Place (see at 1 Kings 6:20).

In the following clause (vv. 49b and 50a) the ornaments of the candlesticks are mentioned first, and then the rest of the smaller golden vessels are enumerated. הַפְּרָח, the flower-work, with which the candlesticks were ornamented (see Ex. 25:33). The word is evidently used collectively here, so that the נְבִיטִים mentioned along with them in the book of Exodus (*l.c.*) are included. הַנִּירֹת, the lamps, which were placed upon the shaft and arms of the candlestick (Ex. 25:37). הַמְּלֶקְחִים, the snuffers (Ex. 25:38). סַפּוֹת, basins in Ex. 12:22, here probably deep dishes (*Schalen*). מְזֻמְרוֹת, knives. מְזֻרְקוֹת, bowls (*Schalen*) or cans with spouts for the wine for the libations; according to 2 Chron. 4:8, there were a hundred of these made. כַּפּוֹת, small flat vessels, probably for carrying the incense to the altar. מְחַתּוֹת, extinguishers; see at Ex. 25:38.

1 Kings 7:50b. The פְּתוֹת were also of gold, possibly of inferior quality. These were either the *hinges* of the doors, or more probably the sockets, in which the pegs of the doors turned. They were provided for the doors of the inner temple, viz., the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. We must supply *Vāv* before לְדֹלְתָי.

All the vessels mentioned in vv. 48 and 49 belonged to the Holy Place of the temple, and were the same as those in the tabernacle; so that the remarks made in the Comm. on Ex.

25:30 and 39, and 30:1–10, as to their purpose and signification, apply to them as well. Only the number of the tables and candlesticks was ten times greater. If a multiplication of the number of these two vessels appeared appropriate on account of the increases in the size of the room, the number was fixed at ten, to express the idea of completeness by that number. No new vessel was made for the Most Holy Place, because the Mosaic ark of the covenant was placed therein (1 Kings 8:4: compare the remarks on this at Ex. 25:10–22).—The account of the vessels of the temple is brought to a close in v. 51: “So was ended all the work that king Solomon made in the house of the Lord; and Solomon brought all that was consecrated by his father, (namely) the silver and the gold (which were not wrought), and the vessels he placed in the treasuries of the house of Jehovah.” As so much gold and brass had already been expended upon the building, it might appear strange that Solomon should not have used up all the treasures collected by his father, but should still be able to bring a large portion of it into the treasuries of the temple. But according to 1 Chron. 22:14, 16, and 29:2ff., David had collected together an almost incalculable amount of gold, silver, and brass, and had also added his own private treasure and the freewill offerings of the leading men of the nation (1 Chron. 29:7–9). Solomon was also able to devote to the building of the temple a considerable portion of his own very large revenues (cf. 1 Kings 10:14), so that a respectable remnant might still be left of the treasure of the sanctuary, which was not first established by David, but had been commenced by Samuel and Saul, and in which David’s generals, Joab and others, had deposited a portion of the gold and silver that they had taken as booty (1 Chron. 26:20–28). For it is evident that not a little had found its way into this treasure through the successful wars of David, from the fact that golden shields were taken from the generals of Hadadezer, and that these were consecrated to the Lord along with the silver, golden, and brazen vessels offered as gifts of homage by king Toi of Hamath, in

addition to the gold and silver which David had consecrated from the defeated Syrians, Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and Amalekites (2 Sam. 8:7, 11, 12; 1 Chron. 18:7, 10, 11).⁴²

1 Kings 8

Dedication of the Temple (Ch. 8)

1 Kings 8. This solemn transaction consisted of three parts, and the chapter arranges itself in three sections accordingly: viz., (a) the conveyance of the ark and the tabernacle, together with its vessels, into the temple, with the words spoken by Solomon on the occasion (vv. 1–21); (b) Solomon’s dedicatory prayer (vv. 22–53); (c) the blessing of the congregation, and the offering of sacrifice and observance of a feast (vv. 54–66).—The parallel account to this in 2 Chron. 5:2–7:10, in addition to certain minor alterations of words and constructions, introduced for the most part merely for the sake of elucidation, contains here and there, and more especially towards the end, a few deviations of greater extent, partly omissions and partly additions. But in other respects it agrees almost word for word with our account.

With regard to the time of the dedication, it is merely stated in v. 2 that the heads of the nation assembled at Jerusalem to this feast in the seventh month. The year in which this took place is not given. But as the building of the temple was finished, according to 1 Kings 6:38, in the *eighth* month of the eleventh year of Solomon’s reign, the dedication which followed in the *seventh* month cannot have taken place in the same year as the completion of the building. Ewald’s opinion, that Solomon dedicated the building a month before it was finished, is not only extremely improbable in itself, but is directly at variance with 1 Kings 7:51. If we add to this, that according to 1 Kings 9:1–10 it was not till after the lapse of twenty years, during which he had built the two houses, the temple, and his palace, that the Lord appeared to Solomon at the dedication of the temple and promised to answer his prayer, we must decide

in favour of the view held by Thenius, that the dedication of the temple did not take place till twenty years after the building of it was begun, or thirteen years after it was finished, and when Solomon had also completed the building of the palace, which occupied thirteen years, as the LXX have indicated at the commencement of 1 Kings 8:1 by the interpolation of the words, καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς συνετέλεσε Σαλωμὼν τοῦ οἰκοδομησαὶ τὸν οἶκον Κυρίου καὶ τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ μετὰ εἴκοσι ἔτη.⁴³

1 Kings 8:1–21. The First Act of the solemnities consisted (1) in the removal of the ark of the covenant into the Most Holy Place of the temple (vv. 1–11); and (2) in the words with which Solomon celebrated the entrance of the Lord into the new temple (vv. 12–21).

1 Kings 8:1–11. *Removal of the ark of the covenant into the temple.*—This solemn transaction was founded entirely upon the solemnities with which the ark was conveyed in the time of David from the house of Obed-edom into the holy tent upon Zion (2 Sam. 6:12ff.; 1 Chron. 15:2ff.). Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses (נְשִׂאֵי הָאֲבוֹת, contracted from נְשִׂאֵי בֵּית הָאֲבוֹת of the Israelites, as representatives of the whole congregation, to himself at Jerusalem, to bring the ark of the covenant out of the city of David, i.e., from Mount Zion (see the Comm. on 2 Sam. 6:16, 17), into the temple which he had built upon Moriah. (On the use of the contracted form of the imperfect יִקְהֵל after אָז, see Ewald, § 233, b.)

1 Kings 8:2. Accordingly “all the men of Israel (i.e., the heads of the tribes and families mentioned in v. 1) assembled together to the king in the month Ethanim, i.e., the seventh month, at the feast.” Gesenius explains the name הָאֲתָנִים (in 55 codd. הָאֲתָנִים) as meaning “month of the flowing brooks,” after אֲתָן in Prov. 13:15; Böttcher, on the other hand, supposes it to denote the equinox. But apart from other grounds, the plural by no means favours this. Nor does the seventh month

answer to the period between the middle of our September and the middle of October, as is supposed by Thenius, who founds upon this supposition the explanation already rejected by Böttcher, viz., “month of gifts;” but it corresponds to the period between the new moon of October and the new moon of November, during which the rainy season commences in Palestine (Rob. *Pal.* ii. p. 96ff.), so that this month may very well have received its name from the constant flowing of the brooks. The explanation, “that is the seventh month,” is added, however (here as in 1 Kings 6:1, 38), not because the arrangement of the months was a different one before the captivity (Thenius), but because different names came into use for the months during the captivity. הַגָּ is construed with the article: “because the feast intended was one that was well known, and had already been kept for a long time (viz., the feast of tabernacles).” The article overthrows the explanation given by Thenius, who supposes that the reference is to the festivities connected with the dedication of the temple itself.

1 Kings 8:3, 4. After the arrival of all the elders (i.e., of the representatives of the nation, more particularly described in v. 1), the priests carried the ark and brought it up (sc., into the temple), with the tabernacle and all the holy vessels in it. The expression וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם, which follows, introduces as a supplementary notice, according to the general diffuseness of the early Hebrew style of narrative, the more precise statement that the priests and Levites brought up these sacred vessels. אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד is not the tent erected for the ark of the covenant upon Zion, which can be proved to have been never so designated, and which is expressly distinguished from the former in 2 Chron. 1:4 as compared with v. 3, but is the Mosaic tabernacle at Gibeon in front of which Solomon had offered sacrifice (1 Kings 3:4). The tabernacle with the vessels in it, to which, however, the ark of the covenant, that had long been separated from it, did not belong, was probably preserved as a sacred relic in the rooms above the Most Holy Place. The ark of

the covenant was carried by priests on all solemn occasions, according to the spirit of the law, which enjoined, in Num. 3:31 and 4:5ff., that the ark of the covenant and the rest of the sacred vessels should be carried by the Levites, after the priests had carefully wrapped them up; and the Levites were prohibited from directly touching them, on pain of death. When, therefore, the ark of the covenant was carried in solemn procession, as in the case before us, probably uncovered, this could only be done by the priests, more especially as the Levites were not allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. Consequently, by the statement in v. 3*b*, that the priests and Levites carried *them* (אֹתָם), viz., the objects mentioned before, we are to understand that the ark of the covenant was carried into the temple by the priests, and the tabernacle with its vessels by the Levites.⁴⁴

1 Kings 8:5. “And king Solomon and the whole congregation, that had gathered round him, were with him before the ark sacrificing sheep and oxen in innumerable multitude.” This took place while the ark of the covenant was carried up, no doubt when it was brought into the court of the temple, and was set down there for a time either within or in front of the hall. Then was this magnificent sacrifice “offered” there “in front of the ark” (לְפָנֵי הָאָרוֹן).

1 Kings 8:6. After this sacrificing was ended, the priests carried the ark to its place, into the back-room of the house, into the Most Holy under the wings of the cherubim (already described in 1 Kings 6:23ff.). The latter statement is explained in v. 7. “For the cherubim were spreading out wings towards the place of the ark, and so covered (lit., threw a shade) over the ark and over its poles from above.” If the outspread wings of the great cherubic figures threw a shade not only over the ark of the covenant, but also over its poles, the ark was probably so placed that the poles ran from north to south, and not from east to west, as they are sketched in my *Archäologie*.

1 Kings 8:8. “And the poles were long, and there were seen their heads (i.e., they were so long that their heads were seen) from the Holy

Place before the hinder room; but on the outside (outside the Holy Place, say in the porch) they were not seen.” יָאָרְכוּ cannot be rendered: they had lengthened the poles, from which Kimchi and others have inferred that they had made new and longer carrying-poles, since the form of the tense in this connection cannot be the pluperfect, and in that case, moreover the object would be indicated by אֵת as in 1 Kings 3:14; but הָאָרְיָד is used intransitively, “to be long,” lit., to show length, as in Ex. 20:12, Deut. 5:16, etc. The remark to the effect that the poles were visible, indicates that the precept of the law in Ex. 25:15, according to which the poles were to be left in the ark, was observed in Solomon’s temple also. Any one could convince himself of this, for the poles were there “to this day.” The author of our books has retained this chronological allusion as he found it in his original sources; for when he composed his work, the temple was no longer standing. It is impossible, however, to ascertain from this statement how the heads of the poles could be seen in the Holy Place,—whether from the fact that they reached the curtain and formed elevations therein, if the poles ran from front to back; or whether, if, as is more probable, they ran from south to north, the front heads were to be seen, simply when the curtain was drawn back.⁴⁵

1 Kings 8:9. “There was nothing in the ark but the two tables of stone, which Moses had put there at Horeb, when Jehovah concluded the covenant with Israel.” The intention of this remark is also simply to show that the law, which enjoined that the ark should merely preserve the stone tables of the covenant (Ex. 25:16; 40:20), had not been departed from in the lapse of time. אֲשֶׁר before בְּרַת is not a pronoun, but a conjunction: when, from the time that, as in Deut. 11:6, etc. בְּרַת without בְּרִית, signifying the conclusion of a covenant, as in 1 Sam. 20:16; 22:8, etc. *Horeb*, the general name for the place where the law was given, instead of the more definite name *Sinai*, as in Deuteronomy (see the Comm. on Ex. 19:1, 2).⁴⁶

1 Kings 8:10, 11. At the dedication of the tabernacle the glory of Jehovah in the cloud filled the sanctuary, so that Moses could not enter (Ex. 40:34, 35); and so was it now. When the priests came out of the sanctuary, after putting the ark of the covenant in its place, the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not stand to minister. The signification of this fact was the same on both occasions. The cloud, as the visible symbol of the gracious presence of God, filled the temple, as a sign that Jehovah the covenant-God had entered into it, and had chosen it as the scene of His gracious manifestation in Israel. By the inability of the priests to stand, we are not to understand that the cloud drove them away; for it was not till the priests had come out that it filled the temple. It simply means that they could not remain in the Holy Place to perform service, say to offer an incense-offering upon the altar to consecrate it, just as sacrifices were offered upon the altar of burnt-offering after the dedicatory prayer (vv. 62, 63).⁴⁷

The glory of the Lord, which is like a consuming fire (Ex. 24:17; Deut. 4:24; 9:3), before which unholy man cannot stand, manifested itself in the cloud. This marvellous manifestation of the glory of God took place only at the dedication; after that the cloud was only visible in the Most Holy Place on the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered it.—The Chronicles contain a long account at this place of the playing and singing of the Levites at these solemnities (vid., 2 Chron. 5:12–14).

1 Kings 8:12–21. *Solomon extols this marvellous proof of the favour of the Lord.*—V. 12. Then spake Solomon, “Jehovah hath spoken to dwell in the darkness.” “Solomon saw that the temple was filled with a cloud, and remembered that God had been pleased to appear in a cloud in the tent of Moses also. Hence he assuredly believed that God was in this cloud also, and that, as formerly He had filled the tabernacle, so He would now fill the temple and dwell therein” (Seb. Schmidt). אָמַר יהוה וגו', which Thenius still renders incorrectly, “the Lord intends to dwell in the darkness,”

refers, as Rashi, C. a Lap., and others have seen, to the utterances of God in the Pentateuch concerning the manifestation of His gracious presence among His people, not merely to Lev. 16:2 (I will appear in the cloud), but also to Ex. 19:9, where the Lord said to Moses, “I come to thee בָּעֶבֶר הָעָנָן,” and still more to Ex. 20:21 and Deut. 4:11; 5:19, according to which God came down upon Sinai בְּעֶרְפָּל. Solomon took the word עֶרְפָּל from these passages. That he meant by this the black, dark cloud which filled the temple, is perfectly obvious from the combination וְהָעָנָן וְהָעֶרְפָּל in Deut. 5:19 and 4:11.⁴⁸ Solomon saw this word of Jehovah realized in the filling of the temple with the cloud, and learned therefrom that the Lord would dwell in this temple. Hence, being firmly convinced of the presence of Jehovah in the cloud which filled the sanctuary, he adds in v. 13: “I have built Thee a house to dwell in, a place for Thy seat for ever.” We are not to understand עוֹלָמִים as signifying that Solomon believed that the temple built by him would stand for ever; but it is to be explained partly from the contrast to the previous abode of God in the tabernacle, which from the very nature of the case could only be a temporary one, inasmuch as a tent, such as the tabernacle was, is not only a moveable and provisional dwelling, but also a very perishable one, and partly from the promise given to David in 2 Sam. 7:14–16, that the Lord would establish the throne of his kingdom for his seed for ever. This promise involved the eternal duration of the gracious connection between God and Israel, which was embodied in the dwelling of God in the temple. This connection, from its very nature, was an eternal one; even if the earthly form, from which Solomon at that moment abstracted himself, was temporal and perishable.—Solomon had spoken these words with his face turned to the Most Holy Place. He then (v. 14) turned his face to the congregation, which was standing in the court, and blessed it. The word “blessed” (בֵּרַךְ) denotes the wish for a blessing with which the king greeted the

assembled congregation, and introduced the praise of God which follows.—In vv. 15–21 he praises the Lord for having now fulfilled with His hand what He spake with His mouth to his father David (2 Sam. 7).

1 Kings 8:16. The promise of God, to choose Jerusalem as the place for the temple and David as prince, is taken freely from 2 Sam. 7:7, 8. In 2 Chron. 6:6, before “I chose David,” we find “and I chose Jerusalem, that my name might be there;” so that the affirmation answers more precisely to the preceding negation, whereas in the account before us this middle term is omitted.

1 Kings 8:17–19. David’s intention to build the temple, and the answer of God that his son was to execute this work, are so far copied from 2 Sam. 7:2, 12, 13, that God approves the intention of David as such. הִטִּיבְתָּ, “Thou didst well that it was in thy mind.”

1 Kings 8:20, 21. “And Jehovah has set up His word.” מְלֵא וַיִּקֶּם וגו' supplies the explanation of מְלֵא בְיָדוֹ (hath fulfilled with his hand) in v. 15. God had caused Solomon to take possession of the throne of David; and Solomon had built the temple and prepared a place there for the ark of the covenant. The ark is thereby declared to be the kernel and star of the temple, because it was the throne of the glory of God.

1 Kings 8:22–53. Second Act of the feast of dedication: *Solomon’s dedicatory prayer* (cf. 2 Chron. 6:12–42).—V. 22. “Then Solomon stood before the altar of Jehovah in front of all the assembly of Israel, and stretched out his hands towards heaven.” It is evident from v. 54 that Solomon uttered the prayer which follows upon his knees. The Chronicles contain the same account as we have here, with this addition, that it is said to have taken place on a “scaffold,” or kind of pulpit (בַּיּוֹר) specially erected for the purpose.⁴⁹ The altar, to the front of which Solomon went, was the altar of burnt-offering in the court, where the congregation was gathered together. The expression נִגַּד בְּלִיקְהָל מִלְּפָנֵי יְשׁוּבֵי עַל-בֵּית־יְהוָה favours the idea that Solomon offered the

prayer upon his knees with his face turned towards the congregation, and not with his back to the people and his face turned towards the temple, as Thenius supposes.—The substance of the prayer is closely connected with the prayer of Moses, especially with the blessings and curses therein (vid., Lev. 26 and Deut. 28). Commencing with the praise of God, who “keepeth covenant and truth” towards His servants, and has thus far performed to His servant David the promise that He gave him (vv. 23, 24), Solomon entreats the Lord still further to fulfil this promise of His (vv. 25, 26), and to keep His eyes constantly open over the temple, to hearken to the prayers of His people, and to avert the curse threatened against sinners from all who shall call upon Him in this temple (vv. 27–53).

1 Kings 8:23, 24. By granting the blessing promised to His people, the Lord has hitherto proved Himself to be the true and only God in heaven and on earth, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who walk before Him with all their heart. This acknowledgment provides the requisite confidence for offering the prayer which is sure of an answer (Matt. 21:22; Mark 11:24; Jas. 1:6). For אֵיךְ-כִּמֹּנֶה אֱלֹהִים, compare Ex. 15:11 with Deut. 4:39; 2 Sam. 7:22; 22:32; Ps. 86:8. “Who keepeth covenant and mercy,” *verbatim* the same as in Deut. 7:9. The promise given to His servant David (2 Sam. 7), the fulfilment of which the commencement now lay before their eyes (cf. vv. 20, 21), was an emanation from the covenant faithfulness of God. “As it is this day,” as in 1 Kings 3:6.

1 Kings 8:25. The expression “and now” (וְעַתָּה) introduces the prayer for the further fulfilment of the promise, never to allow a successor upon the throne to be wanting to David, in the same conditional form in which David had uttered the hope in 1 Kings 2:4, and in which the Lord had renewed the promise to Solomon during the building of the temple (1 Kings 6:12, 13). In מִלְּפָנֵי יְשׁוּבֵי עַל-בֵּית־יְהוָה, instead of מִלְּפָנֵי יְהוָה in 1 Kings 2:4, the divine rejection is more distinctly indicated.

1 Kings 8:26. V. 26 is not merely a repetition of the prayer in v. 25, as Thenius supposes, but forms the introduction to the prayers which follow for the hearing of all the prayer presented before the Lord in the temple. The words, “let Thy words be verified, which Thou spakest unto Thy servant David,” contain something more than a prayer for the continual preservation of the descendants of David upon the throne, for the fulfilment of which Solomon prayed in v. 25. They refer to the whole of the promise in 2 Sam. 7:12–16. The plural **דְּבַרְיָךְ** (*Chethib*) points back to **כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים** in 2 Sam. 7:17, and is not to be altered into the singular after the *Keri*. The singular **אָמַן** is used as it frequently is with the subject in the plural, when the verb precedes (cf. Ewald. § 316, a., 1). Solomon has here in mind one particular point in the promise, viz., that God would not withdraw His mercy from the seed of David, even when it sinned. This is evident from what follows, where he mentions simply cases of transgression, and prays that they may be forgiven.

1 Kings 8:26–28ff. are closely connected in this sense: keep Thy words that were spoken to David; for although this temple cannot hold Thine infinite divine nature, I know that Thou wilt have respect to the prayer of Thy servant, to keep Thine eyes open over this temple, to hear every prayer which Thy people shall bring before Thee therein. **וּפְנִיתָ** in v. 28 continues the optative **אָמַן נָא** in v. 26; and v. 27 contains an intermediate thought, with which Solomon meets certain contracted ideas of the gracious presence of God in the temple. **כִּי** (v. 27) signifies neither but, nevertheless, *atque* (Böttcher), nor “as” (Thenius, Bertheau); and the assertion that v. 27 is the commencement of a new section is overthrown by the inadmissible rendering of **וּפְנִיתָ**, “but Thou turnest Thyself” (Thenius).—With the words, “Should God really dwell upon the earth! behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens (i.e., the heavens in their widest extent, cf. Deut.

10:14) cannot contain Thee, to say nothing (**אָמַן**; cf. Ewald, § 354, c.) of this house which I have built,” in which the infinitude of God and His exaltation above the world are expressed as clearly and forcibly as possible, Solomon does not intend to guard against the delusion that God really dwells in temples (J. D. Mich.), but simply to meet the erroneous idea that He dwells in the temple as men dwell in a house, namely, shut up within it, and not also outside and above it,—a delusion which sometimes forced its way into the unspiritual nation but which was always attacked by the prophets (cf. Mic. 3:11; Jer. 7:4, etc.). For it is evident that Solomon did combine with his clear perception of the infinite exaltation of God a firm belief in His real presence in the temple, and did not do homage to the abstract idealism of the rationalists, not merely from his declaration in vv. 12ff. that he had built this temple as a dwelling-place for God, but also from the substance of all the following prayers, and primarily from the general prayer in vv. 28 and 29, that God would take this temple under His special protection, and hearken to every prayer directed towards it. The distinction between **תְּפִלָּה**, **תְּחִנָּה**, and **רְנָה** is the following: **תְּפִלָּה** denotes prayer in general, praise, supplication, and thanksgiving; **תְּחִנָּה**, supplication or entreaty, prayer for help and mercy; and **רְנָה**, jubilation, prayer as the joyous utterance of praise and thanksgiving.

1 Kings 8:29. “That Thine eyes may be open upon this house night and day.” **אֶל־הַבַּיִת**, *speciali quadam providentia in hanc domum directi* (Mich.). The following clause, “upon the place of which Thou hast said, My name shall be there” (namely, 2 Sam. 7:13, *implicite*), contains within itself the ground upon which the prayer rests. Because the name of God will be in the temple, i.e., because God will manifest His gracious presence there, He will also keep His eyes open upon it, so as to hear the prayer of Solomon directed towards it. **אֶל הַמְּקוֹם הַזֶּה** (toward this place): because Solomon also was prayer in the

court towards the temple.—In v. 30, “and hear the supplication of Thy servant and of Thy people Israel,” he begins by asking that those prayers may be heard which the king and people shall henceforth bring before God in the temple. וְשָׁמַעְתָּ corresponds to וּפְנִיָּתָּ in v. 28, and is more precisely defined by the following וְאָתָּה תִּשְׁמַע (as for these prayers), Thou wilt hear them up to the place of Thine abode, to heaven. אֲלֵךְ is a pregnant expression: to hear the prayer, which ascends to heaven. In the Chronicles we find throughout the explanatory כִּן. The last words, “hear and forgive,” must be left in their general form, and not limited by anything to be supplied. Nothing but forgiveness of sin can remove the curse by which transgression is followed.

This general prayer is then particularized from v. 31 onwards by the introduction of *seven* special petitions for an answer in the different cases in which, in future, prayers may be offered to God in the temple. The *first* prayer (vv. 31, 32) has reference to the oaths sworn in the temple, the sanctity of which God is asked to protect. “If a man sin against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him, to cause him to swear, and he come (and) swear before the altar in this house, then wilt Thou hear,” etc. אָתָּה אֲשֶׁר does not mean either “granted that” (Thenius) or “just *when*” (Ewald, § 533, *a.*), although אִם is used in the Chronicles, and we might render it freely “*when*,” but אָתָּה is simply an accusative particle, serving to introduce the following clause, in the sense of “as for,” or “with regard to (such a case as) that a man sins” (vid., Ewald, § 277, *a.*). וּבָא אֲלֵהָ cannot be taken as anything but an *asyndeton*. For if אֲלֵהָ were a substantive, it would have the article (הָאֲלֵהָ) provided it were the subject, and the verb would be written בָּאָהָ; and if it were the object, we should have בָּאָהָ, as in Neh. 10:30 (cf. Ezek. 17:13). The prayer refers to the cases mentioned in Ex. 22:6–12 and Lev. 5:21–24,

when property entrusted to any one had been lost or injured, or when a thing had been found and the finding was denied, or when an act of fraud had been committed; in which cases the law required not only compensation with the addition of a fifth of its value, but also a trespass-offering as an expiation of the sin committed by taking a false oath. But as this punishment could only be inflicted when the guilty person afterwards confessed his guilt, many false oaths might have been sworn in the cases in question and have remained unpunished, so far as men were concerned. Solomon therefore prays that the Lord will hear every such oath that shall have been sworn before the altar, and work (עָשִׂיתָ), i.e., actively interpose, and judge His servants, to punish the guilty and justify the innocent. The construction תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם (vv. 32, 34, 36, etc.) can be explained more simply from the adverbial use of the accusative (Ewald, § 300, *b.*), than from אֲלֵךְ הַשָּׁמַיִם in v. 30. תַּת דְּרָבּוֹ בְּרָאשׁוֹ, to give (bring) his way upon his head, i.e., to cause the merited punishment to fall upon him (cf. Ezek. 9:10; 11:21, etc.). הַצְּדִיק צָדִיק and הַרְשִׁיעַ רָשָׁע recall Deut. 25:2. For תַּת לּוֹ כְּצַדִּיקוֹ compare 2 Sam. 22:21, 25.—The following cases are all taken from Lev. 26 and Deut. 28.

1 Kings 8:33 and 34. The *second* petition,—“If Thy people Israel are smitten by the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and they turn to Thee and confess Thy name, ... then hear ... and bring them back into the land,”—refers to the threatenings in Lev. 26:17 and Deut. 28:25, where the nation is threatened with defeat and subjugation on the part of enemies, who shall invade the land, in which case prisoners of war are carried away into foreign lands, but the mass of the people remain in the land, so that they who are beaten can pray to the Lord in the temple, that He will forgive them their sin, save them out of the power of the enemy, and bring back the captives and fugitives into their fatherland.

1 Kings 8:35 and 36. The *third* prayer refers to the remission of the punishment of drought

threatened against the land, when the heaven is shut up, according to Lev. 26:19, Deut. 11:17; 28:23. **כִּי תַעֲנִימָם**, because Thou humblest them (LXX, Vulg.); not “that Thou hearest them” (Chald. and others). **כִּי תוֹרִים**, because Thou teachest them the good way. These words correspond to **כִּי תַעֲנִימָם**, and contain a motive for forgiveness. Because God teaches His people and seeks by means of chastisements to bring them back to the good way when they fail to keep His commandments, He must forgive when they recognise the punishment as a divine chastisement and come to Him with penitential prayer.

1 Kings 8:37–40. The *fourth* prayer relates to the removal of other land-plagues: famine (Lev. 26:19, 20, and 26; Deut. 28:23); pestilence (Lev. 26:25); blight and mildew in the corn (Deut. 28:22); locusts (**חֹסִיל**, devourer, is connected with **אַרְבֵּה** without a copula,—in the Chronicles by *Vâv*,—to depict the plague of locusts more vividly before their eyes after Deut. 28:38); oppression by enemies in their own land; lastly, plagues and diseases of all kinds, such as are threatened against the rebellious in Lev. 26:16 and Deut. 28:59–61. **יֵצֵר** is not the imperfect *Kal* of **צוֹר** (Ges., Dietr., Fürst, Olsh. *Gramm.* p. 524), but the imperfect *Hiphil* of **הֵצֵר** in Deut. 28:52, as in Neh. 9:27; and the difficult expression **בְּאַרְצֵי שְׂעָרָיו** is probably to be altered into **בְּאַרְץ שְׂעָרָיו**, whilst **שְׂעָרָיו** is either to be taken as a second object to **יֵצֵר**, as Luther supposes, or as in apposition to **בְּאַרְץ**, in the land (in) his gates, as Bertheau assumes. The assertion of Thenius, that all the versions except the Vulgate are founded upon the reading **עָרָיו**, is incorrect. **כִּי יִהְיֶה** is omitted after **כִּלְמִחְלָה**, since Solomon dropped the construction with which he commenced, and therefore briefly summed up all the prayers, addressed to God under the various chastisements here named, in the expression **כִּלְמִחְלָה כָּל־תְּחִנָּה**, which is placed

absolutely at the opening of v. 38. **אֲשֶׁר יִדְעוּן וְגוֹ'**, “when they perceive each one the stroke of his heart,” i.e., not *dolor animi quem quisque sentit* (Vatab., C. a Lap.), but the plague regarded as a blow falling upon the heart, in other words, as a chastisement inflicted upon him by God. In all these cases may God hear his prayer, and do and give to every one according to his way. **אֲשֶׁר תִּדְעַ**, “as Thou knowest his heart,” i.e., as is profitable for every one according to the state of his heart of his disposition. God can do this, because He knows the hearts of all men (cf. Jer. 17:10). The purpose assigned for all this hearing of prayer (v. 40), viz., “that they may fear Thee,” etc., is the same as in Deut. 4:10.

1 Kings 8:41–43. The *fifth* prayer has reference to the hearing of the prayers of foreigners, who shall pray in the temple. Solomon assumes as certain that foreigners will come and worship before Jehovah in His temple; even Moses himself had allowed the foreigners living among the Israelites to offer sacrifice at the temple (Num. 15:14ff.), and the great name and the arm of the Lord, that had manifested itself in deeds of omnipotence, had become known in the times of Moses to the surrounding nations (Ex. 15:14; 18:1; Josh. 5:1), and the report of this had reached Balaam even in Mesopotamia (see the Comm. on Num. 22). **אֶל הַנְּכָרִי** does not mean “as for the foreigners” (Thenius), for **אֶל** is never used in this sense; but it is to be connected with **תִּשְׁמַע** in v. 43, as **שָׁמַע אֶל** frequently occurs (Bertheau).

1 Kings 8:42. V. 42 is a parenthesis inserted in explanation of **לִמְעַן שְׁמָעוּ**: “for they will hear,” etc. The strong hand and the outstretched arm are connected together as a standing expression for the wondrous manifestations of the divine omnipotence in the guidance of Israel, as in Deut. 4:34; 5:15, etc. With **וְכָא** **וְהַתְּפִלָּה** the **מִן־אֶרֶץ** in v. 41 is resumed, and the main thought continued.

1 Kings 8:43. The reason for the hearing of the prayers of foreigners is “that all nations may

know Thy name to fear Thee," etc., as in Deut. 28:10. An examination of this original passage, from which *כִּי שְׁמֶךָ נִקְרָא עַל וְגו'* is taken and transferred to the temple, shows that the common explanations of this phrase, viz., "that this house is called after Thy name," or "that Thy name is invoked over this temple (at its dedication)," are erroneous. The name of the Lord is always used in the Scriptures to denote the working of God among His people or in His kingdom (see at 2 Sam. 6:2). The naming of this name over the nation, the temple, etc., presupposes the working of God within it, and denotes the confession and acknowledgment of that working. This is obvious from such passages as Jer. 14:9, where the expression "Thy name is called over us" is only a further explanation of the word "Thou art in the midst of us;" and from Isa. 63:19, where "we are they over whom Thou hast not ruled from eternity" is equivalent to "over whom Thy name has not been called." The name of Jehovah will be named over the temple, when Jehovah manifests His gracious presence within it in such a manner, that the nations who pray towards it experience the working of the living God within His sanctuary. It is in this sense that it is stated in 2 Sam. 6:2 that the name of Jehovah is named above the ark of the covenant (see the Comm. *in loc.*).—There are no cases on record of the worship of foreigners in connection with Solomon's temple, though there are in connection with the temple built after the captivity (vid., Josephus, Ant. xi. 8, 5, that of Alexander the Great; xii. 2, 5ff., that of Ptolemaeus Philadelphus; and 2 Macc. 3:2, 3, that of Seleucus).

1 Kings 8:44–50. Finally, in vv. 44–50 Solomon also asks, that when prayers are directed towards the temple by those who are far away both from Jerusalem and the temple, they may be heard. The *sixth* case, in vv. 44 and 45, is, if Israel should be engaged in war with an enemy by the appointment of God; and the *seventh*, in vv. 46–50, is, if it should be carried away by enemies on account of its sins.⁵⁰ By the expression in v. 44, "in the way which Thou

sendest them," the war is described as one undertaken by the direction of God, whether wages against an enemy who has invaded the land, or outside the land of Canaan for the chastisement of the heathen dwelling around them. "And shall pray *וְדָרַךְ הָעִיר וְגו'*:" i.e., in the direction towards the chosen city and the temple, namely, in faith in the actual presence of the covenant God in the temple. *אֵל יְהוָה*, "to Jehovah," instead of "to Thee," is probably introduced for the sake of greater clearness. *וְעָשִׂיתָ מִשְׁפָּטָם*, and secure them justice (cf. Deut. 10:18, Ps. 9:5, etc.).

1 Kings 8:46ff. In the seventh prayer, viz., if Israel should be given up to its enemies on account of its sins and carried away into the land of the enemy, Solomon had the threat in Lev. 26:33 and 44 in his eye, though he does not confine his prayer to the exile of the whole nation foretold in that passage and in Deut. 28:45ff., 64ff., and 30:1–5, but extends it to every case of transportation to an enemy's land. *וְהָשִׁיבוּ אֵל לְבָבָם*, "and they take it to heart," compare Deut. 4:39, and without the object, Deut. 30:1; not "they feel remorse," as Thenius supposes, because the *Hiphil* cannot have this reflective signification (Böttcher). The confession of sin in v. 47, *וְהִטְאֵנוּ וְהִעֵוִינוּ רָשָׁעֵנוּ*, was adopted by the Jews when in captivity as the most exhaustive expression of their deep consciousness of guilt (Dan. 9:5; Ps. 106:6). *הִטָּא*, to slip, *labi*, depicts sin as a wandering from right; *הִעֵוָה*, to act perversely, as a conscious perversion of justice; and *רָשָׁע* as a passionate rebellion against God (cf. Isa. 57:20).

1 Kings 8:50. *וְנָתַתָּם לְרַחֲמִים*: literally, "and make (place) them for compassion before their captors, that they may have compassion upon them," i.e., cause them to meet with compassion from their enemies, who have carried them away.—In vv. 51–53 Solomon closes with general reasons, which should secure the hearing of his prayer on the part of God. Bertheau follows the earlier commentators in

admitting that these reasons refer not merely to the last petitions, but to all the preceding ones.⁵¹ The plea “for they are Thy people,” etc. (v. 51), is taken from Deut. 4:10; and that in v. 53, “Thou didst separate them,” etc., is taken from Lev. 20:24, 26, compared with Ex. 19:5. לְהִיזוֹת עֵינֶיךָ וּגְוֹר follows upon וְשָׁמַעְתָּ (“then hear Thou”) in v. 49; just as v. 29 at the commencement of the prayer follows upon וּפְנִיתָ in v. 28. The recurrence of the same expression shows that the prayer is drawing to a close, and is rounded off by a return to the thought with which it opened. “As Thou spakest by Moses” points back to Ex. 19:5.—In 2 Chron. 6:40–42 the conclusion of the prayer is somewhat altered, and closes with the appeal to the Lord to cause salvation and grace to go forth from the temple over His people.

1 Kings 8:54–66. Concluding Act of the dedication of the temple. Vv. 54–61. *Blessing the congregation.*—After the conclusion of the prayer, Solomon rose up from his knees and blessed all the assembled congregation. וְכַפְּיֹו פְּרוּשׁוֹת is a circumstantial clause, which must be connected with the previous words and rendered thus: “from lying upon his knees with his hands spread out towards heaven.” “And he stood,” i.e., he came from the altar and stood nearer to the assembled congregation. The blessing begins with praise to the Lord for the fulfilment of His promises (v. 16), and consists in the petition that the Lord will always fulfil his (Solomon’s) prayers, and grant His people the promised salvation.⁵²

1 Kings 8:56. The praise of Jehovah rests, so far as the first part is concerned, upon the promise in Deut. 12:9, 10, and upon its fulfilment in Josh. 21:44, 45 and 23:14; and the second part is founded upon Lev. 26:3–13 and Deut. 28:1–14, where the “good word, which the Lord spake by Moses,” is more precisely described as the blessing which the Lord had promised to His people and had hitherto bestowed upon them. He had already given Israel rest by means of Joshua when the land of Canaan was taken; but

since many parts of the land still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, this rest was only fully secured to them by David’s victories over all their enemies. This glorious fulfilment warranted the hope that the Lord would also fulfil in the future what He had promised His servant David (2 Sam. 7:10), if the people themselves would only faithfully adhere to their God. Solomon therefore sums up all his wishes for the good of the kingdom in vv. 57–61 in the words, “May Jehovah our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us nor forsake us, to incline our heart to Himself, that we may walk in all His ways,” etc.—that the evil words predicted by Moses in Lev. 26:14ff., Deut. 28:15, may not fall upon us. For v. 57 compare Deut. 31:6, 8, and Josh. 1:5. אֵל יִטְשֵׁנוּ corresponds to אֵל יִרְפֵּךָ in these passages. In the Pentateuch נָטַשׁ is used but once of men who forsake the Lord, viz., Deut. 32:15; in other cases it is only used in the general sense of casting away, letting alone, and other similar meanings. It is first used of God, in the sense of forsaking His people, in Ps. 27:9 in connection with עָזַב; and it frequently occurs afterwards in Jeremiah.

1 Kings 8:59. May these my words, which I have prayed (vv. 25–43), be near to Jehovah our God day and night, that He may secure the right of His servant (the king) and of His people, as every day demands. יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ, as in Ex. 5:13; 16:4.—For v. 60 compare v. 43.

1 Kings 8:61. Let your heart be שְׁלֵם עִם יי wholly, undividedly devoted to the Lord (cf. 1 Kings 11:4; 15:3, 14, etc.).

1 Kings 8:62–66. *Sacrifices and feast.*—Vv. 62, 63. The dedicatory prayer was followed by a magnificent sacrifice offered by the king and all Israel. The thank-offering (זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים) consisted, in accordance with the magnitude of the manifestation of divine grace, of 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep. This enormous number of sacrificial animals, in which J. D. Michaelis found serious difficulties, Thenius endeavours to set aside as too large, by calculating that as

these sacrifices were offered in seven days, reckoning the sacrificial day at twelve full hours, there must have been about five oxen and about twenty-five sheep slaughtered and offered in sacrifice every minute for the king alone. This calculation would be conclusive, if there were any foundation for the three assumptions upon which it rests: namely, (1) that the number of sacrifices mentioned was offered for the king alone; (2) that the slaughtering and preparation of the sacrificial animals could only be performed by the priests and Levites; and (3) that the whole of the flesh of these sacrificial animals was to be consumed upon the altar. But these three assumptions are all erroneous. There is nothing in the account about their being "for the king alone." For it is obvious that the words "and Solomon offered a sacrifice" are not to be understood as signifying that the king had these sacrifices offered for himself alone, but that the words refer to the sacrifices offered by the king and all Israel for the consecration of the temple, from the simple fact that in v. 62 "Solomon and all Israel" are expressly mentioned as offering sacrifice, and that after the statement of the number of the sacrifices we find these words in v. 63: "so the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of Jehovah." Moreover it is very evident from the law in Lev. 1 and 3 that at the offering of sacrifice the slaughtering, flaying, and preparation of the sacrificial animals were performed by any Israelite, and that it was only the sprinkling of the blood against the altar and the burning of the sacrificial portions upon the altar which were the exclusive province of the priests. In order to form a correct idea of the enormous number of sacrifices which could be slaughtered on any one day we will refer again to the notice in Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 9, 3) already mentioned in the *Comm. on the Pentateuch*, p. 683 (translation), that in the reign of the emperor Nero the procurator *Cestius* directed the priests to count the number of the paschal lambs, and that they counted 250,000, which were slaughtered for the passover between the ninth and eleventh hours of the day, and of which the blood was

sprinkled upon the altar. If then it was possible at that time to slaughter more than 250,000 lambs in three hours of the afternoon, and to sprinkle the blood upon the altar, there can have been no difficulty in slaughtering and sacrificing 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep at the dedication of the temple on each of the seven days of the festival. As all Israel from Hamath to the brook of Egypt came to Jerusalem to this festival, we shall not be above the mark if we estimate the number of the heads of houses present at 100,000. And with very little trouble they could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep a day and prepared them for sacrificing. How many priests took an active part in this, we do not indeed know, in fact we have no information as to the number of the priests in Solomon's time; but we know that in the time of David the number of Levites qualified for service, reckoning from their thirtieth year, was 38,000, so that we may certainly assume that there were two or three thousand priests. Now if only the half of these Levites and priests had come to Jerusalem to the dedication of the temple, they alone could have slaughtered 3000 oxen and 18,000 sheep every day. And would not a thousand priests have been sufficient to sprinkle the blood of so many animals upon the altar and to turn the fat between the morning and evening sacrifice? If we divided these sacrifices among a thousand priests, each one would only have had to attend to the sprinkling of the blood and burning of the fat of three oxen and eighteen sheep each day.—But the brazen altar of burnt-offering might not have been large enough for the burning of so many sacrifices, notwithstanding the fact that only the fat portions of the thank-offerings were consumed, and they did not require much room; since the morning and evening burnt-offerings were added daily, and as festal offerings they would certainly not consist of a lamb only, but at least of one bullock, and they were burned whole, although the altar of burnt-offering with a surface of 144 square yards (see my *bibl. Archäol.* i. p. 127) would hold a very large quantity of sacrificial flesh at once. In v. 64, however, it is expressly

stated that Solomon sanctified the middle of the court, which was before the house of Jehovah, to burn the burnt-offering and meat-offering and the fat portions of the thank-offerings there, because the brazen altar was too small to hold these sacrifices. "The middle of the court" (תוֹדֵי הַחֵצֵר) is the whole of the inner portion of the court of the priests, which was in front of the temple-house and formed the centre of the court surrounding the temple. Of course we have not to imagine that the sacrifices were offered upon the stone pavement of the court, but must assume that there were auxiliary altars erected in the inner court around the brazen altar. By the burnt-offering and the meat-offering (belonging to it: אֲתֵרֵהָ עוֹלָה וְאֲתֵרֵהָ מִנְחָה) we are not to understand certain burnt-offerings, which were offered for a definite number of thank-offerings, as Thenius supposes. The singular and the definite article are both at variance with this. The reference is rather to the (well-known) daily morning and evening burnt-offerings with their meat-offering, and in this case, no doubt, to such a festal sacrifice as is prescribed in Num. 28 for the great yearly feasts.

1 Kings 8:65. Thus Solomon held the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great assembly from the neighbourhood of Hamath to the brook of Egypt, i.e., from the whole land in its fullest extent from north to south. "The district of *Hamath*," i.e., *Epiphania* on the Orontes, is mentioned as the northern boundary (cf. Num. 34:8; 13:21, Josh. 13:5, etc.); and "the brook of Egypt" (נַחַל מִצְרַיִם), *Rhinocorura*, as the southern boundary (cf. Num. 34:8, Josh. 15:4). "The feast" (הַחֵג), which Solomon held with the people "seven days and seven days, fourteen days," is not the feast of the dedication, but, as in v. 2, the feast of tabernacles, which fell in the seventh month; and the meaning of the verse is, that on that occasion the feast of the seventh month was kept for fourteen days, namely, seven days as the feast of the dedication, and seven days as the feast of tabernacles. We are obliged to take

the words in this way, partly on account of the evident reference to חֵג (at the feast) in v. 2 in the expression אֲתֵרֵהָ חֵג (the feast) in this verse, and partly on account of the statement which follows in v. 66, "and on the eighth day he sent the people away." The "eighth day" is not the first day of the feast of tabernacles (Thenius); but the eighth day, as the conclusion of the feast of tabernacles, עֲצֵרֶת (Lev. 23:36). The correctness of this view is placed beyond all doubt by the context in the Chronicles, which states more clearly that, "Solomon kept the feast seven days, and all Israel with him ... and they kept עֲצֵרֶת (the closing feast) on the eighth day; for they kept the dedication of the altar seven days and the feast seven days; and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month he sent the people away." The feast of tabernacles lasted seven days, from the 15th to the 21st, with a closing festival on the eighth day, i.e., the 22nd of the month (Lev. 23:33-39). This festival was preceded by the dedication of the temple from the 8th to the 14th of the month. The statement in v. 66, "on the eighth day he sent the people away," if we take the words in their strict sense, is at variance with the statement in the Chronicles, "on the 23rd day," since the eighth day of the feast of tabernacles was the 22nd day of the month; but it may easily be accounted for from want of precision in a well-known matter. Solomon sent the people away on the eighth day, i.e., on the afternoon or evening of the *atzereth* of the feast of tabernacles, so that on the morning of the next day, i.e., on the 23rd of the month, the people took their journey home, "joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had shown to His servant David and to the people." *David* is mentioned, because the completion of the building of the temple was the fulfilment of the divine promise given to him. "Tents," for houses, as in 2 Sam. 10:1, Judg. 7:8, and other passages.

1 Kings 9**The Answer to Solomon's Prayer. The Means Employed for the Erection of His Buildings (Ch. 9)**

1 Kings 9:1–9. The Answer of the Lord to Solomon's Dedicatory Prayer (cf. 2 Chron. 7:11–22).—Vv. 1, 2. When Solomon had finished the building of the temple, and of his palace, and of all that he had a desire to build, the Lord appeared to him the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, i.e., by night in a dream (see 1 Kings 3:5), to promise him that his prayer should be answered. For the point of time, see at 1 Kings 8:1. **כָּל־הַשֵּׁק**, all Solomon's desire or pleasures, is paraphrased thus in the Chronicles: **כָּל־הַבָּא עַל לֵב**, "all that came into his mind," and, in accordance with the context, is very properly restricted to these two principal buildings by the clause, "in the house of Jehovah and in his own house."

1 Kings 9:3ff. The divine promise to Solomon, that his prayer should be answered, is closely connected with the substance of the prayer; but in our account we have only a brief summary, whereas in the Chronicles it is given more elaborately (vid., 2 Chron. 7:12–16). "I have sanctified this house which thou hast built, to put my name there." For the expression, see Deut. 12:11. The sanctifying consisted in the fact, that Jehovah put His name in the temple; i.e., that by filling the temple with the cloud which visibly displayed His presence, He consecrated it as the scene of the manifestation of His grace. To Solomon's prayer, "May Thine eyes stand open over this house" (1 Kings 8:29), the Lord replies, giving always more than we ask, "My eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually."

1 Kings 9:4, 5. Vv. 4 and 5 contain the special answer to 1 Kings 8:25 and 26.—Vv. 6–9 refer to the prayer for the turning away of the curse, to which the Lord replies: If ye and your children turn away from me, and do not keep my commandments, but worship other gods, this house will not protect you from the curses threatened in the law, but they will be fulfilled

in all their terrible force upon you and upon this temple. This threat follows the Pentateuch exactly in the words in which it is expressed; v. 7 being founded upon Deut. 28:37, 45, and 63, and the curse pronounced upon Israel in Deut. 29:23–26 being transferred to the temple in vv. 8 and 9.—**וְשָׁלַח מִעַל פָּנַי**, to dismiss, i.e., to reject from before my face. "This house will be **עָלְיוֹן**," i.e., will stand high, or through its rejection will be a lofty example for all that pass by. The temple stood upon a high mountain, so that its ruins could not fail to attract the attention of all who went past. The expression **עָלְיוֹן** is selected with an implied allusion to Deut. 26:19 and 28:1. God there promises to make Israel **עָלְיוֹן**, high, exalted above all nations. This blessing will be turned into a curse. The temple, which was high and widely renowned, shall continue to be high, but in the opposite sense, as an example of the rejection of Israel from the presence of God.⁵³

1 Kings 9:10–28. The Means by which the Buildings were Erected.—In order that all which still remained to be said concerning Solomon's buildings might be grouped together, different notices are introduced here, namely, as to his relation to Hiram, the erection of several fortresses, and the tributary labour, and also as to his maritime expeditions; and these heterogeneous materials are so arranged as to indicate the resources which enabled Solomon to erect so many and such magnificent buildings. These resources were: (1) his connection with king Hiram, who furnished him with building materials (vv. 10–14); (2) the tributary labour which he raised in his kingdom (vv. 15–25); (3) the maritime expedition to Ophir, which brought him great wealth (vv. 26–28). But these notices are very condensed, and, as a comparison with the parallel account in 2 Chron. 8 shows, are simply incomplete extracts from a more elaborate history. In the account of the tributary labour, the enumeration of the cities finished and fortified (vv. 15–19) is interpolated; and the information concerning the support which was rendered to Solomon in

the erection of his buildings by Hiram (vv. 11–14), is merely supplementary to the account already given in v. 5. Vv. 24 and 25 point still more clearly to an earlier account, since they would be otherwise unintelligible.—In 2 Chron. 8 the arrangement is a simpler one: the buildings are first of all enumerated in vv. 1–6, and the account of the tributary labour follows in vv. 7–11.

1 Kings 9:10–14. The notices concerning *Solomon's connection with Hiram* are very imperfect; for v. 14 does not furnish a conclusion either in form or substance. The notice in 2 Chron. 8:1, 2 is still shorter, but it supplies an important addition to the account before us.

1 Kings 9:10, 11. Vv. 10 and 11 form one period. אָז יָתַן (then he gave) in v. 11 introduces the apodosis to וַיְהִי מָקַר (and it came to pass, etc.) in v. 10; and v. 11 contains a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis. Hiram had supported Solomon according to his desire with cedar wood and cypress wood, and with gold; and Solomon gave him in return, after his buildings were completed, twenty cities in the land of *Galil*. But these cities did not please Hiram. When he went out to see them, he said, “What kind of cities are these (מָה in a contemptuous sense) which thou hast given me, my brother?” אָחִי as in 1 Kings 20:32, 1 Macc. 10:18; 11:30, 2 Macc. 11:22, as a conventional expression used by princes in their intercourse with one another. “And he called the land *Cabul* unto this day;” i.e., it retained this name even to later times. The land of *Galil* is a part of the country which was afterwards known as *Galilaea*, namely, the northern portion of it, as is evident from the fact that in Josh. 20:7; 21:32, *Kedes* in the mountains of Naphtali, to the north-west of Lake *Huleh*, is distinguished from the *kadesh* in southern Palestine by the epithet בְּגִלְיָל. It is still more evident from 2 Kings 15:29 and Isa. 8:23 and *Galil* embraced the northern part of the tribe of Naphtali; whilst the expression used by

Isaiah, גְּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם, also shows that this district was for the most part inhabited by heathen (i.e., non-Israelites). The twenty cities in *Galil*, which Solomon gave to Hiram, certainly belonged therefore to the cities of the Canaanites mentioned in 2 Sam. 24:7; that is to say, they were cities occupied chiefly by a heathen population, and in all probability they were in a very bad condition. Consequently they did not please Hiram, and he gave to the district the contemptuous name of the land of *Cabul*. Of the various interpretations given to the word *Cabul* (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 656), the one proposed by Hiller (*Onomast.* p. 435), and adopted by Reland, Ges., Maurer, and others, viz., that it is a contraction of כְּבָבוּל, *sicut id quod evanuit tanquam nihil*, has the most to support it, since this is the meaning required by the context. At the same time it is possible, and even probable, that it had originally a different signification, and is derived from כָּבַל = חָבַל in the sense of to pawn, as Gesenius and Dietrich suppose. This is favoured by the occurrence of the name *Cabul* in Josh. 19:27, where it is probably derivable from כָּבַל, to fetter, and signifies literally a fortress or castle; but in this instance it has no connection with the land of *Cabul*, since it is still preserved in the village of *Cabul* to the south-east of Acre (see the Comm. on Josh. *l.c.*). The “land of *Cabul*” would therefore mean the pawned land; and in the mouths of the people this would be twisted into “good for nothing.” In this case וַיִּקְרָא would have to be taken impersonally: “they called;” and the notice respecting this name would be simply an explanation of the way in which the people interpreted it. Hiram, however, did not retain this district, but gave it back to Solomon, who then completed the cities (2 Chron. 8:2).⁵⁴ The only way in which we can give to v. 14 a meaning in harmony with the context, is by taking it as a supplementary explanation of חִירָם ... וַיִּשְׁלַח in v. 11, and so rendering וַיִּשְׁלַח as a pluperfect, as in 1 Kings 7:13: “Hiram had sent the king a hundred and twenty talents of gold.” If we reckon the value of gold as being ten times

the worth of silver, a hundred and twenty talents of gold would be 3,141,600 *thalers* (about £471,240: Tr.). This is no doubt to be regarded as a loan, which Solomon obtained from Hiram to enable him to complete his buildings. Although David may have collected together the requisite amount of precious metals for the building of the temple, and Solomon had also very considerable yearly revenues, derived partly from tribute paid by subjugated nations and partly from trade, his buildings were so extensive, inasmuch as he erected a large number of cities beside the temple and his splendid palace (vv. 15–19), that his revenues might not suffice for the completion of these costly works; and therefore, since he would not apply the consecrated treasures of the temple to the erection of cities and palaces, he might find himself compelled to procure a loan from the wealthy king Hiram, which he probably intended to cover by ceding to him twenty cities on the border of the Phoenician territory. But as these cities did not please the king of Tyre and he gave them back to Solomon, the latter will no doubt have repaid the amount borrowed during the last twenty years of his reign.

1 Kings 9:15–23. *Solomon's tribute service, and the building of the cities.* (Cf. 2 Chron. 8:3–10.) The other means by which Solomon made it possible to erect so many buildings, was by compelling the remnants of the Canaanitish population that were still in the land to perform tributary labour. זָה דְבַר הַמָּס, “this is the case with regard to the tribute.” For הָעֵלָה מִס compare 1 Kings 5:27. To the announcement of the object which Solomon had in view in raising tributary labourers, namely, to build, etc., there is immediately appended a list of all the buildings completed by him (vv. 15–19); and it is not till v. 20 that we have more precise details concerning the tribute itself. Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, and the cities enumerated, are for the most part not new buildings, but simply fortifications, or the completion of buildings already in existence. David had

already built the castle of *Millo* and the wall of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:9); so that Solomon's building was in both cases merely fortifying more strongly. On *Millo* see the fuller remarks at 2 Sam. 5:9; and on the building of the wall, those at 1 Kings 3:1 and 11:27. As Solomon thereby closed the breach of the city of David according to 1 Kings 11:27, he probably extended the city wall so as to enclose the temple mountain; and he may possibly have also surrounded the lower city with a wall, since David had only built a fortification round about the upper city upon Zion (see at 2 Sam. 5:9).—*Hazor*: an old royal city of the Canaanites above Lake *Huleh*, which has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. 11:1). *Megiddo*, i.e., *Lejun* (see at 1 Kings 4:12). *Gezer*: also an old Canaanitish royal city, which stood close to the Philistian frontier, probably on the site of the present village of *el Kubab* (see at Josh. 10:33).

1 Kings 9:16. This city had been taken and burned down by the king of Egypt; its Canaanitish inhabitants had been put to death; and the city itself had been given as a marriage portion to his daughter who was married to Solomon. Nothing is known concerning the occasion and object of Pharaoh's warlike expedition against this city. The conjecture of Thenius, that the Canaanitish inhabitants of Gezer had drawn upon themselves the vengeance of Pharaoh, mentioned here, through a piratical raid upon the Egyptian coast, is open to this objection, that according to all accounts concerning its situation, Gezer was not situated near the sea-coast, but very far inland.

1 Kings 9:17. This city Solomon built: i.e., he not only rebuilt it, but also fortified it. He did the same also to *Lower Bethhoron*, i.e., *Beit-Ur Tachta*, on the western slope of the mountains, four hours' journey from Gibeon. According to 2 Chron. 8:5, Solomon also fortified *Upper Bethhoron*, which was separated by a deep wady from Lower Bethhoron, that lay to the west (see Comm. on Josh. 10:10 and 16:3). The two Bethhorons and Gezer were very important places for the protection of the mountainous country of Benjamin, Ephraim, and Judah

against hostile invasions from the Philistian plain. The situation of Megiddo on the southern edge of the plain of Jezreel, through which the high road from the western coast to the Jordan ran, was equally important; and so also was Hazor as a border fortress against Syria in the northern part of the land.

1 Kings 9:18. Solomon also built, i.e., fortified, *Baalath* and *Tadmor* in the desert. According to Josh. 19:44, *Baalath* was a city of Dan, and therefore, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 1) justly observes, was not far from Gezer; and consequently is not to be identified with either Baalgad or Baalbek in Coele-syria (Iken, *ich.* Rosenm.; cf. Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 519). תַּמֹּר (*Chethib*) is either to be read תְּמֹר, or according to Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 344) תְּמֹר, palm, a palm-city. The *Keri* requires תְּדֹמֹר (*Tadmor*, after 2 Chron. 8:4), a pronunciation which may possibly have simply arisen from Aramaean expansion, but which is still the name for the city current among the Arabs even in the present day (*Arabic tadmur, locus palmarum ferax*). The Greeks and Romans called it *Palmyra*. It was situated in what is certainly now a very desolate oasis of the Syrian desert, on the caravan road between Damascus and the Euphrates,—according to modern accounts, not more than seventeen hours' journey from that river; and there are still magnificent ruins which attest the former glory of this wealthy and, under queen Zenobia, very powerful city (cf. Ritter, *Erdk.* xvii. 2, p. 1486ff., and E. Osiander in Herzog's *Cycl.*). The correctness of this explanation of the name is placed beyond all doubt by the words "in the wilderness;" and consequently even Movers has given up his former opinion, viz., that it was the city of *Thamar* in southern Judah (Ezek. 47:19; 48:28), which Thenius has since adopted, and has decided in favour of *Palmyra*, without being led astray by the attempt of Hitzig to explain the name from the Sanscrit (*vid., Deutsche morgld. Ztschr.* viii. p. 222ff.). The expression בְּאֲרָזִים appears superfluous, as all the cities named before were situated in the land or kingdom of

Solomon, and *Tadmor* is sufficiently defined by בְּמִדְבָּר (in the desert). The text is evidently faulty, and either the name of the land, namely *Hamath* (according to 2 Chron. 8:4), has dropped out, or בְּאֲרָזִים is to be taken in connection with what follows (according to the Cod. Al. of the LXX), and the cop. ו before אֶת בְּאֲרָזִים must be erased and inserted before בְּאֲרָזִים ("and in the land of all the magazine-cities").

1 Kings 9:19. The "magazine-cities" (עָרֵי הַמְּסֻבּוֹת) were fortified cities, in which the produce of the land was collected, partly for provisioning the army, and partly for the support of the rural population in times of distress (2 Chron. 17:12; 32:28), similar to those which Pharaoh had built in the land of Goshen (Ex. 1:11). If they were situated on the great commercial roads, they may also have served for storing provisions for the necessities of travellers and their beasts of burden. The cities for the war-chariots (הַרְרָב) and cavalry (הַפָּרָשִׁים) were probably in part identical with the magazine-cities, and situated in different parts of the kingdom. There were no doubt some of these upon Lebanon, as we may on the one hand infer from the general importance of the northern frontier to the security of the whole kingdom, and still more from the fact that Solomon had an opponent at Damascus in the person of Rezin (1 Kings 11:24), who could easily stir up rebellion in the northern provinces, which had only just been incorporated by David into the kingdom; and as we may on the other hand clearly gather from 2 Chron. 16:4, according to which there were magazine-cities in the land of Naphtali. Finally, the words "and what Solomon had a desire to build" embrace all the rest of his buildings, which it would have occupied too much space to enumerate singly. That the words אֶת הַשֵּׁק are not to be so pressed as to be made to denote simply "the buildings undertaking for pure pleasure," like the works mentioned in Eccles. 2:4ff., as Thenius and Bertheau suppose, is evident from a comparison of v. 1, where all

Solomon's buildings except the temple and palace, and therefore the fortifications as well as others, are included in the expression "all his desire."—Fuller particulars concerning the tributary workmen are given in v. 20ff. The Canaanish population that was left in the land were made use of for this purpose,—namely, the descendants of the Canaanites who had not been entirely exterminated by the Israelites. "Their children," etc., supplies a more precise definition of the expression "all the people," etc., in v. 20. (For the fact itself, see the commentary on 1 Kings 5:27, 28.)

1 Kings 9:22. Solomon did not make Israelites into tributary slaves; but they were warriors, ministers, and civil and military officers. עֲבָדִים are the king's servants; שָׂרִים, the heads of the military and civil service; שְׁלֵשִׁים, royal adjutants (see at 2 Sam. 23:8); שָׂרֵי רֶכֶב וּפָרָשָׁיו, captains over the royal war-chariots and cavalry.—For v. 23 compare 1 Kings 5:30.

1 Kings 9:24, 25. Vv. 24 and 25 contain two notices, with which the account of Solomon's buildings is brought to a close. Both verses point back to 1 Kings 3:1–4 (viz., v. 24 to 1 Kings 3:1, and v. 25 to 1 Kings 3:2–4), and show how the incongruities which existed at the commencement of Solomon's reign were removed by his buildings. When Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, he brought her into the city of David (1 Kings 3:1), until he should have finished his palace and built her a house of her own within it. After this building was completed, he had her brought up from the city of David into it. עָלָה, came up, inasmuch as the palace stood upon the loftier summit of Zion. הָאֵל is to be connected with אֵל which follows, in the sense of *only or just as*: as soon as Pharaoh's daughter had gone up into the house built for her, Solomon built Millo.⁵⁵

1 Kings 9:25. After the building of the temple, the practice of sacrificing upon the altars of the high places could be brought to an end (1 Kings 3:2). Solomon now offered burnt-offerings and thank-offerings three times a year upon the

altar which he had built to the Lord, i.e., upon the altar of burnt-offering in the temple, or as 2 Chron. 8; 12 adds by way of explanation, "before the porch." "Three times in the year:" i.e., at the three great yearly feasts—passover, the feast of weeks, and the feast of tabernacles (2 Chron. 8:13). The words which follow, וְהִקְטִיר אֹתוֹ, "and indeed burning (the sacrifice) at the (altar) which was before Jehovah," cannot be taken as parallel to the preceding clause, and understood as referring to the incense, which was offered along with the bleeding sacrifices, because הִקְטִיר is not a preterite, but an inf. absol., which shows that this clause merely serves as an explanation of the preceding one, in the sense of, "namely, burning the sacrifices at the altar which was before Jehovah." הִקְטִיר is the technical expression here for the burning of the portions of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, as in Ex. 29:18, Lev. 1:9, etc. On the use of אָשַׁר after אֹתוֹ, which Thenius and Böttcher could not understand, and on which they built up all kinds of conjectures, see Ewald, § 333, *a*, note.—וַיִּשְׁלֵם אֶת־הַבַּיִת, "and made the house complete," i.e., he put the temple into a state of completion by offering the yearly sacrifices there from that time forward, or, as Böttcher explains it, gave it thereby its full worth as a house of God and place of worship. וַיִּשְׁלֵם is to be taken grammatically as a continuation of the inf. abs. הִקְטִיר.

1 Kings 9:26–28. *He sends ships to Ophir.*—Solomon built a fleet (אֲנִיָּה is collective, ships or fleet; the *nom. unitatis* is אֲנִיָּה) at Eziongeber, near Eloth, on the coast of the Red Sea (יַם־סוּף: see at Ex. 10:19), in the land of Edom; and Hiram sent in the fleet "shipmen that had knowledge of the sea" along with Solomon's servants to Ophir, whence they brought to king Solomon 420 talents of gold. *Eziongeber*, a harbour at the north-eastern end of the Elanitic Gulf, was probably the "large and beautiful town of *Asziun*" mentioned by Makrizi (see at Num. 33:35), and situated on the great bay of

Wady Emrag (see Rüppell, *Reisen in Nubien*, pp. 252–3). *Eloth* (lit., trees, a grove, probably so named from the large palm-grove in the neighbourhood), or *Elath* (Deut. 2:8; 2 Kings 14:22: see at Gen. 14:6), the *Aila* and *Aelana* of the Greeks and Romans, Arab. *Aileh*, was situated at the northern point of the (Elanitic) gulf, which took its name from the town; and in the time of the Fathers it was an important commercial town. It was not far from the small modern fortress of *Akaba*, where heaps of rubbish still show the spot on which it formerly stood (compare Rüppell, *Nub.* p. 248, with plates 6 and 7, and Robinson, *Pal.* i. p. 251ff.).—The corresponding text, 2 Chron. 8:17, 18, differs in many respects from the account before us. The statement in the Chronicles, that Solomon went to Eziongeber and Elath, is but a very unimportant deviation; for the building of the fleet makes it a very probable thing in itself that Solomon should have visited on that account the two towns on the Elanitic Gulf, which were very near to one another, to make the requisite arrangements upon the spot for this important undertaking. There is apparently a far greater deviation in v. 27, where, in the place of the statement that Hiram sent 𐤇𐤍𐤁𐤁, in the (or a) fleet, his servants as sailors who had knowledge of the sea, the chronicler affirms that Hiram sent by his servants ships and men who had knowledge of the sea. For the only way in which Hiram could send ships to Eziongeber was either by land or (as Ritter, *Erdk.* xiv. p. 365, supposes) out of the Persian Gulf, supposing that the Tyrians had a fleet upon that sea at so early a date as this. The statement in the Chronicles receives an apparent confirmation from 1 Kings 10:22, “The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram,” if indeed this passage also refers to the trade with Ophir, as is generally supposed; for then these words affirm that Hiram sent ships of his own to Ophir along with those of Solomon. We do not think it probable, however that the words “Hiram sent ships by his own men” are to be so pressed as to be taken to mean that he had whole ships, or ships taken to pieces, conveyed to Eziongeber either from

Tyre or out of the Mediterranean Sea, although many cases might be cited from antiquity in support of this view.⁵⁶ In all probability the words affirm nothing more than that Hiram supplied the ships for this voyage, that is to say, that he had them built at Eziongeber by his own men, and the requisite materials conveyed thither, so far as they were not to be obtained upon the spot. At any rate, Solomon was obliged to call the Tyrians to his help for the building of the ships, since the Israelites, who had hitherto carried in no maritime trade at all, were altogether inexperienced in shipbuilding. Moreover, the country round Eziongeber would hardly furnish wood adapted for the purpose, as there are only palms to be found there, whose spongy wood, however useful it may be for the inside of houses, cannot be applied to the building of ships. But if Hiram had ships built for Solomon by his own men and sent him sailors who were accustomed to the sea, he would certainly have some of his own ships engaged in this maritime trade; and this explains the statement in 1 Kings 10:22.

The destination of the fleet was *Ophir*, whence the ships brought 420 or (according to the Chronicles) 450 talents of gold. The difference between 420 and 450 may be accounted for from the substitution of the numeral letter 𐤅 (50) for 𐤂 (20). The sum mentioned amounted to eleven or twelve million dollars (from £1,600,000 to £1,800,000—Tr.), and the question arises, whether this is to be taken as the result of one voyage, or as the entire profits resulting from the expeditions to Ophir. The words admit of either interpretation, although they are more favourable to the latter than to the former, inasmuch as there is no allusion whatever to the fact that they brought this amount all at once or on every voyage. (See also at 1 Kings 10:14 and 22.) The question as to the situation of Ophir has given rise to great dispute, and hitherto no certain conclusion has been arrived at; in fact, it is possible that there are no longer any means of deciding it. Some have endeavoured to prove that it was in southern Arabia, others that it was on the

eastern coast of Africa, and others again that it was in Hither India.⁵⁷ The decision is dependent upon a previous question, whether 1 Kings 10:22, "The king had a Tarshish fleet upon the sea with the fleet of Hiram; once in three years came the Tarshish fleet, bringing gold, silver," etc., also applies to the voyage to Ophir. The expression "Tarshish fleet;" the word בָּיָם ("on the sea"), which naturally suggests that sea to which the Israelites applied the special epithet הַיָּם, namely the Mediterranean; and lastly, the difference in the cargoes,—the ships from Ophir bringing gold and *algummim* wood (v. 28 and 1 Kings 10:11), and the Tarshish fleet bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks (1 Kings 10:22),—appear to favour the conclusion that the Tarshish fleet did not sail to Ophir, but upon the Mediterranean Sea to Tarshish, i.e., Tartessus in Spain; to which we may add the fact that אָנִי תַרְשִׁישׁ is reproduced in 2 Chron. 9:21 by אָנִיזוֹת הַלְכוֹת תַרְשִׁישׁ, "ships going to Tarshish." Nevertheless, however plausible these arguments may appear, after a renewed investigation of the subject I cannot regard them as having decisive weight: for (1) the expression "Tarshish fleet" is used in 1 Kings 22:49 in connection with ships that were intended to go to Ophir; (2) בָּיָם (upon the sea) might receive its more precise definition from what precedes; and (3) the difference in the cargoes reduces itself to this, that in addition to the gold, which was the chief production of Ophir, there are a few other articles of trade mentioned, so that the account in 1 Kings 10:22 is more complete than that in 1 Kings 9:28 and 10:11. The statement concerning the Tarshish fleet in 1 Kings 10:22 contains a passing remark, like that in 1 Kings 10:11, from which we must infer that both passages treat in the same manner simply of the voyage to Ophir, and therefore that the term "Tarshish ships," like our *Indiamen* (*Indienfahrer*), was applied to ships intended for long voyages. If, in addition to the ships sailing to Ophir, Solomon had also had a fleet upon the Mediterranean Sea which sailed with the Phoenicians to Tartessus, this

would certainly have been mentioned here (1 Kings 9:27, 28) at the same time as the Ophir voyage. On all these grounds we can come to no other conclusion than that the expression in 2 Chron. 9:21, "ships going to Tarshish," is simply a mistaken exposition of the term "Tarshish fleet,"—a mistake which may easily be explained from the fact, that at the time when the Chronicles were written, the voyages not only of the Israelites but also of the Tyrians both to Ophir and Tarshish had long since ceased, and even the geographical situation of these places was then unknown to the Jews (see my *Introduction to the Old Test.* p. 442, ed. 2). The name *Ophir* occurs first of all in Gen. 10:29 among the tribes of Southern Arabia, that were descended from Joktan, between Seba and Havilah, i.e., the Sabaeans and Chaulotaeans. Hence it appears most natural to look for the gold-land of Ophir in Southern Arabia. But as there is still a possibility that the Joktanide tribe of Ophir, or one branch of it, may subsequently have emigrated either to the eastern coast of Africa or even to Hither India, and therefore that the Solomonian Ophir may have been an Arabian colony outside Arabia, the situation of this gold country cannot be determined without further evidence from Gen. 10:29 alone; but before arriving at an actual decision, we must first of all examine the arguments that may be adduced in support of each of the three countries named. *Sofala* in Eastern Africa, in the Mozambique Channel, has nothing in common with the name *Ophir*, but is the Arabic *sufâlah* (Heb. שֹׁפְלָה), i.e., lowland or sea-coast; and the old Portuguese accounts of the gold mines in the district of *Fura* there, as well as the pretended walls of the queen of Saba, have far too little evidence to support them, to have any bearing upon the question before us. The supposed connection between the name *Ophir* and the city of Σουπάρρα mentioned by Ptolemaeus, or Οὔππαρα by Periplus (*Geogr. min.* i. p. 30), in the neighbourhood of *Goa*, or the shepherd tribe of *Abhira*, cannot be sustained. Σουπάρρα or *Sufâra* (Edrisi) answers to the Sanscrit *Supâra*, i.e.,

beautiful coast (cf. Lassen, *Ind. Alterthk.* i. p. 107); and Οὔππαρα in Periplus is not doubt simply a false reading for Σουπάρρα, which has nothing in common with אֹפִיר. And the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* can hardly come into consideration, because the country which they inhabited, to the south-east of the mouths of the Indus, has no gold.—Again, the hypothesis that India is intended derives just as little support from the circumstance that, with the exception of Gen. 10:29, the LXX have always rendered אֹפִיר either Σωφύρα or Σουφύρ, which is, according to the Coptic lexicographers, the name used by the Copts for India, and that Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 4), who used the Old Test. in the Alexandrian version, has given India as the explanation of Ophir, as it does from this supposed resemblance in the names. For, according to the geographical ideas of the Alexandrians and later Greeks, India reached to Ethiopia, and Ethiopia to India, as Letronne has conclusively proved (see his *Mémoire sur une mission arienne, etc.*, in *Mém. de l'Institut. Acad. des Inscript. et Bell. Lettres*, t. x. p. 220ff.).

Greater stress has been laid upon the duration of the voyages to Ophir,—namely, that the Tarshish fleet came once in three years, according to 1 Kings 10:22, and brought gold, etc. But even Lassen, who follows Heeren, observes quite truly, that “this expression need not be understood as signifying that three whole years intervened between the departure and return, but simply that the fleet returned once in the course of three years.” Moreover, the stay in Ophir is to be reckoned in as part of the time occupied in the voyage; and that this is not to be estimated as a short one, is evident from the fact that, according to Homer, *Odyss.* xv. 454ff., a Phoenician merchantman lay for a whole year at one of the Cyclades before he had disposed of his wares of every description, in return for their articles of commerce, and filled his roomy vessel. If we add to this the slowness of the voyage,—considering that just as at the present day the Arabian coasters go but very slowly from port to port, so the combined fleet of Hiram and Solomon would not be able to

proceed with any greater rapidity, inasmuch as the Tyrians were not better acquainted with the dangerous Arabian Sea than the modern Arabians are, and that the necessary provisions for a long voyage, especially the water for drinking, could not be taken on board all at once, but would have to be taken in at the different landing-places, and that on these occasions some trade would be done,—we can easily understand how a voyage from Eziongeber to the strait of Bab el Mandeb and the return might occupy more than a year,⁵⁸ so that the time occupied in the voyage as given here cannot furnish any decisive proof that the fleet sailed beyond Southern Arabia to the East Indies.

And lastly, the same remarks apply to the goods brought from Ophir, which many regard as decisive evidence in favour of India. The principal article for which Ophir became so celebrated, viz., the gold, is not found either in *Sufâra* near Goa, or in the land of *Abhira*. Even if India be much richer in gold than was formerly supposed (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 592), the rich gold country lies to the north of Cashmir (see Lassen, ii. pp. 603–4). Moreover, not only is it impossible to conceive what goods the Phoenicians can have offered to the Indian merchants for their gold and the other articles named, since large sums of gold were sent to India every year in the Roman times to pay for the costly wares that were imported thence (see Roscher, pp. 53, 54); but it is still less possible to comprehend how the shepherd tribe of *Abhira* could have come into possession of so much gold as the Ophir fleet brought home. The conjecture of Ritter (*Erdk.* xiv. p. 399) and Lassen (ii. p. 592), that this tribe had come to the coast not very long before from some country of their own where gold abounded, and that as an uncultivated shepherd tribe they attached but very little value to the gold, so that they parted with it to the Phoenicians for their purple cloths, their works in brass and glass, and for other things, has far too little probability to appear at all admissible. If the *Abhira* did not know the value of the gold, they would not have brought it in

such quantities out of their original home into these new settlements. We should therefore be obliged to assume that they were a trading people, and this would be at variance with all the known accounts concerning this tribe.—As a rule, the gold treasures of Hither Asia were principally obtained from Arabia in the most ancient times. If we leave Havilah (Gen. 2:11) out of the account, because its position cannot be determined with certainty, the only other place specially referred to in the Old Testament besides Ophir as being celebrated as a gold country is Saba, in the south-western portion of Yemen. The Sabaeans bring gold, precious stones, and incense (Isa. 60:6; Ezek. 27:22); and the queen of Saba presented Solomon with 120 talents of gold, with perfumes and with precious stones (1 Kings 10:10). This agrees with the accounts of the classical writers, who describe Arabia as very rich in gold (cf. Strabo, xvi. 777f. and 784; Diod. Sic. ii. 50, iii. 44; also Bochart, *Phaleg*, l. ii. c. 27). These testimonies, which we have already given in part at Ex. 38:31, are far too distinct to be set aside by the remark that there is no gold to be found in Arabia at the present time. For whilst, on the one hand, the wealth of Arabia in gold may be exhausted, just as Spain no longer yields any silver, on the other hand we know far too little of the interior of Southern Arabia to be able distinctly to maintain that there is no gold in existence there.—Silver, the other metal brought from Ophir, was also found in the land of the Nabataeans, according to Strabo, xvi. p. 784, although the wealth of the ancient world in silver was chiefly derived from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain (cf. Movers, *Phöniz*. ii. 3, p. 36ff., where the different places are enumerated in which silver was found).—That precious stones were to be found in Arabia is evident from the passages cited above concerning the Sabaeans.—On the other hand, however, it has been supposed that the remaining articles of Ophir could only have been brought from the East Indies.

According to 1 Kings 10:12, the Ophir ships brought a large quantity of עֲצֵי אֱלִמְגִים

(almuggim wood: 2 Chron. 2:7, אֱלִמְגִים).

According to Kimchi (on 2 Chron. 2:7), the אֱלִמְגִים or אֱלִמְגִים is *arbor rubri coloris, dicta lingua arabica albakam* (Arabic 'l-bqm), *vulgo brasilica*. This tree, according to Abulfadl (Celsius, *Hierob.* i. p. 176), is a native of India and Ethiopia; and it is still a question in dispute, whether we are to understand by this the *Pterocarpus Santal.*, from which the true sandal-wood comes, and which is said to grow only in the East Indies on Malabar and Java, or the *Caesalpinia Sappan L.*, a tree which grows in the East Indies, more especially in Ceylon, and also in different parts of Africa, the red wood of which is used in Europe chiefly for dyeing. Moreover the true explanation of the Hebrew name is still undiscovered. The derivation of it from the Sanscrit *Valgu*, i.e., *pulcher* (Lassen and Ritter), has been set aside by Gesenius as inappropriate, and *mocha, mochâta*, which is said to signify sandal-wood in Sanscrit, has been suggested instead. But no evidence has been adduced in its favour, nor is the word to be found in Wilson's *Sanscrit Lexicon*. If, however, this derivation were correct, אֱלִמְגִים would be the Arabic article, and the introduction of this article in connection with the word *mocha* would be a proof that the sandal-wood, together with its name, came to the Hebrews through merchants who spoke Arabic.—The other articles from Ophir mentioned in 1 Kings 10:22 are שֵׁן הַבַּיִם, ὀδόντες ἐλεφάντινοι (LXX), *dentés elephantorum* or *ebur* (Vulg.), שֵׁן דָּפִיל, elephants' teeth (Targ.). But however certain the meaning of the word may thus appear, the justification of this meaning is quite as uncertain. In other cases ivory is designated by the simple term שֵׁן (1 Kings 10:18; 22:39; Ps. 45:9; Amos 3:15, etc.), whereas Ezekiel (Ezek. 27:15) calls the whole tusk שֵׁן קַרְנוֹת, horns of the tooth. הַבַּיִם is said to signify elephants here; and according to Benary it is contracted from הַאֲבִים, the Sanscrit word *ibha*, elephant; according to Ewald, from הַלְבַּיִם, from the

Sanskrit *Kalabha*; and according to Hitzig, from נְהָבִים = לְהָבִים, *Libyi*; or else שְׁנֵהָבִים is a false reading for שְׁן וְהָבִים, ivory and ebony, according to Ezek. 27:15 (see *Ges. Thes.* p. 1453). Of these four derivations the first two are decidedly wrong: the first, because *ibha* as a name for the elephant only occurs, according to Weber, in the later Indian writings, and is never used in the earlier writings in this sense (vid., Roediger, *Addenda ad Ges. thes.* p. 115); the second, because *Kalabha* does not signify the elephant, but *catulum elephanti*, before it possesses any teeth available for ivory. The third is a fancy which its originator himself has since given up and the fourth a conjecture, which is not raised to a probability even by the attempt of Böttcher to show that הָבִים is a case of backward assimilation from הָבִים, because the asyndeton שְׁן הָבִים between two couples connected by ו is without any analogy, and the passages adduced by Böttcher, viz., Deut. 29:22, Josh. 15:54ff., and Even Ezek. 27:33, are to be taken in quite a different way.—The rendering of קָפִים by apes, and the connection of the name not only with the Sanscrit and Malabar *kapi*, but also with the Greek κῆπος and κῆβος, also κείβος, are much surer; but, on the other hand, the assumption that the Greeks, like the Semitic nations, received the word from the Indians along with the animals, is very improbable: for κῆπος in Greek does not denote the ape (πίθηκος) generally, but simply a species of long-tailed apes, the native land of which, according to the testimony of ancient writers, was Ethiopia,⁵⁹ and the Ethiopian apes are hardly likely to have sprung from India.—And lastly, even in the case of תְּכֵיִם, according to the ancient versions *peacocks*, the derivation from the Malabaric or Tamul *tôgai* or *tôghai* (cf. Roediger in *Ges. Thes.* p. 1502) is not placed beyond the reach of doubt.

If, in conclusion, we look through all the articles of commerce that were brought to Jerusalem from the Ophir voyages, apart from the gold and silver, which were not to be found in the

land of Abhira, the ivory and ebony (supposing that we ought to read שְׁן וְהָבִים for שְׁנֵהָבִים) furnish no evidence in support of India, inasmuch as both of them could have been brought from Ethiopia, as even Lassen admits (ii. pp. 554). And even if the words *Almuggim*, *Kophim*, and *Tucchijim* really came from India along with the objects to which they belonged, it would by no means follow with certainty from this alone that Ophir was situated in India.—For since, for example, there are indisputable traces of very early commercial intercourse between India and Hither Asia and Africa, especially Southern Arabia and Ethiopia, reaching far beyond the time of Solomon, the seamen of Hiram and Solomon may have obtained these articles either in Arabia or on the Ethiopian coast. For even if the statements of Herodotus and Strabo, to the effect that the Phoenicians emigrated from the islands of the Erythraean Sea, Tylos (or Tyros?) and Arados, to the Phoenician coast, do not prove that the Phoenicians had already extended their commercial enterprise as far as India even before the twelfth century, as Lassen (ii. 597 and 584–5) supposes; if the Tyrians and Aradians, who were related to them by tribe, still continued to dwell upon the islands of the Persian Gulf, from which they could much more easily find the way to India by sea,—since the historical character of these statement has been disputed by Movers (*Phönizier*, ii. 1, p. 38ff.) on very weighty grounds; yet it is evident that there was a very early intercourse between East India and Africa, reaching far beyond all historical testimony, from the following well-established facts: that the Egyptians made use of indigo in the dyeing of their stuffs, and this could only have been brought to them from India; that muslins, which were likewise of Indian origin, are found among the material in which the mummies are enveloped; and that in the graves of the kings of the eighteenth dynasty, who ceased to reign in the year 1476 B.C., there have been discovered vases of Chinese porcelain (cf. Lassen, ii. p. 596). And the intercourse between the southern coast of Arabia and Hither India may have been quite as

old, if not older; so that Indian productions may have been brought to Hither Asia by the Sabaeans long before the time of Solomon (vid., Lassen, ii. pp. 593–4, and Movers, *Phöniz.* ii. 3, pp. 247, 256). But the commercial intercourse between Arabia and the opposite coast of Ethiopia, by which African productions reached the trading inhabitants of Arabia, was unquestionably still older than the trade with India. If we weigh well all these points, there is no valid ground for looking outside Arabia for the situation of the Solomonian Ophir. But we shall no doubt be obliged to give up the hope of determining with any greater precision that particular part of the coast of Arabia in which Ophir was situated, inasmuch as hitherto neither the name Ophir nor the existence of gold-fields in Arabia has been established by modern accounts, and moreover the interior of the great Arabian peninsula is still for the most part a *terra incognita*.⁶⁰

1 Kings 10

The Queen of Saba. Solomon's Wealth and Splendour

1 Kings 10:1–13. Visit of the Queen of Saba (cf. 2 Chron. 9:1–12).—When the fame of Solomon's great wisdom came to the ears of the queen of Saba, probably through the Ophir voyages, she undertook a journey to Jerusalem, to convince herself of the truth of the report which had reached her, by putting it to the test by means of enigmas. אֲשָׁפָא, Σαβῶα, is not Ethiopia or Meroë, as Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 6, 5), who confounds אֲשָׁפָא with אֲסָפָא, and the Abyssinian Christians suppose (vid., Ludolfi *hist. Aeth.* ii. 3), but the kingdom of the *Sabaeans*, who were celebrated for their trade in incense, gold, and precious stones, and who dwelt in Arabia Felix, with the capital *Saba*, or the Μαριάβα of the Greeks. This queen, who is called *Balkis* in the Arabian legend (cf. Koran, *Sur.* 27, and Pococke, *Specim. hist. Arab.* p. 60), heard the fame of Solomon יהוה לְשֵׁם; i.e., not “at the naming of the name of Jehovah” (Böttcher), nor “in respect of the glory of the Lord, with regard to that which

Solomon had instituted for the glory of the Lord” (Thenius); nor even “serving to the glorification of God” (de Wette and Maurer); but literally, “belonging to the name of the Lord:” in other words, the fame which Solomon had acquired through the name of the Lord, or through the fact that the Lord had so glorified Himself in him (Ewald and Dietrich in *Ges. Lex.* s.v. הָ). “She came to try him with riddles,” i.e., to put his wisdom to the test by carrying on a conversation with him in riddles. The love of the Arabs for riddles, and their superiority in this *jeu d'esprit*, is sufficiently well known from the immense extent to which the Arabic literature abounds in *Mashals*. We have only to think of the large collections of proverbs made by Ali ben Abi Taleb and Meidani, or the *Makamen* of Hariri, which have been made accessible to all by F. Rückert's masterly translation into German, and which are distinguished by an amazing fulness of word-play and riddles. רֵידָה, a riddle, is a pointed saying which merely hints at the deeper truth and leaves it to be guessed.

1 Kings 10:2, 3. As the queen of a wealthy country, she came with a very large retinue. חֵיל does not mean a military force or an armed escort (Thenius), but riches, property; namely, her numerous retinue of men (עֲבָדִים, v. 13), and camels laden with valuable treasures. The words גַּמְלִים ... יִקְרָה are an explanatory circumstantial clause, both here and also in the Chronicles, where the cop. *Vav* stands before גַּמְלִים (cf. Ewald, § 341, *a, b*). “And spake to Solomon all that she had upon her heart,” i.e., in this connection, whatever riddles she had it in her mind to lay before him; “and Solomon told her all her sayings,” i.e., was able to solve all her riddles. There is no ground for thinking of sayings of a religious nature, as the earlier commentators supposed, but simply of sayings the meaning of which was concealed, and the understanding of which indicated very deep wisdom.

1 Kings 10:4, 5. She saw הַבַּיִת, i.e., Solomon's palace, not the temple, and "the food of his table," i.e., both the great variety of food that was placed upon the king's table (1 Kings 5:2, 3), and also the costly furniture of the table (v. 21), and "the seat of his retainers and the standing of his servants," i.e., the places in the palace assigned to the ministers and servants of the king, which were contrived with wisdom and arranged in a splendid manner. עֲבָדִים are the chief officers of the king, viz., ministers, counsellors, and *aides de camp*; מְשָׁרְתִים, the court servants; מוֹשָׁב, the rooms of the courtiers in attendance; מַעְמָד, the standing-place, i.e., the rooms of the inferior servants, "and their clothing," which they received from the king; and מְשַׁקֵּיוֹ, not his cup-bearers (LXX, Vulg.), but as in Gen. 40:21, the drink, i.e., probably the whole of the drinking arrangements; וְעֹלָתוֹ, and his ascent, by which he was accustomed to go into the house of Jehovah. עֹלָה does not mean burnt-offering here, as the older translators have rendered it, but ascent, as in Ezek. 40:26, and as the Chronicles have correctly explained it by עֲלִיתוֹ. For burnt-offering is not to be thought of in this connection, because the queen had nothing to see or to be astonished at in the presentation of such an offering. עֹלָתוֹ is most likely "the king's outer entrance" into the temple, mentioned in 2 Kings 16:18; and the passage before us would lead us to suppose that this was a work of art, or an artistic arrangement. וְלֹא הָיָה וְגוֹ', "and there was no more spirit in her:" she was beside herself with amazement, as in Josh. 5:1; 2:11.

1 Kings 10:6-9. She then said with astonishment to Solomon, that of what her eyes now saw she had not heard the half, through the report which had reached her of his affairs and of his wisdom, and which had hitherto appeared incredible to her; and not only congratulated his servants, who stood continually near him and could hear his wisdom, but also praised Jehovah his God, that

out of His eternal love to His people Israel He had given them a king to do justice and righteousness. The earlier theologians inferred from this praising of Jehovah, which involved faith in the true God, when taken in connection with Matt. 12:42, that this queen had been converted to the true God, and conversed with Solomon on religious matters. But, as we have already observed at 1 Kings 5:21, an acknowledgment of Jehovah as the God of Israel was reconcilable with polytheism. And the fact that nothing is said about her offering sacrifice in the temple, shows that the conversion of the queen is not to be thought of here.

1 Kings 10:10. She thereupon presented to Solomon a hundred and twenty talents of gold (more than three million thalers [nearly half a million sterling—Tr.]), and a very large quantity of spices and precious stones. The בְּשָׂמִים probably included the genuine balsam of Arabia, even if בָּשָׂם was not the specific name of the genuine balsam. "There never more came so much of such spices of Jerusalem." Instead of לֹא בָּא עוֹד לָרֶב ... we find in the Chronicles, v. 9, לֹא הָיָה כִּי, "there was nothing like this balsam," which conveys the same meaning though expressed more indefinitely, since כְּבִשָּׂם points back to the preceding words, "balsam (spices) in great quantity."⁶¹

1 Kings 10:11, 12. The allusion to these costly presents leads the historian to introduce the remark here, that the Ophir fleet also brought, in addition to gold, a large quantity of *Algummim* wood (see at 1 Kings 9:28) and precious stones. Of this wood Solomon had מְסָעָד or מְסָעוֹת made for the temple and palace. מְסָעָד, from סָעַד, signifies a support, and מְסָעָה may be a later form for סָעָל, a flight of steps or a staircase, so that we should have to think of steps with bannisters. This explanation is at any rate a safer one than that of "divans" (Thenius), which would have been quite out of place in the temple, or "narrow pannelled stripes on the floor" (Bertheau), which cannot in the smallest

degree be deduced from *מִסְעָד*, or “support = moveables, viz., tables, benches, footstools, boxes, and drawers” (Böttcher), which neither harmonizes with the temple, where there was no such furniture, nor with the *מִסְלוֹת* of the Chronicles. “And guitars and harps for the singers,” probably for the temple singers. *כְּנֹר* and *נָבֵל* are string instruments; the former resembling our guitar rather than the harp, the strings being carried over the sounding-board upon a bridge, the latter being of a pitcher shape without any sounding bridge, as in the case of the harps.

1 Kings 10:13. Solomon gave the queen of Saba all that she wished and asked for, beside what he gave her “according to the hand,” i.e., the might, of the king; that is to say, in addition to the presents answering to his might and his wealth, which he was obliged to give as a king, according to the Oriental custom. In the Chronicles (v. 12) we find “beside that which she had brought (*הַבְּיָאָה*) to the king,” which is an abbreviated expression for “beside that which he gave her in return for what she had brought to him,” or beside the return presents corresponding to her gifts to him, as it has been already correctly paraphrased by the Targum.

1 Kings 10:14–22. Solomon’s Wealth and the Use He Made of It (cf. 2 Chron. 9:13–21).—V. 14. The gold which Solomon received in one year amounted to 666 talents,—more than seventeen million thalers (two million and a half sterling—Tr.). 666 is evidently a round number founded upon an approximative valuation. *בְּשָׁנָה אֶחָת* is rendered in the Vulg. *per annos singulos*; but this is hardly correct, as the Ophir fleet, the produce of which is at any rate included, did not arrive every year, but once in three years. Thenius is wrong in supposing that this revenue merely applies to the direct taxes levied upon the Israelites. It includes all the branches of Solomon’s revenue, whether derived from his commerce by sea and land (cf. vv. 28, 29) or from the royal domains (1 Chron. 27:26–31), or received in the form of presents

from foreign princes, who either visited him like the queen of Saba or sent ambassadors to him (vv. 23, 24), excepting the duties and tribute from conquered kings, which are specially mentioned in v. 15. *לְבַד מֵאֲנָשֵׁי הַתּוֹר*, beside what came in (*בְּאֵל לְשִׁלְמוֹהָ*) from the travelling traders and the commerce of the merchants, and from all the kings, etc. *אֲנָשֵׁי הַתְּרָיִם* (a combination resembling our merchantmen; cf. Ewald, § 287, *e.*, p. 721) are probably the tradesmen or smaller dealers who travelled about in the country, and *רֹבְלִים* the wholesale dealers. This explanation of *תְּרָיִם* cannot be rendered doubtful by the objection that *תוֹר* only occurs elsewhere in connection with the wandering about of spies; for *רָכַל* signified originally to go about, spy out, or retail scandal, and after that to trade, and go about as a tradesman. *מְלָכֵי הָעָרָב* are not kings of the auxiliary and allied nations (Chald., Ges.), but kings of the mixed population, and according to Jer. 25:24, more especially of the population of Arabia Deserta (*הַשְּׂכָנִים בְּמִדְבָּר*), which bordered upon Palestine; for *עָרָב* is a mixed crowd of all kinds of men, who either attach themselves to a nation (Ex. 12:38), or live in the midst of it as foreigners (Neh. 13:3), hence a number of mercenaries (Jer. 50:37). In 2 Chron. 9:14, *הָעָרָב* is therefore correctly explained by the term *עָרָב*, which does not mean the whole of Arabia, but “only a tract of country not very extensive on the east and south of Palestine” (Gesenius), as these tribes were tributary of Solomon. *פְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ*, the governors of the land, are probably the officers named in 1 Kings 4:7–19. As they collected the duties in the form of natural productions and delivered them in that form, so also did the tradesmen and merchants pay their duties, and the subjugated pastoral tribes of Arabia their tribute, *in natura*. This explains in a very simple manner why these revenues are separated from the revenue of Solomon which came in the form of money. *פְּחָה* is a foreign

word, which first found its way into the Hebrew language after the times of the Assyrians, and sprang from the Sanscrit *paksha*, a companion or friend, which took the form of *pakkha* in Prakrit, and probably of *pakha* in the early Persian (vid., Benfey and Stern, *die Monatsnamen*, p. 195).

1 Kings 10:16, 17. Solomon had 500 ornamental shields made, 200 larger ones (צָנִים, *scuta*, targets), and 300 smaller (מְגִנִּים, *clypei*). These shields, like all the shields of the ancients, were made of wood or basket-work, and covered with gold plate instead of leather (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 296ff.). זָהָב שְׁחוּט does not mean *aurum jugulatum*, i.e., gold mixed with metal of a different kind, but, as Kimchi has shown, *aurum diductum*, beaten gold, from שָׁחַט, to stretch; since Solomon would certainly use pure gold for these ornamental shields. "Six hundred shekels of gold he spread upon one target," that is to say, he used for gilding one target. Six hundred shekels would weigh about 17 1/2 s., so that the value of the gold upon a target would be more than 5000 thalers (£750), supposing that the Mosaic shekel is meant. But this is rendered doubtful by the fact that the gold upon the small shields is estimated at three minae. If, for example, the three minae are equal to three hundred shekels, according to 2 Chron. 9:16, as is generally assumed, a hundred shekels are reckoned as one mina; and as the mina only contained fifty Mosaic shekels, according to Ezek. 45:12, the reference must be to shekels after the king's weight (2 Sam. 14:26), which were only half the sacred shekels (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. p. 135). Consequently the gold plate upon one target was not quite 9 s., and that upon a shield not quite 4 1/2 s. These shields were intended for the body-guard to carry on state occasions (1 Kings 14:27, 28; 2 Chron. 12:10), and were kept in the house of the forest of Lebanon (1 Kings 7:2).

1 Kings 10:18–20. Solomon had a great throne of ivory made, and had it overlaid with fine gold. כִּסֵּא־אִשָּׁר is not a throne made of ivory, but

one merely ornamented with ivory; and we are to imagine the gilding as effected by laying the gold simply upon the wood, and inserting the ivory within the gold plate. מוֹפָז, a *hophal* participle of פָּזַז: *aurum depuratum*, hence = טְהוֹר in 2 Chron. 9:17. The throne had six steps, and a "rounded head on the hinder part thereof," i.e., a back which was arched above or rounded off,⁶² and יָדַת, arms, i.e., arms on both sides of the seat (מְקוֹם הַשִּׁבְתָּ), and two lions standing by the side of the arms. Beside this there were twelve lions upon the six steps, namely two upon each step, one on this side and one on that. Instead of אֲרָיִים (v. 20) we find אֲרָיוֹת in v. 19, just as we do in both verses of the Chronicles, not because the reference is to artificial, inanimate figures and not to natural lions, as Thenius supposes, but because the plural ending יֹ- is an unusual one with this word; and even where natural lions are spoken of, we always find אֲרָיוֹת in other passages (cf. Judg. 14:5; 2 Sam. 1:23; 2 Kings 17:25; Song of Sol. 4:8, etc.). The lions were symbols of the ruler's authority; and the twelve lions upon the steps may possibly have pointed to the rule over the twelve tribes of Israel, which was concentrated in the throne; not "watchers of the throne," as Thenius thinks. This throne was so splendid a work, that the historian observes that nothing of the kind had ever been made for any other kingdom. Upon the early Assyrian monuments we do indeed find high seats depicted, which are very artistically worked, and provided with backs and arms, and some with the arms supported by figures of animals (see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 301), but none resembling Solomon's throne. It is not till a later age that the more splendid thrones appear (vid., Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenland*, iii. pp. 176ff.).

1 Kings 10:21, 22. The drinking vessels of Solomon also were all of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon of costly gold (טָגוֹר: see at 1 Kings 6:20). Silver was counted as nothing, because the Tarshish

fleet arrived once in three years, bringing gold, silver, etc. (see at 1 Kings 9:28).

1 Kings 10:23–29. In vv. 23–29 everything that had to be stated concerning the wealth, wisdom, and revenue of Solomon is summed up as conclusion (cf. 2 Chron. 9:22–28 and 1:14–17).

1 Kings 10:23, 24. Vv. 23 and 24 point back to 1 Kings 5:9–14. וַיִּגְדַּל: Solomon became greater, not was greater, on account of the *Vâv consec.* כָּל-הָעַמִּים, all the world, corresponds to כָּל-הָאָרֶץ in 1 Kings 5:14. The foreigners out of all lands, who came on account of his wisdom, brought Solomon presents: gold and silver vessels, clothes (שְׂלֵמוֹת, court dresses, which are still customary presents in the East), גְּשֵׁק, armour, spices, horses and mules.

1 Kings 10:26. V. 26 is simply a repetition of 1 Kings 5:6) compare also 1 Kings 9:19); and v. 27 is merely a further extension of v. 21. The words of v. 27, “Solomon made silver like stones in Jerusalem, and cedars like the sycamores in the lowland for abundance,” are a hyperbolic description of his collection of enormous quantities of precious metals and costly wood. שֵׁקֵמִים, *sycomori*, mulberry fig-trees, are very rare in Palestine in its present desolate state (see Rob. *Pal.* iii. 27), and are only met in any abundance in Egypt; but in ancient times they abounded in the lowlands of Palestine to such an extent, that they were used as common building wood (vid., Isa. 9:9, on which Theodoret observes, τούτων (συκαμίνων) ἡ Παλαιστίνη πεπλήρωται). According to 1 Chron. 27:28, the sycamore forests in the lowland of Judah were royal domains.

1 Kings 10:28, 29. (cf. 2 Chron. 1:16, 17). “And (as for) the going out of horses from Egypt for Solomon, a company of king’s merchants fetched (horses) for a definite price.” This is the only possible explanation of the verse according to the Masoretic punctuation; but to obtain it, the first מְקוֹה must be connected with סוֹסֵי in opposition to the accents, and the

second must be pointed מְקוֹה. This is the rendering adopted by Gesenius in his *Thesaurus* and *Lexicon* (ed. Dietr. s. v. מְקוֹה). The meaning company or troop may certainly be justified from Gen. 1:10, Ex. 7:19, and Lev. 11:36, where the word signifies an accumulation of water. Still there is something very strange not only in the application of the word both to a company of traders and also to a troop of horses, but also in the omission of סוֹסֵי (horses) after the second מְקוֹה. Hence the rendering of the LXX and Vulgate deserves attention, and may possibly be the one to be preferred (as Michaelis, Bertheau *on Chron.*, and Movers assume). The translators of these versions have taken מְקוֹה as the name of a place, ἔξ᾽Ἐκουέ, or rather ἐκ Κουέ, *de Coa*.⁶³ According to this, the rendering would be: “And as for the going out of horses from Egypt and Koa (or Kawe) for Solomon, the king’s traders fetched them from Joa (Kawe) for a fixed price.” It is true that the situation of *Koa* cannot be more precisely defined; but there seems to be very little doubt that it was a place for the collection of customs upon the frontier of Egypt.

1 Kings 10:29. “And there came up and went out a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty shekels; and so (in the same manner as for Solomon) they led them out for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram through their hand.” מְרִכְבָּה, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. 8:4; 10:18, and Ezek. 39:20, denotes a chariot with the team of horses belonging to it, possibly three horses (see at 1 Kings 5:6), not *quadriga* (Clericus and others), or two draught horses and two as a reserve (Thenius). For the inference, that if a horse cost 150 shekels, a team of four would be obtained for 600, is not quite a certain one, since the chariot itself would certainly not be given in. A hundred and fifty shekels are a little more than 130 thalers (§ 19, 10s.—Tr.), and 600 would be 525 thalers (§ 78, 15s.). These amounts are sufficient to show how untenable the opinion of Movers is, that the sums mentioned are not the prices paid for horses

and chariots, but the payment made for their exit, or the customs duty. And his other opinion is quite equally erroneous, namely that the chariots and horses were state carriages and horses of luxury intended for the king.—The merchants are called the king's traders, not because a portion of their profits went into the royal treasury as the tax upon trade (Bertheau), nor as the brokers who bought for the king (Thenius), but because they carried on their trade for the king's account. **בְּיָדָם** cannot be adduced as evidence to the contrary; for linguists require no proof that this cannot mean "auf ihre Hand," as Thenius assumes. Böttcher's explanation is the right one, namely, "through their hand," inasmuch as they brought the horses and chariots themselves even to those kings who lived at a greater distance, without employing intermediate agents. The kings of the **הִתְיָיִם**, the Hittites in the wider sense (= Canaanites, as in Josh. 1:4, 2 Kings 7:6, Ezek. 16:3), and of Aram, were in part Solomon's vassals, since his rule extended over all the Canaanites with the exception of the Phoenicians, and over several kingdoms of Aram.

1 Kings 11

Solomon's Polygamy and Idolatry. His Opponents, and His Death (Ch. 11)

1 Kings 11. The idolatry into which Solomon fell in his old age appears so strange in a king so wise and God-fearing as Solomon showed himself to be at the dedication of the temple, that many have been quite unable to reconcile the two, and have endeavoured to show either that Solomon's worship of idols was psychologically impossible, or that the knowledge of God and the piety attributed to him are unhistorical. But great wisdom and a refined knowledge of God are not a defence against the folly of idolatry, since this has its roots in the heart, and springs from sensual desires and the lust of the flesh. The cause assigned in the biblical account for Solomon's falling away from the Lord, is that he loved

many strange, i.e., foreign or heathen, wives, who turned his heart from Jehovah to their own gods in his old age. Consequently the falling away did not take place suddenly, but gradually, as Solomon got old, and was not a complete renunciation of the worship of Jehovah, to whom he offered solemn sacrifices three times a year, and that certainly to the day of his death (1 Kings 9:25), but consisted simply in the fact that his heart was no longer thoroughly devoted to the Lord (1 Kings 11:4), and that he inclined towards the idols of his foreign wives and built them altars (vv. 5–8); that is to say, it consisted merely in a syncretic mixture of Jehovah-worship and idolatry, by which the worship which should be paid solely and exclusively to the true God was not only injured, but was even turned into idolatry itself, Jehovah the only true God being placed on a level with the worthless gods of the heathen.—Love to foreign wives no doubt presupposed an inclination to foreign customs; it was not, however, idolatry in itself, but was still reconcilable with that sincere worship of Jehovah which is attributed to Solomon in the earlier years of his reign. At the same time it was a rock on which living faith and true adherence to the Lord might at last suffer shipwreck. And we may even infer from the repeated warnings of God (1 Kings 3:14; 6:12; 9:4), that from the earliest years of his reign Solomon was in danger of falling into idolatry. This danger did, indeed, spring in his case from his inclination to foreign customs; but this inclination was again influenced by many of the circumstances of his reign, which we must regard as contributing more remotely to his eventual fall. And among the first of these we must place the splendour and glory of his reign. Through long and severe conflicts David had succeeded in conquering all the enemies of Israel, and had not only helped his people to peace and prosperity, but had also raised the kingdom to great power and glory. And Solomon inherited these fruits of his father's reign. Under the blessings of peace he was not only able to carry out the work of building a splendid temple, which his father had urged

upon him, but was also able, by a wise use of the sources already existing and by opening new ones, still further to increase the treasures which he had collected, and thereby to exalt the splendour of his kingdom. The treaty with Hiram of Tyre, which enabled him to execute the intended state buildings in Jerusalem, was followed by alliances for the establishment of a widespread commerce both by sea and land, through which ever increasing treasures of gold and silver, and other costly goods, were brought to the king. As this accumulation of riches helped to nourish his inclination to a love of show, and created a kind of luxury which was hardly reconcilable with the simplicity of manners and the piety of a servant of God, so the foreign trade led to a toleration of heathen customs and religious views which could not fail to detract from the reverence paid to Jehovah, however little the trade with foreigners might be in itself at variance with the nature of the Old Testament kingdom of God. And again, even the great wisdom of king Solomon might also become a rock endangering his life of faith, not so much in the manner suggested by J. J. Hess (*Gesch. Dav. u. Sal.* ii. p. 413), namely, that an excessive thirst for inquiry might easily seduce him from the open and clearer regions of the kingdom of truth into the darker ones of the kingdom of lies, i.e., of magic, and so lead him to the paths of superstition; as because the widespread fame of his wisdom brought distinguished and wise men from distant lands to Jerusalem and into alliance with the king, and their homage flattered the vanity of the human heart, and led to a greater and greater toleration of heathen ways. But these things are none of them blamed in the Scriptures, because they did not of necessity lead to idolatry, but might simply give an indirect impulse to it, by lessening the wall of partition between the worship of the true God and that of heathen deities, and making apostasy a possible thing. The Lord Himself had promised and had given Solomon wisdom, riches, and glory above all other kings for the glorification of his kingdom; and these gifts of God merely contributed to estrange his heart

from the true God for the simple reason, that Solomon forgot the commandments of the Lord and suffered himself to be besotted by the lusts of the flesh, not only so as to love many foreign wives, but so as also to take to himself wives from the nations with which Israel was not to enter into any close relationship whatever.

1 Kings 11:1–13. Solomon's Love of Many Wives and Idolatry.—Vv. 1, 2. "Solomon loved many foreign wives, and that along with the daughter of Pharaoh." וְאֶת־בִּתּוֹ פַּי, standing as it does between וְנָשִׁים נְכַרְיֹתָר and מוֹאָבִיּוֹת, cannot mean "and especially the daughter of P.," as Thenius follows the earlier commentators in supposing, but must mean, as in v. 25, "and that with, or along with," i.e., actually beside the daughter of Pharaoh. She is thereby distinguished from the foreign wives who turned away Solomon's heart from the Lord, so that the blame pronounced upon those marriages does not apply to his marriage to the Egyptian princess (see at 1 Kings 3:1). All that is blamed is that, in opposition to the command in Deut. 17:17, Solomon loved (1) *many* foreign wives, and (2) Moabitish, Ammonitish, and other wives, of the nations with whom the Israelites were not to intermarry. All that the law expressly prohibited was marriage with Canaanitish women (Deut. 7:1–3; Ex. 34:16); consequently the words "of the nations," etc., are not to be taken as referring merely to the Sidonian and Hittite women (J. D. Mich.); but this prohibition is extended here to all the tribes enumerated in v. 2, just as in Ezra 9:2ff., 10:3, Neh. 13:23; not from a rigour surpassing the law, but in accordance with the spirit of the law, namely, because the reason appended to the law, *ne in idololatriam a superstitionis mulieribus pellicerentur* (Clericus), applied to all these nations. The Moabites and Ammonites, moreover, were not to be received into the congregation at all, not even to the tenth generation, and of the Edomites only the children in the third generation were to be received (Deut. 23:4, 8, 9). There was all the less reason, therefore, for permitting marriages with them, that is to say, so long as they

retained their nationality or their heathen ways. The words **לֹא־תָבֹאוּ ... בְּכֶם** are connected in form with Josh. 23:12, but, like the latter, they really rest upon Ex. 34:16 and Deut. 7:1–3. In the last clause **הִקְהָה** is used with peculiar emphasis: Solomon clave to these nations, of which God had said such things, to love, i.e., to enter into the relation of love or into the marriage relation, with them. **דָּבַק** is used of the attachment of a man to his wife (Gen. 2:4) and also to Jehovah (Deut. 4:4; 10:20, etc.).

1 Kings 11:3–8. Vv. 3–8 carry out still further what has been already stated. In v. 3 the taking of *many* wives is first explained. He had seven hundred **שָׂרוֹת** **נָשִׁים**, women of the first rank, who were exalted into princesses, and three hundred concubines. These are in any case round numbers, that is to say, numbers which simply approximate to the reality, and are not to be understood as affirming that Solomon had all these wives and concubines at the same time, but as including all the women who were received into his harem during the whole of his reign, whereas the sixty queens and eighty concubines mentioned in Song of Sol. 6:8 are to be understood as having been present in the court at one time. Even in this respect Solomon sought to equal the rulers of other nations, if not to surpass them.⁶⁴—These women “inclined his heart,” i.e., determined the inclination of his heart.

1 Kings 11:4. In the time of old age, when the flesh gained the supremacy over the spirit, they turned his heart to other gods, so that it was no longer wholly with Jehovah, his God. **שָׁלֵם**, *integer*, i.e., entirely devoted to the Lord (cf. 1 Kings 8:61), like the heart of David his father, who had indeed grievously sinned, but had not fallen into idolatry.

1 Kings 11:5–8. He walked after the Ashtaroth, etc. According to v. 7, the idolatry here condemned consisted in the fact that he built altars to the deities of all his foreign wives, upon which they offered incense and sacrifice to their idols. It is not stated that he himself also offered sacrifice to these idols. But even

the building of altars for idols was a participation in idolatry which was irreconcilable with true fidelity to the Lord. **עֲשֵׂתָרֶת**, Astarte, was the chief female deity of all the Canaanitish tribes; her worship was also transplanted from Tyre to Carthage, where it flourished greatly. She was a moon-goddess, whom the Greeks and Romans called sometimes *Aphrodite*, sometimes *Urania*, *Σελήνη*, *Coelestis*, and *Juno* (see the Comm. on Judg. 2:13). **מִלְכָם**, which is called **מִלְכָד** (without the article) in v. 7, and **מִלְכָם** in Jer. 49:1, 3, and Amos 1:15, the abomination of the Ammonites, must not be confounded with the *Molech* (**הַמִּלְכָד**, always with the article) of the early Canaanites, to whom children were offered in sacrifice in the valley of Benhinnom from the time of Ahaz onwards (see the Comm. on Lev. 18:21), since they had both of them their separate places of worship in Jerusalem (cf. 2 Kings 23:10, and 13), and nothing is ever said about the offering of children in sacrifice to Milcom; although the want of information prevents us from determining the precise distinction between the two. *Milcom* was at any rate related to the *Chemosh* of the Moabites mentioned in v. 7; for Chemosh is also described as a god of the Ammonites in Judg. 11:24, whereas everywhere else he is called the god of the Moabites (Num. 21:29; Amos 1:15, etc.). *Chemosh* was a sun-god, who was worshipped as king of his people and as a god of war, and as such is depicted upon coins with a sword, lance, and shield in his hands, and with two torches by his side (see at Num. 21:29). The enumeration of the different idols is incomplete; Chemosh being omitted in v. 5, and Astarte, to whom Solomon also built an altar in Jerusalem, according to 2 Kings 23:13, in v. 7. Still this incompleteness does not warrant our filling up the supposed gaps by emendations of the text. **וַיַּעַשׂ הָרַע וְגו'** as in Judg. 2:11; 3:7, etc. **מִלָּא אֶחָרֵי יי**, a pregnant expression for **מִלָּא לְלֶכֶת אַח' יי** as in Num. 14:24; 32:11, 12, etc.—These places of sacrifice (**בְּמָה**, see at 1 Kings 3:2) Solomon built upon the

mountain in front, i.e., to the east, of Jerusalem, and, according to the more precise account in 2 Kings 23:13, to the right, that is to say, on the southern side, of the Mount of Corruption,—in other words, upon the southern peak of the Mount of Olives; and consequently this peak has been called in church tradition from the time of Brocardus onwards, either *Mons Offensionis*, after the Vulgate rendering of הַר הַמְּשָׁחִית in 2 Kings 23:13, or *Mons Scandali*, Mount of Offence (vid., Rob. *Pal.* i. 565 and 566).

1 Kings 11:8. “So did he for all his foreign wives,” viz., built altars for their gods; for instance, in addition to those already named, he also built an altar for Astarte. These three altars, which are only mentioned in the complete account in 2 Kings 23:13, were sufficient for all the deities of the foreign wives. For the Hittites and Edomites do not appear to have had any deities of their own that were peculiar to themselves. The Hittites no doubt worshipped Astarte in common with the Sidonians, and the Edomites probably worshipped Milcom. In the whole of the Old Testament the only place in which gods of the Edomite are mentioned is in 2 Chron. 25:20, and there no names are given. Of course we must except Pharaoh’s daughter, according to v. 1, and the remarks already made in connection with that verse; for she brought no idolatrous worship to Jerusalem, and consequently even in later times we do not find the slightest trace of Egyptian idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah.⁶⁵ Burning incense (מִקְטֹרֶת) is mentioned before sacrificing (מִזְבְּחֹת), because vegetable offerings took precedence of animal sacrifices in the nature-worship of Hither Asia (vid., Bähr, *Symbolik*, ii. pp. 237ff.).

1 Kings 11:9ff. Through this apostasy from the Lord his God, who had appeared to him twice (1 Kings 3:5ff. and 9:2ff.) and had warned him against idolatry (הַצִּוָּה) is a continuation of the participle הַנִּרְאָה, Solomon drew down upon himself the anger of Jehovah. The emphasis lies upon the fact that God had appeared to him

Himself for the purpose of warning him, and had not merely caused him to be warned by prophets, as Theodoret has explained. In consequence of this, the following announcement is made to him, no doubt through the medium of a prophet, possibly Ahijah (v. 29): “Because this has come into thy mind, and thou hast not kept my covenant, ... I will tear the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant; nevertheless I will not do it in thy lifetime for thy father David’s sake: howbeit I will not tear away the whole kingdom; one tribe I will give to thy son.” In this double limitation of the threatened forfeiture of the kingdom there is clearly manifested the goodness of God (δείκνυσι τὴν ἄμετρον ἀγαθότητα—Theodoret); not, however, with reference to Solomon, who had forfeited the divine mercy through his idolatry, but with regard to David and the selection of Jerusalem: that is to say, not from any special preference for David and Jerusalem, but in order that the promise made to David (2 Sam. 7), and the choice of Jerusalem as the place where His name should be revealed which was connected with that promise, might stand immoveably as an act of grace, which no sin of men could overturn (vid., v. 36). For שָׁבַד see the Comm. on vv. 31, 32.

1 Kings 11:14–40. Solomon’s Opponents.—Although the punishment with which Solomon was threatened for his apostasy was not to be inflicted till after his death, the Lord raised up several adversaries even during his lifetime, who endangered the peace of his kingdom, and were to serve as constant reminders that he owed his throne and his peaceable rule over the whole of the kingdom inherited from his father solely to the mercy, the fidelity, and the long-suffering of God.—The rising up of Hadad and Rezon took place even before the commencement of Solomon’s idolatry, but it is brought by וַיִּקָּם יְהוָה (v. 14) into logical connection with the punishment with which he is threatened in consequence of that idolatry, because it was not till a later period that it produced any perceptible effect upon his

government, yet it ought from the very first to have preserved him from self-security.

1 Kings 11:14–22. The *first* adversary was *Hadad* the Edomite, a man of royal birth. The name *הַדָּד* (*הַדָּד* in v. 17, according to an interchange of ה and א which is by no means rare) was also borne by a prae-Mosaic king of Edom (Gen. 36:35), from which we may see that it was not an uncommon name in the royal family of the Edomites. But the conjecture of Ewald and Thenius, that our Hadad was a grandson of Hadar, the last of the kings mentioned there, is quite a groundless one, since it rests upon the false assumption that Hadar (called Hadad in the Chronicles by mistake) reigned in the time of David (see the Comm. on Gen. 36:31ff.). *הוּא* before *בְּאֲדָוִם* stands in the place of the relative *אֲשֶׁר*: “of royal seed he = who was of the royal seed in Edom” (cf. Ewald, § 332, a.).

1 Kings 11:15ff. When David had to do with the Edomites, ... Hadad fled. *אֶת הַיְהוָה* is analogous to *הַיְהוָה עִם*, to have to do with any one, though in a hostile sense, as in the phrase to go to war with (*אֶת*) a person, whereas *הַיְהוָה עִם* generally means to be upon the side of any one. The correctness of the reading *בְּהִיּוֹת* is confirmed by all the ancient versions, which have simply paraphrased the meaning in different ways. For Böttcher has already shown that the LXX did not read *בְּהִיּוֹת*, as Thenius supposes. The words from *בְּעֵלֹת* to the end of v. 16 form explanatory circumstantial clauses. On the circumstance itself, compare 2 Sam. 8:13, 14, with the explanation given there. “The slain,” whom Joab went to bury, were probably not the Israelites who had fallen in the battle in the Salt valley (2 Sam. 8:13), but those who had been slain on the invasion of the land by the Edomites, and still remained unburied. After their burial Joab defeated the Edomites in the valley of Salt, and remained six months in Edom till he had cut off every male. “All Israel” is the whole of the Israelitish army. “Every male” is of course only

the men capable of bearing arms, who fell into the hands of the Israelites; for “Hadad and others fled, and the whole of the Idumaeen race was not extinct” (Clericus). Then *Hadad* fled, while yet a little boy, with some of his father’s Edomitish servants, to go to Egypt, going first of all to Midian and thence to Paran. The country of *Midian* cannot be more precisely defined, inasmuch as we meet with Midianites sometimes in the peninsula of Sinai on the eastern side of the Elanitic Gulf, where Edrisi and Abulfeda mention a city of Madian (see at Ex. 2:15), and sometimes on the east of the Moabitish territory (see at Num. 22:4 and Judg. 6:1). Here, at any rate, we must think of the neighbourhood of the Elanitic Gulf, though not necessarily of the city of Madian, five days’ journey to the south of Aela; and probably of the country to which Moses fled from Egypt. *Paran* is the desert of that name between the mountains of Sinai and the south of Canaan (see at Num. 10:12), through which the Haj route from Egypt by Elath to Mecca still runs. Hadad would be obliged to take the road by Elath in order to go to Egypt, even if he had taken refuge with the Midianites on the east of Moab and Edom.

1 Kings 11:18ff. From Paran they took men with them as guides through the desert. Thus Hadad came to Egypt, where Pharaoh received him hospitably, and gave them a house and maintenance (*לֶחֶם*), and also assigned him land (*אֲרָץ*) to cultivate for the support of the fugitives who had come with him, and eventually, as he found great favour in his eyes, gave him for a wife the sister of his own wife, queen *Tachpenes*, who bare him a son, *Genubath*. This son was weaned by Tachpenes in the royal palace, and then brought up among (with) the children of Pharaoh, the royal princes. According to Rosellini and Wilkinson (Ges. *Thes.* p. 1500), Tachpenes was also the name of a female deity of Egypt. The wife of Pharaoh is called *הַגְּבִירָה*, i.e., the mistress among the king’s wives, as being the principal consort. In the case of the kings of Judah this title is given to the king’s mother, probably as

the president in the harem, whose place was taken by the reigning queen after her death. The weaning, probably a family festival as among the Hebrews (Gen. 21:8) and other ancient nations (vid., Dougtaei *Analecta* ss. i. 22f.), was carried out by the queen in the palace, because the boy was to be thereby adopted among the royal children, to be brought up with them.

1 Kings 11:21, 22. When Hadad heard in Egypt of the death of David and Joab, he asked permission of Pharaoh to return to his own country. Pharaoh replied, "What is there lacking to thee with me?" This answer was a pure expression of love and attachment to Hadad, and involved the request that he would remain. But Hadad answered, "No, but let me go." We are not told that Pharaoh then let him go, but this must be supplied; just as in Num. 10:32 we are not told what Hobab eventually did in consequence of Moses' request, but it has to be supplied from the context. The return of Hadad to his native land is clearly to be inferred from the fact that, according to vv. 14 and 25, he rose up as an adversary of Solomon.⁶⁶

1 Kings 11:23–25. A *second* adversary of Solomon was *Rezon*, the son of Eliadah (for the name see at 1 Kings 15:18), who had fled from his lord Hadadezer, king of Zobah, and who became the captain of a warlike troop (גִּדּוּד), when David smote *them* (אֲתֵמ), i.e., the troops of his lord (2 Sam. 8:3, 4). Rezon probably fled from his lord for some reason which is not assigned, when the latter was engaged in war with David, before his complete overthrow, and collected together a company from the fugitives, with which he afterwards marched to Damascus, and having taken possession of that city, made himself king over it. This probably did not take place till towards the close of David's reign, or even after his death, though it was at the very beginning of Solomon's reign; for "he became an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon (i.e., during the whole of his reign), and that with (beside) the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel (i.e., became disgusted with the Israelitish rule), and

became king over Aram." אֲשֶׁר הָדָד is an abbreviated expression, to which עָשָׂה may easily be supplied, as it has been by the LXX (vid., Ewald, § 292, *b.*, *Anm.*). It is impossible to gather from these few words in what the mischief done by Hadad to Solomon consisted.⁶⁷ Rezon, on the other hand, really obtained possession of the rule over Damascus. Whether at the beginning or not till the end of Solomon's reign cannot be determined, since all that is clearly stated is that he was Solomon's adversary during the whole of his reign, and attempted to revolt from him from the very beginning. If, however, he made himself king of Damascus in the earliest years of his reign, he cannot have maintained his sway very long, since Solomon afterwards built or fortified Tadmor in the desert, which he could not have done if he had not been lord over Damascus, as the caravan road from Gilead to Tadmor (Palmyra) went past Damascus.⁶⁸

1 Kings 11:26–40. *Attempted rebellion of Jeroboam the Ephraimite.*—Hadad and Rezon are simply described as adversaries (שָׂטָן) of Solomon; but in the case of Jeroboam it is stated that "he lifted up his hand against the king," i.e., he stirred up a tumult or rebellion. הָרִים יָד בָּ is synonymous with נָשָׂא יָד בָּ in 2 Sam. 18:28; 20:21. It is not on account of this rebellion, which was quickly suppressed by Solomon, but on account of the later enterprise of Jeroboam, that his personal history is so minutely detailed. Jeroboam was an Ephraimite (אֶפְרַתִּי), as in 1 Sam. 1:1, Judg. 12:5) of *Zereda*, i.e., *Zarthan*, in the Jordan valley (see 1 Kings 7:46), son of a widow, and עָבָד, i.e., not a subject (Then.), but an officer, of Solomon. All that is related of his rebellion against the king is the circumstances under which it took place. הָאֲשֶׁר הִדְבִּיר אֲשֶׁר, this is how it stands with, as in Josh. 5:4. Solomon built *Millo* (1 Kings 9:15), and closed the rent (the defile?) in the city of David. פְּרִץ, *ruptura*, cannot be a rent or breach in the wall of the city of David, inasmuch as חוֹמָה is not

added, and since the fortification of the city by David (2 Sam. 5:9) no hostile attack had ever been made upon Jerusalem; but in all probability it denotes the ravine which separated Zion from Moriah and Ophel, the future *Tyropoeon*, through the closing of which the temple mountain was brought within the city wall, and the fortification of the city of David was completed (Thenius, Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 330). Compare מִפְּרֵץ, a gap in the coast, a bay. On the occasion of this building, Jeroboam proved himself a גִּבּוֹר הַיָּל, i.e., a very able and energetic man; so that when Solomon saw the young man, that he was doing work, i.e., urging it forward, he committed to him the oversight over all the heavy work of the house of Joseph. It must have been while occupying this post that he attempted a rebellion against Solomon. This is indicated by וְזֶה הַדְּבָר וְגַר in v. 27.

According to 1 Kings 12:4, the reason for the rebellion is to be sought for in the appointment of the Ephraimites to heavy works. This awakened afresh the old antipathy of that tribe to Judah, and Jeroboam availed himself of this to instigate a rebellion.

1 Kings 11:29ff. At that time the prophet Ahijah met him in the field and disclosed to him the word of the Lord, that he should become king over Israel. בְּעֵת הַהִיא: at that time, viz., the time when Jeroboam had become overseer over the heavy works, and not after he had already stirred up the rebellion. For the whole of the account in vv. 29–39 forms part of the explanation of וַיִּהְיֶה בְּעֵת הַהִיא which commences with v. 27b, so that וַיִּהְיֶה בְּעֵת הַהִיא is closely connected with וַיִּפְקֹד אֹתוֹ in v. 28, and there is no such gap in the history as is supposed by Thenius, who builds upon this opinion most untenable conjectures as to the intertwining of different sources. At that time, as Jeroboam was one day going out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah of Shilo (Seilun) met him by the way (בַּדֶּרֶךְ), with a new upper garment wrapped around him; and when they were alone, he rent the new garment, that is to say, his own, not

Jeroboam's, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. p. 388) erroneously supposes, into twelve pieces, and said to Jeroboam, "Take thee ten pieces, for Jehovah saith, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and give thee ten tribes; and one tribe shall remain to him (Solomon) for David's sake," etc. The new שֵׁלֶמָה was probably only a large four-cornered cloth, which was thrown over the shoulders like the *Heik* of the Arabs, and enveloped the whole of the upper portion of the body (see my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. pp. 36, 37). By the tearing of the new garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten for himself, the prophetic announcement was symbolized in a very emphatic manner. This symbolical action made the promise a completed fact. "As the garment as torn in pieces and lay before the eyes of Jeroboam, so had the division of the kingdom already taken place in the counsel of God" (O. v. Gerlach). There was something significant also in the circumstance that it was a *new* garment, which is stated twice, and indicates the newness, i.e., the still young and vigorous condition, of the kingdom (Thenius).

In the word of God explaining the action it is striking that Jeroboam was to receive *ten* tribes, and the *one* tribe was to remain to Solomon (vv. 31, 32, 35, 36, as in v. 13). The nation consisted of twelve tribes, and Ahijah had torn his garment into twelve pieces, of which Jeroboam was to take ten; so that there were two remaining. It is evident at once from this, that the numbers are intended to be understood symbolically and not arithmetically. *Ten* as the number of completeness and totality is placed in contrast with *one*, to indicate that all Israel was to be torn away from the house of David, as is stated in 1 Kings 12:20, "they made Jeroboam king over *all* Israel," and only one single fragment was to be left to the house of Solomon out of divine compassion. This one tribe, however, is not Benjamin, the one tribe beside Judah, as Hupfeld (on Ps. 80), C. a Lap., Mich., and others suppose, but, according to the distinct statement in 1 Kings 12:20, "the tribe of Judah only." Nevertheless Benjamin belonged to

Judah; for, according to 1 Kings 12:21, Rehoboam gathered together the whole house of Judah *and the tribe of Benjamin* to fight against the house of Israel (which had fallen away), and to bring the kingdom again to himself. And so also in 2 Chron. 11:3 and 23 Judah and Benjamin are reckoned as belonging to the kingdom of Rehoboam. This distinct prominence given to Benjamin by the side of Judah overthrows the explanation suggested by Seb. Schmidt and others, namely, that the description of the portion left to Rehoboam as *one* tribe is to be explained from the fact that Judah and Benjamin, on the border of which Jerusalem was situated, were regarded in a certain sense as one, and that the little Benjamin was hardly taken into consideration at all by the side of the great Judah. For if Ahijah had regarded Benjamin as one with Judah, he would not have torn his garment into twelve pieces, inasmuch as if Benjamin was to be merged in Judah, or was not to be counted along with it as a distinct tribe, the whole nation could only be reckoned as eleven tribes. Moreover the twelve tribes did not so divide themselves, that Jeroboam really received ten tribes and Rehoboam only one or only two. In reality there were three tribes that fell to the kingdom of Judah, and only nine to the kingdom of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh being reckoned as two tribes, since the tribe of Levi was not counted in the political classification. The kingdom of Judah included, beside the tribe of Judah, both the tribe of Benjamin and also the tribe of Simeon, the territory of which, according to Josh. 19:1–9, was within the tribe-territory of Judah and completely surrounded by it, so that the Simeonites would have been obliged to emigrate and give up their tribe-land altogether, if they desired to attach themselves to the kingdom of Israel. But it cannot be inferred from 2 Chron. 15:9 and 34:6 that an emigration of the whole tribe had taken place (see also at 1 Kings 12:17). On the other hand, whilst the northern border of the tribe of Benjamin, with the cities of Bethel, Ramah, and Jericho, fell to the kingdom of Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:29; 15:17, 21; 16:34), several of the

cities of the tribe of Dan were included in the kingdom of Judah, namely, Ziklag, which Achish had presented to David, and also Zorea and Ajalon (2 Chron. 11:10; 28:18), in which Judah obtained compensation for the cities of Benjamin of which it had been deprived.⁶⁹ Consequently there only remained nine tribes for the northern kingdom. For לְמַעַן עֲבָדִי וגו' see at v. 13. For v. 33 compare vv. 4–8. The plurals עֲבָדִי, וְשִׁתְּחֻוּ, and הֵלְכוּ are not open to critical objection, but are used in accordance with the fact, since Solomon did not practise idolatry alone, but many in the nation forsook the Lord along with him. צִדְדִּיָן, with a Chaldaic ending (see Ges. § 87, 1, a.). In vv. 34–36 there follows a more precise explanation: Solomon himself is not to lose the kingdom, but to remain prince all his life, and his son is to retain one tribe; both out of regard to David (vid., vv. 12 and 13). כִּי נָשִׂיא אָשֶׁתֶנּוּ, inasmuch as leaving him upon the throne was not merely a divine permission, but a divine act. “That there may be a light to my servant David always before me in Jerusalem.” This phrase, which is repeated in 1 Kings 15:4, 2 Kings 8:19, 2 Chron. 21:7, is to be explained from 2 Sam. 21:17, where David’s regal rule is called the light which God’s grace had kindled for Israel, and affirms that David was never to want a successor upon the throne.

1 Kings 11:37–39. The condition on which the kingdom of Jeroboam was to last was the same as that on which Solomon had also been promised the continuance of his throne in 1 Kings 3:14; 6:12; 9:4, namely, faithful observance of the commandments of God. The expression, “be king over all that thy soul desireth,” is explained in what follows by “all Israel.” It is evident from this that Jeroboam had aspired after the throne. On the condition named, the Lord would build him a lasting house, as He had done for David (see at 2 Sam. 7:16). In the case of Jeroboam, however, there is no allusion to a lasting duration of the מַמְלָכָה (kingdom) such as had been ensured to David; for the division of the kingdom was not to last

for ever, but the seed of David was simply to be chastised. לְמַעַן זֶהָ, for this, i.e., because of the apostasy already mentioned; "only not all the days," i.e., not for ever. וְאֶעֱנֶה is explanatory so far as the sense is concerned: "for I will humble." Jeroboam did not fulfil this condition, and therefore his house was extirpated at the death of his son (1 Kings 15:28ff.).

1 Kings 11:40. V. 40 is a continuation of וַיִּרְם יָד בְּמֶלֶךְ in v. 26; for vv. 27–39 contain simply an explanation of Jeroboam's lifting up his hand against Solomon. It is obvious from this that Jeroboam had organized a rebellion against Solomon; and also, as v. 29 is closely connected with v. 28, that this did not take place till after the prophet had foretold his reigning over ten tribes after Solomon's death. But this did not justify Jeroboam's attempt; nor was Ahijah's announcement an inducement or authority to rebel. Ahijah's conduct as perfectly analogous to that of Samuel in the case of Saul, and is no more to be attributed to selfish motives than his was, as though the prophetic order desired to exalt itself above the human sovereign (Ewald; see, on the other hand, Oehler's article in Herzog's *Cycl.*). For Ahijah expressly declared to Jeroboam that Jehovah would let Solomon remain prince over Israel during the remainder of his life. This deprived Jeroboam of every pretext for rebellion. Moreover the prophet's announcement, even without this restriction, gave him no right to seize with his own hand and by means of rebellion upon that throne which God intended to give to him. Jeroboam might have learned how he ought to act under these circumstances from the example of David, who had far more ground, according to human opinion, for rebelling against Saul, his persecutor and mortal foe, and who nevertheless, even when God had delivered his enemy into his hand, so that he might have slain him, did not venture to lay his hand upon the anointed of the Lord, but waited in pious submission to the leadings of his God, till the Lord opened the way to the throne through the death of Saul. By the side of David's behaviour

towards Saul the attempt of Jeroboam has all the appearance of a criminal rebellion, so that Solomon would have been perfectly justified in putting him to death, if Jeroboam had not escaped from his hands by a flight into Egypt.—On *Shishak* see at 1 Kings 14:25.

1 Kings 11:41–43. *Conclusion of the history of Solomon.*—Notice of the original works, in which further information can be found concerning his acts and his wisdom (see the Introduction); the length of his reign, viz., forty years; his death, burial, and successor. Solomon did not live to a very great age, since he was not more than twenty years old when he ascended the throne.—Whether Solomon turned to the Lord again with all his heart, a question widely discussed by the older commentators (see Pfeiffer *Dubia vex.* p. 435; Budde *hist. eccl.* ii. p. 273ff.), cannot be ascertained from the Scriptures. If the Preacher *Koheleth* is traceable to Solomon so far as the leading thoughts are concerned, we should find in this fact an evidence of his conversion, or at least a proof that at the close of his life Solomon discovered the vanity of all earthly possessions and aims, and declared the fear of God to be the only abiding good, with which a man can stand before the judgment of God.

History of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah to the Destruction of the Former.

1 Kings 12–2 Kings 17. After the death of Solomon the Israelitish kingdom of God was rent asunder, through the renunciation of the Davidic sovereignty by the ten tribes, into the two kingdoms of Israel (the ten tribes) and Judah; and through this division not only was the external political power of the Israelitish state weakened, but the internal spiritual power of the covenant nation was deeply shaken. And whilst the division itself gave rise to two small and weak kingdoms in the place of one strong nation, the power of both was still further shaken by their attitude towards each other.—The history of the two kingdoms divides itself into three epochs. In the *first* epoch, i.e., the period from Jeroboam to Omri in Israel, and from Rehoboam to Asa in Judah (1

Kings 12–16), they maintained a hostile attitude towards each other, until Israel sustained a severe defeat in a great war with Judah; and on the renewal of its attacks upon Judah, king Asa called the Syrians to his help, and thereby entangled Israel in long and severe conflicts with this powerful neighbouring state. The hostility terminated in the *second* epoch, under Ahab and his sons Ahaziah and Joram in Israel, and under Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah of Judah, since the two royal families connected themselves by marriage, and formed an alliance for the purpose of a joint attack upon their foreign foes, until the kings of both kingdoms, viz., Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, were slain at the same time by Jehu (1 Kings 17–2 Kings 10:27). This period of union was followed in the *third* epoch, from Jehu in Israel and Joash in Judah onwards, by further estrangement and reciprocal attacks, which led eventually to the destruction of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians through the untheocratical policy of Ahaz.

If we take a survey of the attitude of the two kingdoms towards the Lord, the invisible God-King of His people, during these three epochs, to all appearance the idolatry was stronger in the kingdom of Judah than in the kingdom of Israel. For in the latter it is only under Ahab and his two sons, under whom the worship of Baal was raised into the state religion at the instigation of Jezebel the Phoenician wife of Ahab, that we meet with the actual worship of idols. Of the other kings both before and afterwards, all that is related is, that they walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and did not desist from his sin, the worship of the calves. In the kingdom of Judah, on the other hand, out of thirteen kings, only five were so truly devoted to the Lord that they promoted the worship of Jehovah and opposed idolatry (viz., Asa, Jehoshaphat, Uzziah, Jotham, and Hezekiah). Of the others, it is true that Joash and Amaziah walked for a long time in the ways of the Lord, but in the closing years of their reign they forsook the God of their fathers to serve idols and worship them (2 Chron. 24:18 and 25:14ff.). Even Rehoboam was strengthened at

the outset in the worship of Jehovah by the Levites who emigrated from the kingdom of the ten tribes to Judah; but in the course of three years he forsook the law of the Lord, and Judah with him, so that altars of high places, Baal columns, and Asherah idols, were set up on every hill and under every green tree, and there were even male prostitutes in the land, and Judah practised all the abominations of the nations that were cut off before Israel (1 Kings 14:23, 24; 2 Chron. 11:13–17, 12:1). In all these sins of his father Abijam also walked (1 Kings 15:3). At a later period, in the reign of Joram, the worship of Baal was transplanted from Israel to Judah and Jerusalem, and was zealously maintained by Ahaziah and his mother Athaliah. It grew still worse under Ahaz, who even went so far as to set up an idolatrous altar in the court of the temple and to close the temple doors, for the purpose of abolishing altogether the legal worship of Jehovah. But notwithstanding this repeated spread of idolatry, the apostasy from the Lord was not so great and deep in the kingdom of Judah as in the kingdom of Israel. This is evident from the fact that idolatry could not strike a firm root there, inasmuch as the kings who were addicted to it were always followed by pious and God-fearing rulers, who abolished the idolatrous abominations, and nearly all of whom had long reigns; so that during the 253 years which intervened between the division of the kingdom and the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, idolatry did not prevail in Judah for much more than fifty-three years,⁷⁰ and for about 200 years the worship of the true God was maintained according to the commandment of the law. This constant renewal of a victorious reaction against the foreign deities shows very clearly that the law of God, with its ordinances and institutions for divine worship, had taken firm and deep root in the people and kingdom, and that the reason why idolatry constantly revived and lifted up its head afresh was, that the worship of Jehovah prescribed in the law made no concessions to the tendency to idolatry in hearts at enmity against God. It was different with the kingdom

of the ten tribes. There the fact that idolatry only appeared in the reigns of Ahab and his sons and successors, is to be accounted for very simply from the attitude of that kingdom towards the Lord and His lawful worship. Although, for instance, the secession of the ten tribes from the house of David was threatened by God, as a punishment that would come upon Solomon and his kingdom on account of Solomon's idolatry; on the part of the rebellious tribes themselves it was simply the ripe fruit of their evil longing for a less theocratic and more heathen kingdom, and nothing but the work of opposition to the royal house appointed by Jehovah, which had already shown itself more than once in the reign of David, though it had been suppressed again by the weight of his government, which was strong in the Lord.

This opposition became open rebellion against the Lord, when Jeroboam, its head, gave the ten tribes a religious constitution opposed to the will of God for the purpose of establishing his throne, and not only founded a special sanctuary for his subjects, somewhat after the model of the tabernacle or of the temple at Jerusalem, but also set up golden calves as symbols and images of Jehovah the invisible God, to whom no likeness can be made. This image-worship met the wishes and religious cravings of the sensual and carnally-minded people, because it so far filled up the gap between the legal worship of Jehovah and the worship of the nature-deities, that the contrast between Jehovah and the Baalim almost entirely disappeared, and the principal ground was thereby removed for the opposition on the part of the idolatrous nation to the stringent and exclusive worship of Jehovah. In this respect the worship of the calves worked more injuriously upon the religious and moral life of the nation than the open worship of idols. This sin of Jeroboam is therefore "the ground, the root and cause of the very sinful development of the kingdom of Israel, which soon brought down the punishment of God, since even from the earliest time one judgment after another fell openly upon the kingdom. For beside the sin of Jeroboam, that which was the ground of its

isolation continued to increase, and gave rise to tumult, opposing aspirants to the throne, and revolutionary movements in the nation, so that the house of Israel was often split up within itself" (Ziegler). Therefore the judgment, with which even from the time of Moses the covenant nation had been threatened in case of obstinate rebellion against its God, namely the judgment of dispersion among the heathen, fell upon the ten tribes much earlier than upon Judah, because Israel had filled up the measure of sin earlier than Judah.

The chronological computation of this period, both as a whole and in its separate details, is one of the more difficult features connected with this portion of the history of the Israelitish kingdom. As our books give not only the length of time that every king both of Israel and Judah reigned, but also the time when every king of Israel ascended the throne, calculated according to the year of the reign of the contemporaneous king of Judah, and *vice versa*, these accounts unquestionably furnish us with very important help in determining the chronology of the separate data; but this again is rendered difficult and uncertain by the fact, that the sum-total of the years of the several kings is greater, as a rule, than the number of years that they can possibly have reigned according to the synchronistic accounts of the contemporaneous sovereigns in the other kingdom. Chronologists have therefore sought from time immemorial to reconcile the discrepancies by assuming inaccuracies in the accounts, or regencies and interregna. The necessity for such assumptions is indisputable, from the fact that the discrepancies in the numbers of the years are absolutely irreconcilable without them.⁷¹ But if the application of them in the several cases is not to be dependent upon mere caprice, the reconciliation of the sum-totals of the years that the different kings reigned with the differences which we obtain from the chronological data in the synchronistic accounts must be effected upon a fixed and well-founded historical principle, regencies and interregna being only assumed in cases where there are clear

indications in the text. Most of the differences can be reconciled by consistently observing and applying the principle pointed out in the Talmud, viz., that the years of the kings are reckoned from Nisan to Nisan, and that with such precision, that even a single day before or after Nisan is reckoned as equal to a year,—a mode of reckoning which is met with even in the New Testament, e.g., in the statement that Jesus rose from the dead after three days, or on the third day, and also in the writings of Josephus, so that it is no doubt an early Jewish custom,⁷²—for, according to this, it is not necessary to assume a single interregnum in the kingdom of Judah, and only one regency (that of Joram with his father Jehoshaphat), which is clearly indicated in the text (2 Kings 8:16); and in the kingdom of Israel there is no necessity to assume a single regency, and only two interregna (the first after Jeroboam II, the second between Pekah and Hoshea).

If, for example, we arrange the chronological data of the biblical text upon this principle, we obtain for the period between the division of the kingdom and the Babylonian captivity the following table, which only differs from the statements in the text in two instances,⁷³ and has a guarantee of its correctness in the fact that it coincides with the well-established chronological data of the universal history of the ancient world.⁷⁴

From the Division of the Kingdom to the Ascent of the Throne by Ahab in the 38th Year of Asa King of Judah.

1 Kings 12:1–16:28. This epoch embraces only fifty-seven years, which are filled up in the kingdom of Judah by the reigns of three kings, and in the kingdom of Israel by six rulers from four different houses, Jeroboam's sin of rebellion against the ordinance and commandment of God having produced repeated rebellions, so that one dynasty was ever rising up to overthrow and exterminate another.—Commencing with the secession of the ten tribes from Rehoboam, we have first of all an account of the founding of the kingdom of

Israel (1 Kings 12), and of the predictions of the prophets concerning the introduction of the calf-worship (1 Kings 13) and the rejection of Jeroboam and his house by God (1 Kings 14:1–20); and after this the most important facts connected with the reigns of Rehoboam, Abijam, and Asa are given (1 Kings 14:21–15:24); and, finally, a brief history of the kingdom of Israel from the ascent of the throne by Nadab to the death of Omri (1 Kings 15:25–16:28).

1 Kings 12

Secession of the Ten Tribes from the House of David, and Founding of the Kingdom of Israel.

1 Kings 12. The jealousy which had prevailed from time immemorial between Ephraim and Judah, the two most powerful tribes of the covenant nation, and had broken out on different occasions into open hostilities (Judg. 8:1ff.; 2 Sam. 2:9, 19:42ff.), issued, on the death of Solomon, in the division of the kingdom; ten tribes, headed by Ephraim, refusing to do homage to Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, and choosing Jeroboam the Ephraimite as their king. Now, although the secession of the ten tribes from the royal house of David had been ordained by God as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry, and not only had Solomon been threatened with this punishment, but the sovereignty over ten tribes had been promised to Jeroboam by the prophet Ahijah, whilst the secession itself was occasioned by Rehoboam's imprudence; yet it was essentially a rebellion against the Lord and His anointed, a conspiracy on the part of these tribes against Judah and its king Rehoboam. For apart from the fact that the tribes had no right to choose at their pleasure a different king from the one who was the lawful heir to the throne of David, the very circumstance that the tribes who were discontented with Solomon's government did not come to Jerusalem to do homage to Rehoboam, but chose Sichem as the place of meeting, and had also sent for Jeroboam out of Egypt, showed clearly enough that it was their intention to sever themselves

from the royal house of David; so that the harsh reply given by Rehoboam to their petition that the service imposed upon them might be lightened, furnished them with the desired opportunity for carrying out the secession upon which they had already resolved, and for which Jeroboam was the suitable man. And we have already shown at 1 Kings 11:40 that the promise of the throne, which Jeroboam had already received from God, neither warranted him in rebelling against Solomon, nor in wresting to himself the government over the tribes that were discontented with the house of David after Solomon's death. The usurpation of the throne was therefore Jeroboam's first sin (vv. 1–24), to which he added a second and much greater one immediately after his ascent of the throne, namely, the establishment of an unlawful worship, by which he turned the political division into a religious schism and a falling away from Jehovah the God-King of His people (vv. 25–33).

1 Kings 12:1–24. Secession of the Ten Tribes (cf., 2 Chron. 10:1–11:4).—Vv. 1–4. Rehoboam went to Shechem, because all Israel had come thither to make him king. "All Israel," according to what follows (cf., vv. 20 and 21), was the ten tribes beside Judah and Benjamin. The right of making king the prince whom God had chosen, i.e., of anointing him and doing homage to him (compare 1 Chron. 12:38, where הַמְלִיךְ alternates with מָשַׁח לְמֶלֶךְ, (2 Sam. 2:4, 5:3), was an old traditional right in Israel, and the tribes had exercised it not only in the case of Saul and David (1 Sam. 11:15; 2 Sam. 2:4, 5:3), but in that of Solomon also (1 Chron. 29:22). The ten tribes of Israel made use of this right on Rehoboam's ascent of the throne; but instead of coming to Jerusalem, the residence of the king and capital of the kingdom, as they ought to have done, and doing homage there to the legitimate successor of Solomon, they had gone to Sichern, the present Nablus (see at Gen. 12:6 and 33:18), the place where the ancient national gatherings were held in the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. 24:1), and where Abimelech the son of Gideon had offered himself as king in the

time of the Judges (Judg. 9:1ff.). On the choice of Sichern as the place for doing homage Kimchi has quite correctly observed, that "they sought an opportunity for transferring the government to Jeroboam, and therefore were unwilling to come to Jerusalem, but came to Sichern, which belonged to Ephraim, whilst Jeroboam was an Ephraimite." If there could be any further doubt on the matter, it would be removed by the fact that they had sent for Jeroboam the son of Nebat to come from Egypt, whither he had fled from Solomon (1 Kings 11:40), and attend this meeting, and that Jeroboam took the lead in the meeting, and no doubt suggested to those assembled the demand which they should lay before Rehoboam (v. 4).⁷⁵

1 Kings 12:2, 3. The construction of vv. 2 and 3 is a complicated one, since it is only in וַיִּבְאוּ in v. 3 that the apodosis occurs to the protasis וַיָּהִי וַיִּשְׁמַע, and several circumstantial clauses intervene. "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard, sc., that Solomon was dead and Rehoboam had been made king ... he was still in Egypt, however, whither he had fled from king Solomon; and as Jeroboam was living in Egypt, they had sent and called him ... that Jeroboam came and the whole congregation of Israel," etc. On the other hand, in 2 Chron. 10:2 the construction is very much simplified, and is rendered clearer by the alteration of וַיָּשָׁב יֵרֵךְ, "and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt," into וַיָּשָׁב יֵרֵךְ מִמִּצְרַיִם, "that Jeroboam returned from Egypt."⁷⁶

1 Kings 12:4. The persons assembled desired that the burdens which Solomon had laid upon them should be lightened, in which case they would serve Rehoboam, i.e., would yield obedience to him as their king. הַקֹּל מֵעַבְדֵי אָבִיךָ, "make light away from the service of thy father," i.e., reduce what was imposed upon us by thy father. Solomon had undoubtedly demanded greater performances from the people than they had previously been accustomed to, not only to meet the cost of maintaining the splendour of his court, but also

and principally to carry out his large and numerous buildings. But in return for this, he had secured for his people not only the blessings of undisturbed peace throughout his whole reign, but also great wealth from the trade and tribute of the subjugated nations, so that there cannot have been any well-grounded occasion for complaint. But when, as is too often the case, men overlooked the advantages and blessings which they owed to his government, and fixed their attention in a one-sided manner merely upon the performances which the king demanded, it might appear as though he had oppressed his people with excessive burdens.

1 Kings 12:5-24. In order that the request of the tribes might be maturely weighed, Rehoboam directed them to appear before him again in three days, and in the meantime discussed the matter with the older counsellors, who had served his father.

1 Kings 12:7. These counsellors said (the singular וַיְדַבֵּר is used, because one of them spoke in the name of the whole), "If thou wilt be subservient to this people to-day (now), and servest them, and hearkenest to them, ... they will serve thee for ever."

1 Kings 12:8ff. But Rehoboam forsook this advice, and asked the younger ministers who had grown up with him. They advised him to overawe the people by harsh threats. "My little finger is stronger than my father's loins." קֶטֶף, from קָטַן, littleness, i.e., the little finger (for the form, see Ewald, § 255, b.),—a figurative expression in the sense of, I possess much greater might than my father. "And now, my father laid a heavy yoke upon you, and I will still further add to your yoke (lay still more upon you): my father chastised you with whips, I will chastise you with scorpions." עֲקָרְבִים, *scorpiones*, are whips with barbed points like the point of a scorpion's sting.⁷⁷ This advice was not only imprudent, "considering all the circumstances" (Seb. Schmidt), but it was unwise in itself, and could only accelerate the secession of the discontented. It was the

language of a tyrant, and not of a ruler whom God had placed over His people. This is shown in vv. 13, 14: "The king answered the people harshly, and forsook the counsel of the old men," i.e., the counsellors who were rich in experience, and spoke according to the counsels of the young men, who flattered his ambition. It is very doubtful, indeed, whether the advice of the old men would have been followed by so favourable a result; it might probably have been so for the moment, but not for a permanency. For the king could not become the עֲבָד of the people, *serve* the people, without prejudicing the authority entrusted to him by God; though there is no doubt that if he had consented to such condescension, he would have deprived the discontented tribes of all pretext for rebellion, and not have shared in the sin of their secession.

1 Kings 12:15. "And the king hearkened not to the people (to their request for their burdens to be reduced), for it was הִוָּהוּ מֵעַם יְהוָה, a turning from the Lord, that He might establish His word" (1 Kings 11:31ff.), i.e., by a divine decree, that Rehoboam contributed to the fulfilment of the counsel of God through his own folly, and brought about the accomplishment of the sentence pronounced upon Solomon.

1 Kings 12:16. The harsh word supplied the discontented with an apparently just occasion for saying, "What portion have we in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse! To thy tents, O Israel! Now see to thy house, David!" i.e., take care of thy house. David, the tribe-father, is mentioned in the place of his family. These words, with which Sheba had once preached rebellion in the time of David (2 Sam. 20:1), give expression to the deep-rooted aversion which was cherished by these tribes towards the Davidic monarchy, and that in so distinct and unvarnished a manner, that we may clearly see that there were deeper causes for the secession than the pretended oppression of Solomon's government; that its real foundation was the ancient jealousy of the tribes, which had been only suppressed for the time by David and Solomon, but had not been

entirely eradicated, whilst this jealousy again had its roots in the estrangement of these tribes from the Lord, and from His law and righteousness.

1 Kings 12:17. But the sons of Israel, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, over these Rehoboam became king. These “sons of Israel” are members of the ten tribes who had settled in Judah in the course of ages (cf., v. 23); and the Simeonites especially are included, since they were obliged to remain in the kingdom of Judah from the very situation of their tribe-territory, and might very well be reckoned among the Israelites who dwelt in the cities of Judah, inasmuch as at first the whole of their territory was allotted to the tribe of Judah, from which they afterwards received a portion (Josh. 19:1). The verse cannot possibly mean that “the tribe of Judah declared in favour of their countryman Rehoboam as king” (Ewald, *Gesch.* iii. p. 399).

1 Kings 12:18. In order to appease the agitated tribes and commence negotiations with them, Rehoboam sent Adoram, the superintendent of the tribute, to them (see at 1 Kings 4:6). Rehoboam entrusted him with the negotiation, because the tribes had complained that the tribute burdens were too severe, and the king was no doubt serious in his wish to meet the demands of the people. But the very fact that he sent this man only increased the bitterness of feeling, so that they stoned him to death, and Rehoboam himself was obliged to summon up all his strength (הִתְאַמֵּץ) to escape a similar fate by a speedy flight to his chariot.

1 Kings 12:19. Thus Israel fell away from the house of David “unto this day” (for this formula, see p. 10).

1 Kings 12:20. The secession was completed by the fact that all Israel (of the ten tribes) called Jeroboam to the assembly of the congregation and made him king “over all Israel,” so that the tribe of Judah alone adhered to the house of David (see at 1 Kings 11:32). V. 20 commences in the same manner as v. 2, to indicate that it closes the account commenced in v. 2.

1 Kings 12:21–24. But after the return of Rehoboam to Jerusalem he was still desirous of bringing back the seceders by force of arms, and raised for that purpose an army of 180,000 men out of all Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of the people, i.e., the Israelites dwelling in the cities of Judah,—a number which does not appear too large according to 2 Sam. 24:9. But the prophet Shemaiah, a prophet who is not mentioned again, received instructions from God to forbid the king to go to war with their brethren the Israelites, “for this thing was from the Lord.” הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה, “this thing, i.e., his being deprived of the sovereignty over ten tribes, but not their rebellion” (Seb. Schmidt). For the fact itself, see the remark on v. 15. The king and the people hearkened to this word. יָשׁוּבוּ לָלֶכֶת, “they turned to go,” i.e., they gave up the intended expedition and returned home. In 2 Chron. 11:4 we have the explanatory phrase יָשׁוּבוּ מִלְּכֶת.

1 Kings 12:25–33. Founding of the Kingdom of Israel.—V. 25. When Jeroboam had become king, it was his first care to give a firmer basis to his sovereignty by the fortification of Sichem and Pnuel. בָּנָה, to build, is used here in the sense of fortifying, because both cities had stood for a long time, and nothing is known of their having been destroyed under either Solomon or David, although the tower of Sichem had been burnt down by Abimelech (Judg. 9:49), and the tower of Pnuel had been destroyed by Gideon (Judg. 8:17). *Sichem*, a place well known from the time of Abraham downwards (Gen. 12:6), was situated upon the mountains of Ephraim, between Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, and still exists under the name of *Nabulus* or *Nablûs*, a name corrupted from *Flavia Neapolis*. Jeroboam dwelt therein, i.e., he chose it at first as his residence, though he afterwards resided in Thirza (see 1 Kings 14:17). *Pnuel* was situated, according to Gen. 32:31, on the other side of the Jordan, on the northern bank of the Jabbok (not the southern side, as Thenius supposes); and judging from Gen. 32:22ff. and Judg. 8:8ff., it was on the

caravan road, which led through Gilead to Damascus, and thence past Palmyra and along the Euphrates to Mesopotamia. It was probably on account of its situation that Jeroboam fortified it, to defend his sovereignty over Gilead against hostile attacks from the north-east and east.

1 Kings 12:26ff. In order also to give internal strength to his kingdom, Jeroboam resolved to provide for his subjects a substitute for the sacrificial worship in the temple by establishing new *sacra*, and thus to take away all occasion for making festal journeys to Jerusalem, from which he apprehended, and that probably not without reason, a return of the people to the house of David and consequently further danger for his own life. "If this people go up to perform sacrifice in the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem, their heart will turn to their lord, king Rehoboam," etc.

1 Kings 12:28. He therefore consulted, sc., with his counsellors, or the heads of the nation, who had helped him to the throne, and made two calves of gold. עֲגֹלֵי זָהָב are young oxen, not of pure gold however, or cast in brass and gilded, but in all probability like the golden calf which Aaron had cast for the people at Sinai, made of a kernel of wood, which was then covered with gold plate (see the Comm. on Ex. 32:4). That Jeroboam had in his mind not merely the Egyptian *Apis*-worship generally, but more especially the image-worship which Aaron introduced for the people at Sinai, is evident from the words borrowed from Ex. 32:4, with which he studiously endeavoured to recommend his new form of worship to the people: "Behold, this is thy God, O Israel, who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." רַב-לָכֶם מֵעִלּוֹת Jerusalem; not "let your going suffice," because מִן is not to be taken in a partitive sense here, as it is in Ex. 9:28 and Ezek. 44:6. What Jeroboam meant to say by the words, "Behold thy God," etc., was, "this is no new religion, but this was the form of worship which our fathers used in the desert, with Aaron himself leading the way"

(Seb. Schmidt). And whilst the verbal allusion to that event at Sinai plainly shows that this worship was not actual idolatry, i.e., was not a worship of Egyptian idols, from which it is constantly distinguished in our books as well as in Hosea and Amos, but that Jehovah was worshipped under the image of the calves or young oxen; the choice of the places in which the golden calves were set up also shows that Jeroboam desired to adhere as closely as possible to ancient traditions. He did not select his own place of residence, but Bethel and Dan. *Bethel*, on the southern border of his kingdom, which properly belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. 18:13 and 22), the present *Beitin*, had already been consecrated as a divine seat by the vision of Jehovah which the patriarch Jacob received there in a dream (Gen. 28:11, 19), and Jacob gave it the name of *Bethel*, house of God, and afterwards built an altar there to the Lord (Gen. 35:7). And Jeroboam may easily have fancied, and have tried to persuade others, that Jehovah would reveal Himself to the descendants of Jacob in this sacred place just as well as He had done to their forefather.—*Dan*, in the northern part of the kingdom, on the one source of the Jordan, formerly called *Laish* (Judg. 18:26ff.), was also consecrated as a place of worship by the image-worship established there by the Danites, at which even a grandson of Moses had officiated; and regard may also have been had to the convenience of the people, namely, that the tribes living in the north would not have to go a long distance to perform their worship.

1 Kings 12:30. But this institution became a sin to Jeroboam, because it violated the fundamental law of the Old Testament religion, since this not only prohibited all worship of Jehovah under images and symbols (Ex. 20:4), but had not even left the choice of the place of worship to the people themselves (Deut. 12:5ff.). "And the people went before the one to Dan." The expression "to Dan" can only be suitably explained by connecting it with הָעָם: the people even to Dan, i.e., the people throughout the whole kingdom even to Dan.

The southern boundary as the *terminus a quo* is not mentioned; not because it was for a long time in dispute, but because it was already given in the allusion to Bethel. **הַאֲזָחָד** is neither the golden calf at Dan nor (as I formerly thought) that at Bethel, but is to be interpreted according to the receding **וְאֵת־הַאֲזָחָד**: one of the two, or actually both the one and the other (Thenius). The sin of which Jeroboam was guilty consisted in the fact that he no longer allowed the people to go to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, but induced or compelled them to worship Jehovah before one or the other of the calves which he had set up, or (as it is expressed in v. 31) made a house of high places, **בַּיִת בָּמוֹת** (see at 1 Kings 3:2), instead of the house of God, which the Lord had sanctified as the place of worship by filling it with His gracious presence. The singular **בַּיִת בָּ** may be accounted for from the antithesis to **בַּיִת יְהוָה**, upon which it rests. There was no necessity to say expressly that there was a house of high places at Bethel and Dan, i.e., in two places, because it followed as a matter of course that the golden calves could not stand in the open air, but were placed in a temple, by which the sacrificial altar stood. These places of worship were houses of *high places*, *Bamoth*, because the ark of the covenant was wanting, and therewith the gracious presence of God, the *Shechinah*, for which no symbol invented by men could be a substitute. Moreover Jeroboam made “priests from the mass of the people, who were not of the sons of Levi.” **מִקְצוֹת הָעָם**, i.e., not of the poorest of the people (Luther and others), but from the last of the people onwards, that is to say, from the whole of the people any one without distinction even to the very last, instead of the priests chosen by God out of the tribe of Levi. For this meaning of **מִקְצוֹת** see Gen. 19:4 and Ezek. 33:2, also Lud. de Dieu on this passage. This innovation on the part of Jeroboam appears very surprising, if we consider how the Ephraimite Micah (Judg. 17:10ff.) rejoiced that he had obtained a Levite to act as priest for his image-worship, and can

only be explained from the fact that the Levites did not consent to act as priests in the worship before the golden calves, but set their faces against it, and therefore, as is stated in 2 Chron. 11:13, 14, were obliged to leave their district towns and possessions and emigrate into the kingdom of Judah.

1 Kings 12:32. Jeroboam also transferred to the eighth month the feast which ought to have been kept in the seventh month (the feast of tabernacles, Lev. 23:34ff.). The pretext for this arbitrary alteration of the law, which repeatedly describes the seventh month as the month appointed by the Lord (Lev. 23:34, 39, and 41), he may have found in the fact that in the northern portion of the kingdom the corn ripened a month later than in the more southern Judah (see my *Bibl. Archäol.* ii. § 118, Anm. 3, and § 119, Anm. 2), since this feast of the ingathering of the produce of the threshing-floor and wine-press (Ex. 23:16; Lev. 23:39; Deut. 16:13) was a feast of thanksgiving for the gathering in of all the fruits of the ground. But the true reason was to be found in his intention to make the separation in a religious point of view as complete as possible, although Jeroboam retained the day of the month, the fifteenth, for the sake of the weak who took offence at his innovations. For we may see very clearly that many beside the Levites were very discontented with these illegal institutions, from the notice in 2 Chron. 11:16, that out of all the tribes those who were devoted to the Lord from the heart went to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the God of the fathers there. “And he sacrificed upon the altar.” This clause is connected with the preceding one, in the sense of: he instituted the feast and offered sacrifices thereat. In v. 32b (from **כִּן עֲשָׂה** onwards) and v. 33, what has already been related concerning Jeroboam’s religious institutions is brought to a close by a comprehensive repetition of the leading points. “Thus did he in Bethel, (namely) to offer sacrifice to the calves; and there he appointed the priests of the high places which he had made, and offered sacrifice upon the altar which he had made at Bethel, on the fifteenth

day in the eighth month, which he himself had devised, and so made a feast for the children of Israel and sacrificed upon the altar to turn.” מְלִבֵּד signifies *seorsum*, by himself alone, i.e., in this connection, *i.q.* “from his own heart.” The *Keri* מְלִבּוֹ is therefore a correct explanation as to the fact; but it is a needless correction from Neh. 6:8. The last clause, וַיַּעַל ... לְהַקְטִיר, leads on to what follows, and it would be more correct to take it in connection with 1 Kings 13:1 and render it thus: and when he was offering sacrifice upon the altar to burn, behold there came a man of God, etc. Thenius has rendered וַיַּעַל incorrectly, and he stood at the altar. This thought would have been expressed by וַיַּעֲמֹד עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, as in 1 Kings 13:1. By הַקְטִיר we are not to understand the burning or offering of incense, but the burning of the sacrificial portions of the flesh upon the altar, as in Lev. 1:9, 13, 17, etc.

1 Kings 13

Testimony of God against the Calf-worship of Jeroboam.

1 Kings 13. A prophet out of Judah announces to Jeroboam the eventual overthrow of the idolatrous worship, and attests his divine mission by miraculous signs upon the altar at Bethel and the hardened king (vv. 1–10); but on the way back he allows himself to be enticed by an old prophet out of Bethel to go into his house, contrary to the express command of the Lord, and while sitting at table with him has to hear from his mouth the divine threat, that on account of his transgression of the command of God he will not come into the sepulchre of his fathers. This threat was fulfilled on his way home; and the marvellous fulfilment made so deep an impression upon the old prophet, that he confirmed the testimony which he had given concerning the worship at the high places (vv. 11–32). These marvellous occurrences not only teach how Jeroboam brought about the overthrow of his dynasty by his thorough hardening against the word of God (vv. 33, 34), but they also show how false prophecy rose up

from the very beginning in the kingdom of Israel and set itself against the true prophets of the Lord, and how it gained a victory, which merely displayed its own impotence, however, and foreshadowed its eventual and certain overthrow.

1 Kings 13:1–10. *Prophecy against the idolatrous worship at Bethel.*—Vv. 1, 2. Whilst Jeroboam was still occupied in sacrificing by the altar at Bethel, there came a prophet (אִישׁ אֶלְהִים) out of Judah “in the word of Jehovah” to Bethel, and pronounced upon the altar its eventual destruction. יְהוָה בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה does not mean “at the word of Jehovah” here, as it frequently does, but “in the word of Jehovah,” as vv. 9 and 17 more especially show; so that the word of Jehovah is regarded as a power which comes upon the prophet and drives him to utter the divine revelation which he has received. It is the same in 1 Kings 20:35. לְהַקְטִיר is to be taken as in 1 Kings 12:33.—“Behold a son will be born to the house of David, named Josiah; he will offer upon thee (O altar) the priests of the high places, who burn incense (i.e., kindle sacrifices) upon thee, and men’s bones will they burn upon thee.” According to 2 Kings 23:15–20, this prophecy was literally fulfilled. The older theologians found in this an evident proof of the divine inspiration of the prophets; modern theology, on the other hand, which denies the supernatural inspiration of prophecy in accordance with its rationalistic or naturalistic principles, supplies that this prophecy was not more precisely defined till after the event, and adduces in support of this the apparently just argument, that the prediction of particular historical events is without analogy, and generally that the introduction either of particular persons by name or of definite numbers is opposed to the very essence of prophecy, and turns prediction into soothsaying. The distinction between soothsaying and prediction, however, is not that the latter merely utters general ideas concerning the future, whilst the former announces special occurrences beforehand: but

soothsaying is the foretelling of all kinds of accidental things; prophecy, on the contrary, the foretelling of the progressive development of the kingdom of God, not merely in general, but in its several details, according to the circumstances and necessities of each particular age, and that in such a manner that the several concrete details of the prophecy rest upon the general idea of the revelation of salvation, and are thereby entirely removed from the sphere of the accidental. It is true that perfectly concrete predictions of particular events, with the introduction of names and statement of times, are much more rare than the predictions of the progressive development of the kingdom of God according to its general features; but they are not altogether wanting, and we meet with them in every case where it was of importance to set before an ungodly generation in the most impressive manner the truth of the divine threatenings of promises. The allusion to *Coresh* in Isa. 44:28, 45:1, is analogous to the announcement before us. But in both cases the names are closely connected with the destination of the persons in the prophecy, and are simply a concrete description of what God will accomplish through these men. Hence the name יֵאֱשִׁיָהוּ occurs primarily according to its appellative meaning alone, viz., “he whom Jehovah supports,” from אָשָׂא, to support, and expresses this thought: there will be born a son to the house of David, whom Jehovah will support of establish, so that he shall execute judgment upon the priests of the high places at Bethel. This prophecy was then afterwards so fulfilled by the special arrangement of God, that the king who executed this judgment bore the name of *Joshyahu* as his proper name. And so also בֹּרֶשׁ was originally an appellative in the sense of sun. The judgment which the prophet pronounced upon the altar was founded upon the *jus talionis*. On the very same altar on which the priests offer sacrifice to the עֲגָלִים shall they themselves be offered, and the altar shall be defiled for ever by the burning of men’s bones

upon it. עֲצָמוֹת אָדָם, “men’s bones,” does not stand for “their (the priests’) bones,” but is simply an epithet used to designate human corpses, which defile the place where they lie (2 Kings 23:16).

1 Kings 13:3. In confirmation of his word the prophet added a miracle (מוֹפֵת, τέρας, *portentum*, see at Ex. 4:21): “this is the sign that the Lord hath spoken (through me): behold the altar will be rent in pieces, and the ashes upon it will be poured out.” יֶשֶׁן is the ashes of the fat of the sacrificial animals. The pouring out of the sacrificial ashes in consequence of the breaking upon of the altar was a penal sign, which indicated, along with the destruction of the altar, the desecration of the sacrificial service performed upon it.

1 Kings 13:4. The king, enraged at this announcement, stretched out his hand against the prophet with the words, “seize him”—and his hand dried up, so that he was not able to draw it back again. יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, i.e., toe become rigid in consequence of a miraculous withdrawal of the vital energy. Thus Jeroboam experienced in the limbs of his own body the severity of the threatened judgment of God.

1 Kings 13:5, 6. The penal miracle announced in the word of Jehovah, i.e., in the strength of the Lord, also took effect immediately upon the altar; and the defiant king was now obliged to entreat the man of God, saying, “Soften, I pray, the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may return to me,” i.e., that I may be able to draw it back again, to move it once more. And this also took place at once at the intercession of the prophet. חָלָה אֶת־פָּנַי יי, lit., to stroke the face of God, i.e., to render it soft by intercession (see at Ex. 32:11).

1 Kings 13:7. As Jeroboam could do nothing by force against the prophet, he endeavoured to gain him over to his side by friendliness, that at least he might render his threat harmless in the eyes of the people. For this purpose, and not to do him honour or to make him some acknowledgment for the restoration of his

hand, he invited him to his house, to strengthen himself with food (עָדָה as in Gen. 18:5, Judg. 9:5; for the form קָעָדָה, see Ewald, § 41, c.) and receive from him a present.

1 Kings 13:8ff. But this design was also frustrated, and the rejection of his worship on the part of God was still more strongly declared. "If thou gavest me," the man of God replied, "the half of thy house, I shall not go in with thee, nor eat bread and drink water in this place; for thus hath Jehovah commanded me," etc. The subject, *Jehovah*, is easily supplied to עָדָה from the context (vid., Ewald, § 294, b.). God had forbidden the prophet to eat and drink "to manifest His detestation of idolatry, and to show by that fact that the Bethelites were so detestable, and as it were excommunicated by God, that He wished none of the faithful to join with them in eating and drinking" (C. a Lap.). He was not to return by the way by which he came, that no one might look out for him, and force him to a delay which was irreconcilable with his commission, or "lest by chance being brought back by Jeroboam, he should do anything to please him which was unworthy of a prophet, or from which it might be inferred that idolaters might hope for some favour from the Deity" (Budd.).

1 Kings 13:11–32. *Seduction of the man of God by an old prophet, and his consequent punishment.*—Vv. 11–19. The man of God had resisted the invitations of Jeroboam, and set out by a different road to return to Judah. An old prophet at Bethel heard from his sons what had taken place (the singular יָבֹא בְּנֵוֹ as compared with the plural וַיִּסְפְּרוּם may be explained on the supposition that first of all one son related the matter to his father, and that then the other sons supported the account given by the first); had his ass saddled; hurried after him, and found him sitting under *the* terebinth (the tree well known from that event); invited him to come into his house and eat with him; and when the latter appealed to the divine prohibition, said to him (v. 18), "I am a prophet also as thou art, and an angel has said to me in

the word of the Lord: Bring him back with thee into thy house, that he may eat and drink," and lied to him (כָּהֵן לֹא without a *copula*, because it is inserted as it were parenthetically, simply as an explanation)—then he went back with him, and ate and drank in his house.

1 Kings 13:20–22. As they were sitting at table the word of the Lord came to the old prophet, so that he cried out to the man of God from Judah: "Because thou hast been rebellious against the command of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment, ... thou wilt not come to the grave of thy fathers," i.e., thou wilt meet with a violent death by the way. This utterance was soon fulfilled.

1 Kings 13:23ff. After he had eaten he saddled the ass for him, i.e., for the prophet whom he had fetched back, and the latter (the prophet from Judah) departed upon it. On the road a lion met him and slew him; "and his corpse was cast in the road, but the ass stood by it, and the lion stood by the corpse." The lion, contrary to its nature, had neither consumed the prophet whom it had slain, nor torn in pieces and devoured the ass upon which he rode, but had remained standing by the corpse and by the ass, that the slaying of the prophet might not be regarded as a misfortune that had befallen him by accident, but that the hand of the Lord might be manifest therein, so that passers-by saw this marvel and related it in Bethel.

1 Kings 13:26. When the old prophet at Bethel heard of this, he said, "It is the man of God, who was disobedient to the word of the Lord; the Lord hath delivered him to the lion, so that it hath torn him (שָׁבַר, *frangere, confringere*, used of a lion which tears its prey in pieces) and slain him according to the word of the Lord, which He spake to him."

1 Kings 13:27–32. He thereupon had his ass saddled, and went and found the corpse and the ass standing by it, without the lion having eaten the corpse or torn the ass in pieces; and he lifted the corpse upon his ass, and brought it into his own city, and laid the corpse in his grave with the customary lamentation: הָיָה אֲנִי

alas, my brother! (cf., Jer. 22:18), and then gave this command to his sons: "When I die, bury me in the grave in which the man of God is buried, let my bones rest beside his bones; for the word which he proclaimed in the word of Jehovah upon the altar at Bethel and upon all the houses of the high places in the cities of Samaria will take place" (i.e., will be fulfilled). The expression "cities of Samaria" belongs to the author of these books, and is used proleptically of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which did not receive this name till after the building of the city of Samaria as the capital of the kingdom and the residence of the kings of Israel (1 Kings 16:24). There is a prophetic element in the words "upon all the houses of the high places," etc., inasmuch as the only other erection at that time beside the one at Bethel was a temple of the high places at Dan. But after such a beginning the multiplication of them might be foreseen with certainty, even without any higher illumination.

The conduct of the old prophet at Bethel appears so strange, that Josephus and the Chald., and most of the Rabbins and of the earlier commentators both Catholic and Protestant, have regarded him as a false prophet, who tried to lay a trap for the prophet from Judah, in order to counteract the effect of his prophecy upon the king and the people. But this assumption cannot be reconciled with either the divine revelation which came to him at the table, announcing to the Judaeen prophet the punishment of his transgression of the commandment of God, and was so speedily fulfilled (vv. 20–24); or with the honour which he paid to the dead man after this punishment had fallen upon him, by burying him in his own grave; and still less with his confirmation of his declaration concerning the altar at Bethel (vv. 29–32). We must therefore follow Ephr. Syr., Theodor., Hengstenberg, and others, and regard the old prophet as a true prophet, who with good intentions, and not "under the influence of human envy" (Thenius), but impelled by the desire to enter into a closer relation to the man of God from Judah and to strengthen himself through his prophetic gifts, urged him to enter

his house. The fact that he made use of sinful means in order to make more sure of securing the end desired, namely, of the false pretence that he had been directed by an angel to do this, may be explained, as Hengstenberg suggests (*Dissert.* vol. ii. p. 149), on the ground that when Jeroboam introduced his innovations, he had sinned by keeping silence, and that the appearance of the Judaeen prophet had brought him to a consciousness of this sin, so that he had been seized with shame on account of his fall, and was anxious to restore himself to honour in his own eyes and those of others by intercourse with this witness to the truth. But however little the lie itself can be excused or justified, we must not attribute to him alone the consequences by which the lie was followed in the case of the Judaeen prophet. For whilst he chose reprehensible means of accomplishing what appeared to be a good end, namely, to raise himself again by intercourse with a true prophet, and had no wish to injure the other in any way, the Judaeen prophet allowed himself to be seduced to a transgression of the clear and definite prohibition of God simply by the sensual desire for bodily invigoration by meat and drink, and had failed to consider that the divine revelation which he had received could not be repealed by a pretended revelation from an angel, because the word of God does not contradict itself. He was therefore obliged to listen to a true revelation from God from the mouth of the man whose pretended revelation from an angel he had too carelessly believed, namely, to the announcement of punishment for his disobedience towards the commandment of God, which punishment he immediately afterwards endured, "for the destruction of the flesh, but for the preservation of the spirit: 1 Cor. 15:5" (*Berleb. Bible*). That the punishment fell upon him alone and not upon the old prophet of Bethel also, and that for apparently a smaller crime, may be accounted for "not so much from the fact that the old prophet had lied with a good intention (this might hold good of the other also), as from the fact that it was needful to deal strictly with the man who had just received a great and holy

commission from the Lord" (O. v. Gerlach). It is true that no bodily punishment fell upon the old prophet, but this punishment he received instead, that with his lie he was put to shame, and that his conscience must have accused him of having occasioned the death of the man of God from Judah. He was thereby to be cured of his weakness, that he might give honour to the truth of the testimony of God. "Thus did the wondrous providence of God know how to direct all things most gloriously, so that the bodily destruction of the one contributed to the spiritual and eternal preservation of the soul of the other" (*Berleb. Bible*).—Concerning the design of these marvellous events, H. Witsius has the following remarks in his *Miscell. ss. i. p. 118* (ed. nov. 1736): "So many wondrous events all occurring in one result caused the prophecy against the altar at Bethel to be preserved in the mouths and memories of all, and the mission of this prophet to become far more illustrious. Thus, although the falsehood of the old man of Bethel brought disgrace upon himself, it injured no one but the man of God whose credulity was too great; and, under the overruling providence of God, it contributed in the most signal manner to the confirmation and publication of the truth."⁷⁸ The heaping up of the marvellous corresponded to the great object of the mission of the man of God out of Judah, through which the Lord would enter an energetic protest against the idolatrous worship of Jeroboam at its first introduction, to guard those who feared God in Israel, of whom there were not a few (2 Chron. 11:16; 2 Kings 18:3, 19:18), from falling away from Him by joining in the worship of the calves, and to take away every excuse from the ungodly who participated therein.

1 Kings 13:33, 34. But this did not lead Jeroboam to conversion. He turned not from his evil way, but continued to make high priests from the mass of the people. וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיַּעַשׂ, "he returned and made," i.e., he made again or continued to make. For the fact itself compare 1 Kings 12:31. "Whoever had pleasure (וַיִּחְפֹּץ, cf., Ges. § 109), he filled his hand, that he might

become a priest of the high places." מָלֵא אֶת־יָדוֹ, to fill the hand, is the technical expression for investing with the priesthood, according to the rite prescribed for the consecration of the priests, namely, to place sacrificial gifts in the hands of the persons to be consecrated (see at Lev. 7:37 and 8:25ff.). The plural בְּמֹת בְּהֵי is used with indefinite generality: that he might be ranked among the priests of high places.

1 Kings 13:34. "And it became in (with) this thing the sin of the house of Jeroboam, and the destroying and cutting off from the earth;" that is to say, this obstinate persistence in ungodly conduct was the guilt which had as its natural consequence the destroying of his house from the face of the earth. בַּדְּבַר הַזֶּה is not a mistake for הַדְּבַר הַזֶּה, but דָּ is used, as in 1 Chron. 9:33, 7:23, to express the idea of being and persisting in a thing (for this use of דָּ compare Ewald, § 295, f.).

1 Kings 14

Reign and Death of Jeroboam and Rehoboam.

1 Kings 14:1–20. Reign of Jeroboam.—Vv. 1–18. *Ahijah's prophecy against Jeroboam and the kingdom of Israel.*—As Jeroboam did not desist from his idolatry notwithstanding the threatened punishment, the Lord visited him with the illness of his son, and directed the prophet Ahijah, to whom his wife had gone to ask counsel concerning the result of the illness, to predict to him not only the cutting off of his house and the death of his sick son, but also the thrusting away of Israel out of the land of its fathers beyond the Euphrates, and in confirmation of this threat caused the sick son to die when the returning mother crossed the threshold of her house again.

1 Kings 14:1–3. When his son fell sick, Jeroboam said to his wife: Disguise thyself, that thou mayest not be known as the wife of Jeroboam, and go to Shiloh to the prophet Ahijah, who told me that I should be king over this people; he will tell thee how it will fare with the boy. הַשְׁתַּנָּה, from שָׁנָה, to alter one's

self, i.e., to disguise one's self. She was to go to Shiloh disguised, so as not to be recognised, to deceive the old prophet, because otherwise Jeroboam did not promise himself any favourable answer, as he had contemptuously neglected Ahijah's admonition (1 Kings 11:38, 39). But he turned to this prophet because he had spoken concerning him לְמֶלֶךְ, to be king, i.e., that he would become king, over this people. לְמֶלֶךְ stands for לְהִיזֹת מֶלֶךְ, with which the infinitive *esse* can be omitted (vid., Ewald, § 336, b.). As this prophecy, which was so favourable to Jeroboam, had come to pass (1 Kings 11:29, 30), he hoped that he might also obtain from Ahijah a divine revelation concerning the result of his son's illness, provided that he did not know who it was who came to seek counsel concerning her sick son. To complete the deception, she was to take with her as a present for the prophet (cf., 1 Sam. 9:8) "ten loaves and crumbs" and a jar with honey, i.e., a trifling gift such as a simple citizen's wife might take. According to the early versions and the context, a kind of plain cake, κολλυρίδα (LXX), *crustulam* (Vulg.). It is different in Josh. 9:5.

1 Kings 14:4, 5. Ahijah could no longer see, because his eyes were blinded with age. קָמוּ עֵינָיו as in 1 Sam. 4:15, an expression applied to the black cataract, *amaurosis*. It was therefore all the less possible for him to recognise in a natural manner the woman who was coming to him. But before her arrival the Lord had not only revealed to him her coming and her object, but had also told him what he was to say to her if she should disguise herself when she came. כָּזָה וְכָזָה; see at Judg. 18:4, וַיְהִי כְּבֹאָהּ וְגו', "let it be if she comes and disguises herself;" i.e., if when she comes she should disguise herself.

1 Kings 14:6. When Ahijah heard the sound of her feet entering the door (the participle בָּאָהּ, according to the number and gender, refers to the אִשָּׁה implied in רַגְלֶיהָ, vid., Ewald, § 317, c.), he addressed her by her name, charged her with her disguise of herself, and told her that he

was entrusted with a hard saying to her. קָשָׁה (cf., 1 Kings 12:13) is equivalent to קָשָׁה קְשׁוּתָהּ; for the construction, compare Ewald, § 284, c.

1 Kings 14:7ff. The saying was as follows: "Therefore, because thou hast exalted thyself from the people, and I have made thee prince over my people Israel (cf., 1 Kings 11:31), ... but thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments ... (cf., 1 Kings 11:34), and hast done worse than all who were before thee (*judices nimirum et duces Israelis*—Cler.), and hast gone and hast made thyself other gods (contrary to the express command in Ex. 20:2, 3), ... and hast cast me behind thy back: therefore I bring misfortune upon the house of Jeroboam," etc. The expression, to cast God behind the back, which only occurs here and in Ezek. 23:35, denotes the most scornful contempt of God, the strict opposite of "keeping God before the eyes and in the heart." מִשְׁתַּתִּין בְּקִיר, every male person; see at 1 Sam. 25:22. A synonymous expression is עֲצוּר וְעָזוּב, the fettered (i.e., probably the married) and the free (or single); see at Deut. 32:36. "In Israel," i.e., in the kingdom of the ten tribes. The threat is strengthened by the clause in v. 10, "and I will sweep out after the house of Jeroboam, as one sweepeth out dung, even to the end," which expresses shameful and utter extermination; and this threat is still further strengthened in v. 11 by the threat added from Deut. 28:26, that of those cut off not one is to come to the grave, but their bodies are to be devoured by the dogs and birds of prey,—the worst disgrace that could befall the dead. Instead of wild beasts (Deut. 28:26) the dogs are mentioned here, because in the East they wander out in the streets without owners, and are so wild and ravenous that they even devour corpses (vid., Harmer, *Beobachtungen*, i. p. 198). לְיָרֵבְעָם with לְ of relationship, equivalent to of those related to Jeroboam. It is the same in v. 13.

1 Kings 14:12, 13. After this announcement of the judgment upon the house of Jeroboam, Ahijah gave the wife information concerning

her sick son. He would die as soon as she entered the city, and of all the male members of the house of Jeroboam he only would receive the honour of a proper burial, because in him there was some good thing towards Jehovah found. Ewald (§ 247, *b.*) regards the form **בְּבֹאָה** as standing for **בְּבֹאָה**, and refers the suffix to the following word **הַעִיר** (vid., Ewald, § 309, *c.*). But as this use of the suffix would be very harsh, the question arises whether **בֹּאָה** is not to be regarded as a feminine form of the infinitive, after the analogy of **דָּעָה** in Ex. 2:4 and **לָדָה** in 2 Kings 19:3, etc. From the fulfilment of this declaration in vv. 17 and 18 Jeroboam was to learn that the threatened destruction of his royal house would also be just as certainly fulfilled. The sick son appears to have been the heir-presumptive to the throne. This may be inferred partly from the lamentation of all Israel at his death (v. 18), and partly from what follows here in the next verse. **אֶל־יְהוָה** means in his relation to Jehovah.

1 Kings 14:14. “Jehovah will raise Himself up a king over Israel, who will cut off the house of Jeroboam this day; but what (sc., do I say)? even now,” sc., has He raised him up. This appears to be the simplest explanation of the last words of the verse, of which very various interpretations have been given. **זֶה** is placed before **הַיּוֹם**, to give it the stronger emphasis, as in Ex. 32:1 (compare Josh. 9:12, 13, and Ewald, § 293, *b.*; and for **עָתָה** compare Delitzsch on *Job*, i. p. 290, transl.).

1 Kings 14:15, 16. But in order that not only Jeroboam, but also the people who had joined in his idolatry, might perceive the severity of the divine judgment, Ahijah also announced to the nation its banishment into exile beyond the Euphrates. “Jehovah will smite Israel, as the reed shakes in the water,” is an abbreviated phrase for: Jehovah will smite Israel in such a manner that it will sway to and fro like a reed in the water moved by a strong wind, which has not a sufficiently firm hold to resist the violence of the storm. “And will thrust them out of the

good land,” etc., as Moses threatened the transgressors of the law (Deut. 29:27), “and scatter them beyond the river (Euphrates),” i.e., banish them among the heathen, from whom God brought out and chose their forefather (Josh. 24:3), “because they have made themselves Ashera-idols, to provoke Jehovah.” **אֲשֵׁרִים** is used for idols generally, among which the golden calves are reckoned. **וַיִּתֵּן**, that He may deliver up Israel, on account of the idolatrous forms of worship introduced by Jeroboam. For the fulfilment see 2 Kings 15:29, 17:23, and 18:11.—In vv. 17 and 18 the exact fulfilment of Ahijah’s announcement concerning the death of Jeroboam’s sick son is described. According to v. 17, Jeroboam was then residing at *Thirza*, whereas he had at first resided at Shechem (1 Kings 12:25). *Thirza* is probably the present *Talluza*, on the north of Shechem (see at Josh. 12:24).

1 Kings 14:19, 20. *End of Jeroboam’s reign.* Of the wars, which were described in the annals of the kings (see p. 10), the war with Abijah of Judah is the only one of which we have any account (2 Chron. 13:2ff.). See also the Comm. on v. 30. He was followed on the throne by his son Nadab.

1 Kings 14:21–31. Reign of Rehoboam in Judah (compare 2 Chron. 11:5–12:16).—V. 21. Rehoboam, who ascended the throne at the age of forty-one, was born a year before the accession of Solomon (see at 1 Kings 2:24). In the description of Jerusalem as the city chosen by the Lord (cf., 1 Kings 11:36) there is implied not so much an indirect condemnation of the falling away of the ten tribes, as the striking contrast to the idolatry of Rehoboam referred to in vv. 23ff. The name of his mother is mentioned (here and in v. 31), not because she seduced the king to idolatry (Ephr. Syr.), but generally on account of the great influence which the queen-mother appears to have had both upon the king personally and upon his government, as we may infer from the fact that the mother’s name is given in the case of every king of Judah (vid., 1 Kings 15:2, 13, 22:42, etc.).

1 Kings 14:22–24. The general characteristics of Rehoboam's reign are supplied and more minutely defined in the account in the Chronicles. According to 2 Chron. 11:5–12:1, he appears to have been brought to reflection by the announcement of the prophet, that the falling away of the ten tribes had come from the Lord as a punishment for Solomon's idolatry (1 Kings 12:23, 24; 2 Chron. 11:2–4); and in the first years of his reign to have followed the law of God with earnestness, and to have been occupied in the establishment of his government partly by the fortification of different cities (2 Chron. 11:5–12), and partly by setting in order his domestic affairs, placing his numerous sons, who were born of his many wives and concubines, in the fortified cities of the land, and thus providing for them, and naming Abijam as his successor (2 Chron. 11:18–22); while his kingdom was still further strengthened by the priests, Levites, and pious Israelites who emigrated to Judah and Jerusalem from the ten tribes (2 Chron. 11:13–17). But this good beginning only lasted three years (2 Chron. 11:17). When he thought that he had sufficiently fortified his kingdom, he forsook the law of the Lord, and all Israel (i.e., all the covenant nation) with him (2 Chron. 12:1). "Judah did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord; they provoked Him to jealousy more than all that their fathers (sc., under the Judges) had done with their sins." **קִנָּא**, to provoke to jealousy (Num. 5:14), is to be explained, when it refers to God, from the fact that the relation in which God stood to His people was regarded under the figure of a marriage, in which Jehovah appears as the husband of the nation, who is angry at the unfaithfulness of his wife, i.e., at the idolatry of the nation. Compare the remarks on **אֵל קִנָּא** in the Comm. on Ex. 20:5.

1 Kings 14:23. They also (the Judaeans as well as the Israelites) built themselves *bamoth*, altars of high places (see at 1 Kings 3:3), monuments and Ashera-idols. **מַצְבּוֹת** are not actual images of gods, but stones set up as memorials (Gen. 31:13, 35:20; Ex. 24:4), more

especially stone monuments set up in commemoration of a divine revelation (Gen. 28:18, 22, 35:14). Like the *bamoth*, in connection with which they generally occur, they were originally dedicated to Jehovah; but even under the law they were forbidden, partly as places of divine worship of human invention which easily degenerated into idolatry, but chiefly because the Canaanites had erected such monuments to Baal by the side of his altars (Ex. 23:24, 34:13; Deut. 7:5, etc.), whereby the worship of Jehovah was unconsciously identified with the worship of Baal, even when the *mazzeboth* were not at first erected to the Canaanitish Baal. As the **מַצְבּוֹת** of the Canaanites were dedicated to Baal, so were the **אֲשֵׁרִים** to Astarte, the female nature-deity of those tribes. **אֲשֵׁרָה**, however, does not mean a *grove* (see the Comm. on Deut. 16:21), but an idol of the Canaanitish nature-goddess, generally most likely a lofty wooden pillar, though sometimes perhaps a straight trunk of a tree, the branches and crown of which were lopped off, and which was planted upon heights and in other places by the side of the altars of Baal. The name **אֲשֵׁרָה** was transferred from the idol to the goddess of nature (1 Kings 15:13, 18:19; 2 Kings 21:7, etc.), and was used of the image or column of the Phoenician Astarte (1 Kings 16:33; 2 Kings 13:6, 17:16, etc.), just as **אֲשֵׁרוֹת** in Judg. 3:7 alternates with **עֲשֵׁתָרוֹת** in Judg. 2:13. These idols the Israelites (? Judaeans—Tr.) appear to have also associated with the worship of Jehovah; for the external worship of Jehovah was still maintained in the temple, and was performed by Rehoboam himself with princely pomp (v. 28). "On every high hill," etc.; see at Deut. 12:2.

1 Kings 14:24. "There were also prostitutes in the land." **קָדֵשׁ** is used collectively as a generic name, including both male and female hierodylae, and is exchanged for the plural in 1 Kings 15:12. The male **קָדֵשִׁים** had emasculated themselves in religious frenzy in honour of the Canaanitish goddess of nature, and were called

Galli by the Romans. They were Canaanites, who had found their way into the land of Judah when idolatry gained the upper hand (as indicated by גל). "They appear here as strangers among the Israelites, and are those notorious Cinaedi more especially of the imperial age of Rome who travelled about in all directions, begging for the Syrian goddess, and even in the time of Augustine went about asking for alms in the streets of Carthage as a remnant of the Phoenician worship (*de civ. Dei*, vii. 26)."—Movers, p. 679. On the female קדשות see the Comm. on Gen. 38:21 and Deut. 23:18.

This sinking into heathen abominations was soon followed by the punishment, that Judah was given up to the power of the heathen.

1 Kings 14:25–28. King *Shishak* of Egypt invaded the land with a powerful army, conquered all the fortified cities, penetrated to Jerusalem, and would probably have put an end to the kingdom of Judah, if God had not had compassion upon him, and saved him from destruction, in consequence of the humiliation of the king and of the chiefs of the nation, caused by the admonition of the prophet Shemaiah, so that after the conquest of Jerusalem Shishak contented himself with withdrawing, taking with him the treasures of the temple and of the royal palace. Compare the fuller account of this expedition in 2 Chron. 12:2–9. *Shishak* (שִׁשַׁק) was the first king of the twenty-second (or Bubastitic) dynasty, called *Sesonchis* in Jul. Afric., *Sesonchosis* in Eusebius, and upon the monuments on which Champollion first deciphered his name, *Sheshonk* or *Sheshenk*. Shishak has celebrated his expedition against Judah by a bas-relief on the outer wall of the pillar-hall erected by him in the first palace at Karnak, in which more than 130 figures are led in cords by *Ammon* and the goddess *Muth* with their hands bound upon their backs. The lower portion of the figures of this long row of prisoners is covered by escutcheons, the border of which being provided with battlements, shows that the prisoners are symbols of conquered cities.

About a hundred of these escutcheons are still legible, and in the names upon them a large number of the names of cities in the kingdom of Judah have been deciphered with tolerable certainty.⁷⁹ Shishak was probably bent chiefly upon the conquest and plundering of the cities. But from Jerusalem, beside other treasures of the temple and palace, he also carried off the golden shields that had been made by Solomon (1 Kings 10:16), in the place of which Rehoboam had copper ones made for his body-guard. The guard, רָצִים, runners, are still further described as הַשְּׁמָרִים פְּתַח בַּיִת הַמֶּלֶךְ, "who kept the door of the king's house," i.e., supplied the sentinels for the gate of the royal palace.

1 Kings 14:28. Whenever the king went into the house of Jehovah, the runners carried these shields; from which we may see that the king was accustomed to go to the temple with solemn pomp. These shields were not kept in the state-house of the forest of Lebanon (1 Kings 10:17) as the golden shields were, but in the guard-chamber (אֲתָנָה; see at Ezek. 40:7) of the runners.

1 Kings 14:29–31. Further particulars are given in 2 Chron. 11 and 12 concerning the rest of the acts of Rehoboam. "There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam the whole time (of their reign)." As nothing is said about any open war between them, and the prophet Shemaiah prohibited the attack which Rehoboam was about to make upon the tribes who had fallen away (1 Kings 11:23ff.), מְלַחְמָה can only denote the hostile feelings and attitude of the two rulers towards one another.

1 Kings 14:31. *Death and burial of Rehoboam:* as in the case of Solomon (1 Kings 11:43). The name of the queen-mother has already been given in v. 21, and the repetition of it here may be explained on the supposition that in the original sources employed by the author of our books it stood in this position. The son and successor of Rehoboam upon the throne is called *Abijam* (אֲבִיָּאָם) in the account before us; whereas in the Chronicles he is always called

Abijah (אַבִּיָּהוּ, 2 Chron. 12:16, 13:1, etc., or אַבְיָהוּ, 2 Chron. 13:21). אַבְיָהוּ, i.e., father of the sea, is unquestionably the older form of the name, which was reduced to אַבְיָהוּ, and then identified with the formation from אָבִי and יָהוּ = יְהוָה (from יְהוָה).

1 Kings 15

Ch. 15:1–24. Reigns of the Two Kings Abijam and Asa of Judah.

1 Kings 15:1–8. Reign of Abijam (cf., 2 Chron. 13).—*Abijam* reigned three years, and his mother's name was *Maacah*, daughter (i.e., grand-daughter) of Absalom. We have the same in 2 Chron. 11:20, 21; but in 2 Chron. 13:2 she is called *Michajahu*, daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. If אַבְיָהוּ was without doubt Absalom, the well-known son of David, as we may infer from the fact that this name does not occur again in the Old Testament in connection with any other person, since Absalom had only one daughter, viz., *Thamar* (2 Sam. 14:27), who was fifty years old when Solomon died, Maacah must have been a daughter of this Thamar, who had married Uriel of Gibeah, and therefore a grand-daughter of Absalom. This is sustained by Josephus (Ant. viii. 10, 1). The form of the name מִיְּהוּ is probably an error in copying for מַעְכָּה, as the name is also written in 2 Chron. 11:20 and 21, and not a different name, which Maacah assumed as queen, as Caspari supposes (*Micha*, p. 3, note 4).

1 Kings 15:3, 4. Abijam walked as king in the footsteps of his father. Although he made presents to the temple (v. 15), his heart was not שָׁלֵם, wholly or undividedly given to the Lord, like the heart of David (cf., 1 Kings 11:4); but (בִּי, after a previous negative) for David's sake Jehovah had left him a light in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him and to let Jerusalem stand, because (אֲשֶׁר) David had done right in the eyes of God, etc., i.e., so that it was only for David's sake that Jehovah did not reject him, and

allowed the throne to pass to his son. For the fact itself compare 1 Kings 11:13 and 36; and for the words, "except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite," see 2 Sam. 11 and 12.

1 Kings 15:6. "And there was war between *Rehoboam* and *Jeroboam* all his life;" i.e., the state of hostility which had already existed between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continued "all the days of his life," or so long as Abijam lived and reigned. If we take כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּיו in this manner (not כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם, v. 16), the statement loses the strangeness which it has at first sight, and harmonizes very well with that in v. 7, that there was also war between Abijam and Jeroboam. Under Abijam it assumed the form of a serious war, in which Jeroboam sustained a great defeat (see 2 Chron. 13:3–20).—The other notices concerning Abijam in vv. 7 and 8 are the same as in the case of Rehoboam in 1 Kings 14:29 and 31.

1 Kings 15:9–24. Reign of Asa (cf., 2 Chron. 14–16).—As Asa ascended the throne in the twentieth year of the reign of Jeroboam, his father Abijam, who began to reign in the eighteenth year of Jeroboam (v. 1), can only have reigned two years and a few months, and not three full years.

1 Kings 15:10. Asa reigned forty-one years. "The name of his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Absalom." This notice, which agrees verbatim with v. 2, cannot mean that Abijam had his own mother for a wife; though Thenius finds this meaning in the passage, and then proceeds to build up conjectures concerning emendations of the text. We must rather explain it, as Ephr. Syr., the Rabbins, and others have done, as signifying that Maacah, the mother of Abijam, continued during Asa's reign to retain the post of queen-mother or הַגְּבִירָה, i.e., sultana valide, till Asa deposed her on account of her idolatry (v. 13), probably because Asa's own mother had died at an early age.

1 Kings 15:11ff. As ruler Asa walked in the ways of his pious ancestor David: he banished the male prostitutes out of the land, abolished

all the abominations of idolatry, which his fathers (Abijam and Rehoboam) had introduced, deposed his grandmother Maacah from the rank of a queen, because she had made herself an idol for the Ashera, and had the idol hewn in pieces and burned in the valley of the Kidron. גללים is a contemptuous epithet applied to idols (Lev. 26:30); it does not mean *stercorei*, however, as the Rabbins affirm, but logs, from גלל, to roll, or masses of stone, after the Chaldee גלל (Ezra 5:8, 6:4), generally connected with שקצים. It is so in Deut. 29:16. מַפְלֵצָה, *formido*, from פלץ, *terrere, timere*, hence an idol as an object of fear, and not *pudendum*, a shameful image, as Movers (*Phöniz.* i. p. 571), who follows the Rabbins, explains it, understanding thereby a Phallus as a symbol of the generative and fructifying power of nature. With regard to the character of this idol, nothing further can be determined than that it was of wood, and possibly a wooden column like the אַשְׁרִים (see at 1 Kings 14:23). "But the high places departed not," i.e., were not abolished. By the בָּמוֹת we are not to understand, according to v. 12, altars of high places dedicated to idols, but unlawful altars to Jehovah. It is so in the other passages in which this formula recurs (1 Kings 22:24; 2 Kings 12:4, 14:4, 15:4; and the parallel passages 2 Chron. 15:17, 20:33). The apparent discrepancy between the last-mentioned passages and 2 Chron. 14:2, 4, and 17:6, may be solved very simply on the supposition that the kings (Asa and Jehoshaphat) did indeed abolish the altars on the high places, but did not carry their reforms in the nation thoroughly out; and not by distinguishing between the *bamoth* dedicated to Jehovah and those dedicated to idols, as Thenius, Bertheau, and Caspari, with many of the earlier commentators, suppose. For although 2 Chron. 14:2 is very favourable to this solution, since both בָּמוֹת and מִזְבְּחוֹת הַגִּבּוֹר are mentioned there, it does not accord with 2 Chron. 17:6, where הַבָּמוֹת cannot be merely idolatrous altars dedicated to the Canaanitish Baal, but unquestionably refer to the unlawful

altars of Jehovah, or at any rate include them. Moreover, the next clause in the passage before us, "nevertheless Asa's heart was wholly given to the Lord," shows that the expression לֹא קָרוֹ does not mean that the king allowed the unlawful Jehovah-*bamoth* to remain, but simply that, notwithstanding his fidelity to Jehovah, the *bamoth* did not depart, so that he was unable to carry the abolition of them thoroughly out.

1 Kings 15:15. He brought the sacred offerings of his father and his own sacred offerings into the house of Jehovah; probably the booty, in silver, gold, and vessels, which his father Abijam had gathered in the war with Jeroboam (2 Chron. 13:16, 17), and he himself on the conquest of the Cushites (2 Chron. 14:12, 13). The *Keri* וְקִדְשֵׁי is a bad emendation of the correct reading in the *Chethib* קִדְשֵׁי, i.e., קִדְשֵׁי (קִדְשֵׁי); for בֵּית יְהוָה is an accusative, and is to be connected with וַיָּבֵא.

1 Kings 15:16, 17. The state of hostility between Judah and Israel continued during the reign of Asa; and Baasha the king of Israel advanced, etc. These statements are completed and elucidated by the Chronicles. After the great victory obtained by Abijam over Jeroboam, the kingdom of Judah enjoyed rest for ten years (2 Chron. 13:23). Asa employed this time in exterminating idolatry, fortifying different cities, and equipping his army (2 Chron. 14:1–7). Then the Cushite *Zerah* invaded the land of Judah with an innumerable army (in the eleventh year of Asa), but was totally defeated by the help of the Lord (2 Chron. 14:8–14); whereupon Asa, encouraged by the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, proceeded with fresh zeal to the extermination of such traces of idolatry as still remained in the kingdom, then renewed the altar of burnt-offering in front of the temple-hall, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held, with the whole nation, a great festival of thanksgiving and rejoicing to the Lord at Jerusalem (2 Chron. 15:1–15). The next year, the sixteenth of his reign and the thirty-sixth from the division of

the kingdom (2 Chron. 16:1), Baasha commenced hostilities, by advancing against Judah, taking possession of *Ramah*, the present *er Râm* (see at Josh. 18:25), which was only two hours and a quarter from Jerusalem, and fortifying it. The occupation of Ramah is not expressly mentioned indeed, but it is implied in *וַיַּעַל עַל יְהוּדָה*, which affirms the hostile invasion of Judah. For Ramah, from its very situation in the heart of the tribe of Benjamin and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, can neither have been a border city nor have belonged to the kingdom of Israel. The intention of Baasha, therefore, in fortifying Ramah cannot have been merely to restrain his own subjects from passing over into the kingdom of Judah, but was evidently to cut off from the kingdom of Judah all free communication with the north. *לְבַלְתִּי תֵת וּגַר*, “that they might not give one going out or one coming in to Asa;” i.e., to cut off from the others all connection with Asa, and at the same time to cut off from those with Asa all connection with this side. The main road from Jerusalem to the north passed by Ramah, so that by shutting up this road the line of communication of the kingdom of Judah was of necessity greatly disturbed. Moreover, the fortification of Ramah by Baasha presupposes the reconquest of the cities which Abijam had taken from the kingdom of Israel (2 Chron. 13:19), and which, according to 2 Chron. 13:19, were still in the possession of Asa.

1 Kings 15:18, 19. In order to avert the danger with which his kingdom was threatened, Asa endeavoured to induce the Syrian king, Benhadad of Damascus, to break the treaty which he had concluded with Baasha and to become his ally, by sending him such treasures as were left in the temple and palace.⁸⁰ *הַנּוֹתְרִים* may be explained from the fact that the temple and palace treasures had been plundered by Shishak in the reign of Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:26); and therefore what Asa had replaced in the temple treasury (v. 15), and had collected together for his palace, was only a remnant in comparison with the former state of these

treasures. The name *בְּנֹ-הַדָּד*, i.e., son of *Hadad*, the sun-god (according to Macrobius, i. 23; cf., Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 196), was borne by three kings of Damascus: the one here named, his son in the time of Ahab (1 Kings 20:1, 34), and the son of Hazael (2 Kings 13:24). The first was a son of *Tabrimmon* and grandson of *Hezyon*. According to v. 19, his father *Tabrimmon* (good is *Rimmon*; see at 2 Kings 5:18) had also been king, and was the contemporary of Abijam. But that his grandfather *Hezyon* was also king, and the same person as the *Rezon* mentioned in 1 Kings 11:23, cannot be shown to be even probable, since there is no ground for the assumption that *Hezyon* also bore the name *Rezon*, and is called by the latter name here and by the former in 1 Kings 11:23.

1 Kings 15:20. Benhadad consented to Asa's request, and directed his captains to advance into the kingdom of Israel: they took several cities in the north of the land, whereby Baasha was compelled to give up fortifying Ramah and withdraw to Thirza. *Ijon* (*עִיּוֹן*) is to be sought for in all probability in Tell *Dibbin*, on the eastern border of *Merj Ayun*; and in *Ajun*, although *Ajun* is written with *Aleph*, the name *Ijon* is probably preserved, since the situation of this Tell seems thoroughly adapted for a fortress on the northern border of Israel (vid., Robinson, *Bibl. Res.* p. 375, and Van de Velde, *Mem.* p. 322). *Dan* is the present *Tell el Kadi*; see at Josh. 19:47. *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, the present *Abil el Kamh*, to the north-west of Lake Huleh (see at 2 Sam. 20:14). “All *Chinneroth*” is the district of *Chinnereth*, the tract of land on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth (see at Josh. 19:35). *עַל כָּל-אֶרֶץ הָ*, together with all the land of Naphtali (for this meaning of *עַל* compare the Comm. on Gen. 32:12). The cities named were the principal fortresses of the land of Naphtali, with which the whole of the country round was also smitten, i.e., laid waste.

1 Kings 15:21. *וַיֵּשֶׁב*, and remained at Thirza, his place of residence (see at 1 Kings 14:17).

1 Kings 15:22. Asa thereupon summoned all Judah אִישׁ נֶקִי אֵין, *nemine immuni*, i.e., *excepto*, no one being free (cf., Ewald, § 286, a.), and had the stones and the wood carried away from Ramah, and *Geba* and *Mizpah* in Benjamin built, i.e., fortified, with them. *Geba* must not be confounded with *Gibeah* of Benjamin or Saul, but is the present *Jeba*, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Ramah (see at Josh. 18:24). *Mizpah*, the present *Nebi Samwil*, about three-quarters of a geographical mile to the south-west of Ramah (see at Josh. 18:26).

1 Kings 15:23, 24. Of the other acts of Asa, the building of cities refers to the building of fortifications mentioned in 2 Chron. 14:5, 6. The disease in his feet in the time of his old age commenced, according to 2 Chron. 16:12, in the thirty-ninth year of his reign; and he sought help from the physicians, but not from the Lord; from which we may see, that the longer he lived the more he turned his heart away from the Lord (compare 2 Chron. 16:10).

Ch. 15:25–16:28. Reigns of the Kings of Israel, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri.

1 Kings 15:25–32. The Reign of Nadab lasted not quite two years, as he ascended the throne in the second year of Asa, and was slain in his third year.

1 Kings 15:26. He walked in the ways of his father (Jeroboam) and in his sin, i.e., in the calf-worship introduced by Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:28). When Nadab in the second year of his reign besieged Gibbethon, which the Philistines and occupied, Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house, I the family or tribe, of Issachar, conspired against him and slew him, and after he became king exterminated the whole house of Jeroboam, without leaving a single soul, whereby the prediction of the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings 14:10ff.) was fulfilled. *Gibbethon*, which was allotted to the Danites (Josh. 19:44), has not yet been discovered. It probably stood close to the Philistian border, and was taken by the Philistines, from whom the Israelites attempted to wrest it by siege under both Nadab and Baasha (1 Kings 16:16), though

apparently without success. לֹא הִשְׁאִיר כָּל-נֶשְׁמָה. as in Josh. 11:14 (see the Comm. on Deut. 20:16).

1 Kings 15:32. V. 32 is simply a repetition of v. 16; and the remark concerning Baasha's attitude towards Asa of Judah immediately after his entrance upon the government precedes the account of his reign, for the purpose of indicating at the very outset, that the overthrow of the dynasty of Jeroboam and the rise of a new dynasty did not alter the hostile relation between the kingdom of Israel and the kingdom of Judah.

1 Kings 16

1 Kings 15:33–16:7. The Reign of Baasha is described very briefly according to its duration (two years) and its spirit, namely, the attitude of Baasha towards the Lord (v. 34); there then follow in 1 Kings 16:1–4 the words of the prophet Jehu, the son of Hanani (2 Chron. 16:7), concerning the extermination of the family of Baasha; and lastly, in vv. 5–7, his death is related with the standing allusion to the annals of the kings. The words of Jehu concerning Baasha (1 Kings 16:1–4) coincide exactly *mutatis mutandis* with the words of Ahijah concerning Jeroboam.⁸¹ The expression “exalted thee out of the dust,” instead of “from among the people” (1 Kings 14:7), leads to the conjecture that Baasha had risen to be king from a very low position. גְּבוּרָתוֹ (his might) in v. 5 refers, as in the case of Asa (1 Kings 15:23), less to brave warlike deeds, than generally to the manifestation of strength and energy in his government.

1 Kings 16:7. V. 7 adds a supplementary remark concerning the words of Jehu (vv. 2ff.), not to preclude an excuse that might be made, in which case נָגַם would have to be taken in the sense of nevertheless, or notwithstanding (Ewald, § 354, a.), but to guard against a misinterpretation by adding a new feature, or rather to preclude an erroneous inference that might be drawn from the words, “I (Jehovah) have made thee prince” (v. 2), as through Baasha had exterminated Nadab and his house

by divine command (Thenius). וְגַם simply means “and also,” and is not to be connected specially with יְהוָה בְּיַד יְהוָה, but to be taken as belonging to the whole sentence: “also the word of Jehovah had come to Baasha through Jehu, ... not only because of the evil, etc., but also (וְגַם ... וְעַל) because he had slain him (Jeroboam).”

With regard to this last reason, we must call to mind the remark made at 1 Kings 11:39, viz., that the prediction of the prophet to Baasha gave him no right to put himself forward arbitrarily as the fulfiller of the prophecy. The very fact that Baasha continued Jeroboam’s sin and caused the illegal worship to be perpetuated, showed clearly enough that in exterminating the family of Jeroboam he did not act under divine direction, but simply pursued his own selfish ends.

1 Kings 16:8–14. The Reign of Elah.—As Baasha reigned from the third to the twenty-sixth year of Asa, i.e., not quite twenty-four years, but only twenty-three years and a few months, so his son Elah reigned from the twenty-sixth to the twenty-seventh year of Asa, i.e., not quite two years.

1 Kings 16:9, 10. *Zimri*, the commander of the half of his war-chariots, conspired against him, and not only slew him, when he was intoxicated (שָׁתָה שְׂכֹר) at a drinking bout in the house of *Arza*, the prefect of his palace, but after ascending the throne exterminated the whole family of Baasha to the very last man. The prefect of the palace was no doubt a party to the conspiracy, and had probably arranged the drinking bout in his house for the purpose of carrying it out. “He did not leave him מִשְׁתֵּינ בְּקִיר (see at 1 Kings 14:10), either his avengers (גֹּאֲלָיו, blood-relations, who might have avenged his death) or his friends.” These words simply serve to explain מִשְׁתֵּינ בְּקִיר, and show that this phrase is to be understood as relating to males only.

1 Kings 16:12, 13. “According to the word of the Lord;” see at vv. 1ff. אֶל כָּל-חַטָּאוֹת, with

regard to all, i.e., on account of all the sins (compare v. 7, where עַל is used). בְּהִבְלִיָּהֶם, through their nothingnesses, i.e., their idols, by which the golden calves are meant.

1 Kings 16:15–22. The Reign of Zimri lasted only seven days. As soon as the people of war (הַעָם), who were besieging Gibbethon (see at 1 Kings 15:27), heard of his conspiracy, his usurpation of the throne, and his murderous deeds, they proclaimed *Omri* king in the camp of the military commanders, and he at once, with all Israel, i.e., all the army, raised the siege of Gibbethon, to lay siege to Thirza. Now when Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the castle of the royal palace and burned the king’s house over his own head, as Sardanapalus did, according to Justin (*Hist.* i. 3). אֶרְמוֹן does not mean harem (Ewald), but the high castle (from אָרַם, to be high); here and in 2 Kings 15:25, the citadel of the royal palace, which consisted of several buildings.

1 Kings 16:19. V. 19 is connected with וַיָּמָת in v. 18: “and so died for his sins,” i.e., as a punishment for them.

1 Kings 16:21, 22. But Omri did not come into possession of an undisputed sovereignty immediately upon the death of Zimri. The nation divided itself into two halves; one half was behind *Tibni*, the son of Ginath (i.e., declared in favour of Tibni), to make him king, the other adhered to *Omri*. Nevertheless Omri’s gained the upper hand over the party of Tibni, and the latter died, whereupon Omri became king after four years, as we may see from a comparison of vv. 15, 16 with v. 23. The “people of Israel” (v. 21) are probably the fighting people, so that the succession to the throne was decided by the military. הָיָה אֶחָדִי as in 2 Sam. 2:10. חָזַק, with an accusative instead of with עַל, in the sense of to overpower, as in Jer. 20:7. According to Josephus (*Ant.* viii. 12, 5), Tibni was slain by his opponent; but this is not contained in the words; on the contrary, all that is implied in the connection of וַיָּמָת with וַיַּחֲזֵק וגו' is that he met with his death in the decisive

engagement in which the opposing party triumphed.

1 Kings 16:23–28. The Reign of Omri.—V. 23. Omri reigned twelve years, i.e., if we compare vv. 15 and 23 with v. 29, reckoning from his rebellion against Zimri; so that he only possessed the sole government for eight years (or, more exactly, seven years and a few months), viz., from the 31st to the 38th years of Asa, and the conflict with Tibni for the possession of the throne lasted about four years. “At Thirza he reigned six years,” i.e., during the four years of the conflict with Tibni, and after his death two years more.

1 Kings 16:24. As soon as he had obtained undisputed possession of the throne, he purchased the hill *Shomron* (Samaria) from *Shemer* (*Semer*) for two talents of silver, about 5200 thalers (£780—Tr.), built houses upon it, and named the town which he built after the former owner of the hill שֶׁמֶרֹן, rendered by the LXX Σεμηρών here, but everywhere else Σαμάρεια (Samaria), after the Chaldee form שְׁמֶרֶן (Ezra 4:10, 17). This city he made his seat (*Residenz*, place of residence, or capital), in which he resided for the last six years of his reign, and where he was buried after his death (v. 28). *Samaria* continued to be the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes from that time forward, and the residence of all succeeding kings of Israel until the destruction of this kingdom after its conquest by Salmanasar (2 Kings 18:9, 10). The city was two hours and a half to the north-west of Sichem, upon a mountain or hill in a mountain-hollow (*Bergkessel*, lit., mountain-caldron) or basin of about two hours in diameter, surrounded on all sides by still higher mountains. “The mountains and valleys round about are still for the most part arable, and are alive with numerous villages and diligent cultivation.” The mountain itself upon which Samaria stood is still cultivated to the very top, and about the middle of the slope is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level ground resembling a girdle. And even higher up there are marks of smaller terraces, where streets of the ancient city may possibly

have run. After the captivity Samaria was retaken and demolished by John Hyrcanus, and lay in ruins till Gabinius the Roman governor rebuilt it (Joseph. Ant. xiii. 19, 2, 3, and iv. 5, 3). Herod the Great afterwards decorated it in a marvellous manner, built a temple there to the emperor Augustus, and named the city after him Σεβαστή, i.e., *Augusta*, from which arose the present name *Sebuste* or *Sebustieh*, borne by a village which is still standing on the ancient site: “a pitiable hamlet consisting of a few squalid houses, inhabited by a band of plunderers, notorious as thieves even among their lawless fellow-countrymen” (V. de Velde, i. p. 378).—But by the side of this there are magnificent ruins of an ancient Johannite church, with the reputed grave of John the Baptist and remains of limestone columns at the foot of the mountain (cf., Robinson, *Pal.* iii. p. 136ff.; Van de Velde, *Syria and Pal.* i. p. 374ff.; and C. v. Raumer, *Pal.* pp. 159, 160).

1 Kings 16:25, 26. Omri also walked in the ways of Jeroboam, and acted worse than his predecessors upon the throne.—For vv. 26 and 27, compare vv. 13 and 14.

From Ahab's Ascent of the Throne to the Death of Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah.

1 Kings 16:29–2 Kings 10:27. In this epoch, which embraces only thirty-four years, the history of the kings of Judah falls so far into the background behind the history of the kingdom of Israel, that it seems to form merely an appendix to it; and the history of the monarchy is so controlled by the description of the labours of the prophets, that it seems to be entirely absorbed in them. These phenomena have their foundation in the development of the two kingdoms during this period. Through the alliance and affinity of Jehoshaphat with the idolatrous Ahab, the kingdom of Judah not only lost the greatest part of the blessing which the long and righteous reign of this pious king had brought, but it became so entangled in the political and religious confusion of the kingdom of Israel in consequence of the participation of Jehoshaphat in the wars between Israel and the

Syrians, and other foes, and the inclination of Joram and Ahaziah to the worship of Baal, that its further development during this period was almost entirely dependent upon the history of Israel. In the latter kingdom the prophets maintained a fierce conflict with the idolatry introduced by Ahab and Jezebel, in which the worship of Baal did indeed eventually succumb, but the pure lawful worship of Jehovah did not attain to full supremacy, so that this great spiritual conflict was no more followed by a permanent blessing to the kingdom as such, than the single victories of Ahab and Joram over the Syrians by outward peace and rest from its oppressors. To guard against the spreading apostasy of the people from the living God through the exaltation of the worship of Baal into the ruling national religion in Israel, the Lord raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, Elijah the Tishbite, with his fiery zeal, who worked so mightily upon the formation of the spiritual life of the covenant nation and the fate of the kingdom, not only in his own person in the reigns of Ahab and Ahaziah (1 Kings 17–2 Kings 2), but indirectly in the person of his successor Elisha under Joram (2 Kings 3–9), and also under the succeeding kings of Israel, that the labours of these prophets and their disciples form the central and culminating point of the Old Testament kingdom of God during the period in question.

Ch. 16:29–34. The Reign of Ahab of Israel.

The ascent of the throne of Israel by Ahab (v. 29) formed a turning-point for the worse, though, as a comparison of v. 30 with v. 25 clearly shows, the way had already been prepared by his father Omri.

1 Kings 16:30, 31. Whereas the former kings of Israel had only perpetuated the sin of Jeroboam, i.e., the calf-worship. or worship of Jehovah under the image of an ox, which he had introduced, Ahab was not satisfied with this. וַיְהִי וַיָּקַם לְבַתוֹ, “it came to pass, was it too little?” i.e., because it was too little (cf. Ewald, § 362, a.) to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, that he took as his wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the king of

the Sidonians, and served Baal, and worshipped him. וַיֵּבֶד before וַיֵּלֶךְ, “he went and served,” is a pictorial description of what took place, to give greater prominence to the new turn of affairs.

בַּעַל (i.e., with Baal) is the Εἰθώβαλος (לְבַתוֹ or Ἰθώβαλος: Jos. Ant. viii. 13, 1) mentioned by Menander in Josephus, c. Ap. i. 18, who was king of Tyre and Sidon, and priest of Astarte, and who usurped the throne after the murder of his brother, king Pheles, and reigned thirty-two years. Jezebel (בַּעַלְזֵבֶל, i.e., probably without cohabitation, cf. Gen. 30:20, = untouched, chaste; not a contraction of אֲבִיבָלָה, as Ewald, § § 273, b., supposes) was therefore, as tyrant and murderess of the prophets, a worthy daughter of her father, the idolatrous priest and regicide. *Baal* (always בַּעַל with the article, *the Baal*, i.e., Lord κατ’ ἐξοχήν) was the principal male deity of the Phoenicians and Canaanites, and generally of the western Asiatics, called by the Babylonians בַּל = בַּעַל (Isa. 46:1), Βῆλος, and as the sun-god was worshipped as the supporter and first principle of psychical life and of the generative and reproductive power of nature (see at Judg. 2:13). Ahab erected an altar to this deity בַּיִת הַבַּעַל, in the house (temple) of Baal, which he had built at Samaria. The worship of Baal had its principal seat in Tyre, where Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, had built for it a splendid temple and placed a golden pillar (χρυσσοῦν κίονα) therein, according to Dios and Menander, in Joseph. Ant. viii. 5, 3, and c. Ap. i. 18. Ahab also erected a similar pillar (מַצֵּבָה) to Baal in his temple at Samaria (vid., 2 Kings 3:2; 10:27). For statues of images of Baal are not met with in the earlier times; and the בַּעַלִּים are not statues of Baal, but different modifications of that deity. It was only in the later temple of Baal or Hercules at Tyre that there was, as Cicero observes (*Verr. iv. 43*), *ex aere simulacrum ipsius Herculis, quo non facile quidquam dixerim me vidisse pulcrus*.

1 Kings 16:33. “And Ahab made אֶת־הָאֲשֵׁרָה, i.e., the Asherah belonging to the temple of Baal”

(see at Judg. 6:25 and Ex. 34:13), an idol of Astarte (see at 1 Kings 14:23).

1 Kings 16:34. In his time *Hiël* the Bethelite (בֵּית הַאֵלִי; compare Ges. § 111. 1 with § 86, 2. 5) built Jericho: "he laid the foundation of it with Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with Segub his youngest, according to the word of Jehovah," etc. (for the explanation see the Comm. on Josh. 6:26). The restoration of this city as a fortification, upon which Joshua had pronounced the curse, is mentioned as a proof how far ungodliness had progressed in Israel; whilst the fulfilment of the curse upon the builder shows how the Lord will not allow the word of His servants to be transgressed with impunity. *Jericho*, on the border of the tribe of Ephraim (Josh. 16:7), which was allotted to the Benjaminites (Josh. 18:21), had come into the possession of the kingdom of Israel on the falling away of the ten tribes from the royal house of David, and formed a border city of that kingdom, through the fortification of which Ahab hoped to secure to himself the passage across the Jordan.

The Prophets Elijah and Elisha.

When Ahab, who was not satisfied with the sin of Jeroboam, had introduced the worship of Baal as the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, and had not only built a temple to Baal in his capital and place of residence, but had also appointed a very numerous priesthood to maintain the worship (see 1 Kings 18:19); and when his godless wife Jezebel was persecuting the prophets of Jehovah, for the purpose of exterminating the worship of the true God: the Lord God raised up the most powerful of all the prophets, namely Elijah the Tishbite, who by his deeds attested his name אֱלֹהֵיהוָה or אֱלֹהֵיהוּ, i.e., whose God is Jehovah. For however many prophets of Jehovah arose in the kingdom of the ten tribes from its very commencement and bore witness against the sin of Jeroboam in the power of the Spirit of God, and threatened the kings with the extermination of their house on account of this sin, no other prophet, either before or

afterwards, strove and worked in the idolatrous kingdom for the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth with anything like the same mighty power of God as the prophet Elijah. And there was no other prophet whom the Lord so gloriously acknowledged by signs and wonders as Elijah, although He fulfilled the words of all His servants by executing the judgments with which they had threatened the rebellious, and whenever it was necessary accredited them as His messengers by miraculous signs.—

Although, in accordance with the plan of our books, which was to depict the leading features in the historical development of the kingdom, all that is related in detail of the life and labours of Elijah is the miracles which he performed in his conflict with the worshippers of Baal, and the miraculous display of the omnipotence and grace of God which he experienced therein; yet we may see very clearly that these formed but one side of his prophetic labours from the passing notices of the schools of the prophets, which he visited once more before his departure from the earth (2 Kings 2); from which it is obvious that this other side of his ministry, which was more hidden from the world, was not less important than his public ministry before the kings and magnates of the land. For these societies of "sons of the prophets," which we meet with at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho (2 Kings 2:3, 5; 4:38), had no doubt been called into existence by Elijah, by associating together those whose souls were fitted to receive the Spirit of God for mutual improvement in the knowledge and fear of Jehovah, in order to raise up witnesses to the truth and combatants for the cause of the Lord, and through these societies to provide the godly, who would not bow the knee before Baal, with some compensation for the loss of the Levitical priesthood and the want of the temple-worship. Compare the remarks on the schools of the prophets at 1 Sam. 19:24.—The more mightily idolatry raised its head in the kingdom of Israel, the more powerfully did the Lord show to His people that He, Jehovah, and not Baal, was God and Lord in Israel. In the prophet Elijah there were combined in a

marvellous manner a life of solitude spent in secret and contemplative intercourse with God, and an extraordinary power for action, which would suddenly burst forth, and by which he acted as a personal representative of God (see at 1 Kings 17:1). In his person the spirit of Moses revived; he was the restorer of the kingdom of God in Israel, of which Moses was the founder. His life recalls that of Moses in many of its features: namely, his flight into the desert, the appearance of the Lord to him at Horeb, and the marvellous termination of his life. Moses and Elijah are the Coryphaei of the Old Testament, in whose life and labours the nature and glory of this covenant are reflected. As the thunder and lightning and the blast of trumpets and the smoking mountain bare witness to the devouring fire of the holiness of the God who had come down upon Sinai to give effect to the promises He had made to the fathers, and to make the children of Israel the people of His possession; so does the fiery zeal of the law come out so powerfully in Moses and Elijah, that their words strike the ungodly like lightning and flames of fire, to avenge the honour of the Lord of Sabaoth and maintain His covenant of grace in Israel. Moses as lawgiver, and Elijah as prophet, are, as Ziegler has well said (p. 206), the two historical anticipations of those two future witnesses, which are "the two olive-trees and two torches standing before the God of the earth. And if any one will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must therefore be slain. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they will" (Rev. 11:4ff.). Elijah was called to this office of witness to turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and of the sons to their fathers (Mal. 3:24), so that in his ministry the prophecy of the future of the kingdom of God falls quite into the backgrounds. Nevertheless he was not only a forerunner but also a type of the Prophet promised by Moses, who was to fulfil both law and prophets (Matt.

5:17); and therefore he appeared as the representative of prophecy, along with Moses the representative of the law, upon the mount of the Transfiguration, to talk with Christ of the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem (Luke 9:31; Matt. 17:3).—To continue his work, Elijah, by command of God, called *Elisha* the son of Shaphat, of Abel-Meholah, who during the whole of his prophetic course carried on with power the restoration of the law in the kingdom of Israel, which his master had begun, by conducting schools of the prophets and acting as the counsellor of kings, and proved himself by many signs and wonders to be the heir of a double portion of the gifts of Elijah.

Modern theology, which has its roots in naturalism, has taken offence at the many miracles occurring in the history of these two prophets, but it has overlooked the fact that these miracles were regulated by the extraordinary circumstances under which Elijah and Elisha worked. At a time when the sovereignty of the living God in Israel was not only called in question, but was to be destroyed by the worship of Baal, it was necessary that Jehovah as the covenant God should interpose in a supernatural manner, and declare His eternal Godhead in extraordinary miracles. In the kingdom of the ten tribes there were no priestly or Levitical duties performed, nor was there the regular worship of God in a temple sanctified by Jehovah Himself; whilst the whole order of life prescribed in the law was undermined by unrighteousness and ungodliness. But with all this, the kingdom was not yet ripe for the judgment of rejection, because there were still seven thousand in the land who had not bowed their knee before Baal. For the sake of these righteous men, the Lord had still patience with the sinful kingdom, and sent it prophets to call the rebellious to repentance. If, then, under the circumstances mentioned, the prophets were to fulfil the purpose of their mission and carry on the conflict against the priests of Baal with success, they needed a much greater support on the part of God, through the medium of miracles, than

the prophets in the kingdom of Judah, who had powerful and venerable supports in the Levitical priesthood and the lawful worship.⁸² It is only when we overlook the object of these miracles, therefore, that they can possibly appear strange. "If," as Kurtz has said,⁸³ "we take the history of our prophet as one living organic link in the whole of the grand chain of the marvellous works of God, which stretches from Sinai to Golgotha and the Mount of Olives, and bear in mind the peculiarity of the position and circumstances of Elijah, the occurrence of a miracle in itself, and even the accumulation of them and their supposed externality, will appear to us in a very different light.—Without miracle, without very striking, i.e., external miracles, their ministry would have been without basis, without a starting-point, and without hold."—The miracles are still more numerous in the history of Elisha, and to some extent bear such a resemblance to those of Elijah, that the attempt has been made to set them down as merely legendary imitations of the latter; but considered as a whole, they are more of a helpful and healing nature, whereas those of Elijah are for the most part manifestations of judicial and punitive wrath. The agreement and the difference may both be explained from Elisha's position in relation to Elijah and his time. By the performance of similar and equal miracles (such as the division of the Jordan, 2 Kings 2:8 and 14; the increase of the oil, 2 Kings 4:3ff. compared with 1 Kings 17:14ff.; the raising of the dead, 2 Kings 4:34ff. compared with 1 Kings 17:19ff.). Elisha proved himself to be the divinely-appointed successor of Elijah, who was carrying forward his master's work (just as Joshua by the drying up of the Jordan proved himself to be the continuer of the work of Moses), and as such performed more miracles, so far as number is concerned, than even his master had done, though he was far inferior to him in spiritual power. But the difference does not prevail throughout. For whilst the helpful and healing side of Elijah's miraculous power is displayed in his relation to the widow at Zarephath; the judicial and punitive side of that of Elisha

comes out in the case of the mocking boys at Bethel, of Gehazi, and of Joram's knight. But the predominance of strict judicial sternness in the case of Elijah, and of sparing and helpful mildness in that of Elisha, is to be accounted for not so much from any difference in the personality of the two, as from the altered circumstances. Elijah, with his fiery zeal, had broken the power of the Baal-worship, and had so far secured an acknowledgment of the authority of Jehovah over His people that Joram and the succeeding kings gave heed to the words of the prophets of the Lord; so that Elisha had for the most part only to cherish and further the conversion of the people to their God, for which Elijah had prepared the way.

1 Kings 17

First Appearance of Elijah.

1 Kings 17. The prophet Elijah predicts to Ahab, as a punishment for his idolatry the coming of a drought and famine. During their continuance he is miraculously preserved by God, first of all at the brook Cherith, and then at the house of a widow at Zarephath (vv. 1–16), whose deceased son he calls to life again (vv. 17–24).

1 Kings 17:1. Elijah the Tishbite is introduced without the formula "The word of the Lord came to ...," with which the appearance of the prophets is generally announced, proclaiming to king Ahab in the name of the Lord the punitive miracle of a drought that will last for years. This abrupt appearance of Elijah cannot be satisfactorily explained from the fact that we have not the real commencement of his history here; it is rather a part of the character of this mightiest of all the prophets, and indicates that in him the divine power of the Spirit appeared as it were personified, and his life and acts were the direct effluence of the higher power by which he was impelled. His origin is also uncertain. The epithet *תִּישְׁבִּי* is generally derived from a place called *Tishbeh*, since, according to Tobit 1:2, there existed in Upper Galilee a *Θίσβη ἐκ δεξιῶν Κυδίου*, "on the right, i.e., to the south of *Kydios*," probably *Kedesh* in

the tribe of Naphtali, from which the elder Tobias was carried away captive, although this description of the place is omitted in the Hebrew version of the book of Tobit issued by Fagius and Münster, and in the Vulgate. And to this we must adhere, and as no other Thisbe occurs, must accept this Galilean town as the birthplace of Elijah; in which case the expression “of the settlers of Gilead” indicates that Elijah did not live in his birthplace, but dwelt as a foreigner in Gilead. For תושב in itself by no means denotes a non-Israelite, but, like גֵר, simply one who lived away from his home and tribe relations in the territory of a different tribe, without having been enrolled as a member of it, as is clearly shown by Lev. 25:40, and still more clearly by Judg. 17:7, where a Levite who was born in Bethlehem is described as גֵר in the tribe of Ephraim.⁸⁴ The expression “as truly as Jehovah the God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand (i.e., whom I serve; see at 1 Kings 1:2), there shall not fall dew and rain these years, except at my word,” was a special application of the threats of the law in Deut. 11:16, 17; 28:23, 24, and Lev. 26:19, to the idolatrous kingdom. השנים האלה, “these (ensuing) years,” does not fix any definite terminus. In לְפִי דְבָרִי there is involved an emphatic antithesis to others, and more especially to the prophets of Baal. “When I shall say this by divine authority and might, let others prate and lie as they may please” (*Berleb. Bibel*). Elijah thereby describes himself as one into whose power the God of Israel has given up the idolatrous king and his people. In Jas. 5:17, 18, this act of Elijah is ascribed to the power of his prayers, since Elijah “was also a man such as we are,” inasmuch as the prophets received their power to work solely through faith and intercourse with God in prayer, and faith gives power to remove mountains.

1 Kings 17:2-9. After the announcement of this judgment, Elijah had to hide himself, by the command of God, until the period of punishment came to an end, not so much that he might be safe from the wrath and pursuit of

Ahab and Jezebel, as to preclude all earnest entreaties to remove the punishment. “For inasmuch as the prophet had said that the rain would come at his word, how would they have urged him to order it to come!” (Seb. Schm.) He was to turn קִדְמָה, eastward, i.e., from Samaria, where he had no doubt proclaimed the divine judgment to Ahab, to the Jordan, and to hide himself at the brook *Cherith*, which is in front of the Jordan. The brook *Cherith* was in any case a brook emptying itself into the Jordan; but whether upon the eastern or the western side of that river, the ambiguity of עַל-פְּנֵי, which means both “to the east of” (Gen. 25:18) and also “in the face of,” i.e., before or towards (Gen. 16:12; 18:16), it is impossible to determine with certainty. That it must signify “to the east of the Jordan” here, does not follow from קִדְמָה with anything like the certainty that Thenius supposes. An ancient tradition places the *Cherith* on this side of the Jordan, and identifies it with the spring *Phasaelis*, which takes its rise in the slope of the mountains into the Jordan valley above the city of *Phasaelis*, and empties itself into the Jordan (cf. *Ges. thes.* p. 719, and V. de Velde, *Reise*, ii. pp. 273-4); whereas Eusebius, in the *Onom. s.v. Chorat* (Χορρά), places it on the other side of the Jordan, and Thenius thinks of the apparently deep Wady *Rajib* or *Ajlun*. All that can be affirmed with certainty is, that neither the brook *Kanah* (Josh. 16:8; 17:9), which flows into the Mediterranean, nor the Wady *Kelt* near Jericho, which Robinson (*Pal.* ii. p. 288) suggests, can possibly come into consideration: the latter for the simple reason, that the locality in the neighbourhood of Jericho was unsuitable for a hiding-place. Elijah was to drink of this brook, and the ravens by divine command were to provide him with bread and meat, which they brought him, according to v. 6, both morning and evening. It is now generally admitted that העֲרָבִים does not mean either Arabs or Orebites (the inhabitants of an imaginary city named Oreb), but *ravens*. Through this miracle, which unbelievers reject, because they do not acknowledge a living God, by whom, as the

Creator and Lord of all creatures, even the voracious ravens are made subservient to His plans of salvation, Elijah was not only cut off from intercourse with men, who might have betrayed his place of abode to the king, but was mightily strengthened himself, through the confidence inspired in the almighty assistance of his God, for his approaching contests with the worshippers of idols, and for the privations and sufferings which awaited him in the fulfilment of his vocation.

1 Kings 17:7-9. After some time this brook dried up for want of rain. Then the Lord directed His servant to go to the Sidonian *Zarephath*, and to live with a widow whom He had commanded to provide for him. מִן־יָמָיו does not mean *post annum*, for יָמָיו merely derives this meaning in certain passages from the context (cf. Lev. 25:29; 1 Sam. 27:7; Judg. 17:10); whereas in this instance the context does not point to the space of a year, but to a longer period of indefinite duration, all that we know being that, according to 1 Kings 18:1, the sojourn of Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath lasted at least two years. Zarephath (Σαρέπθα, LXX) was situated on the Mediterranean Sea between Tyre and Sidon, where a miserable Mohammedan village with ruins and a promontory, *Surafend*, still preserve the name of the former town (Rob. iii. p. 413ff., and V. de Velde, *Syria and Palestine*, i. pp. 101-3, transl.).

1 Kings 17:10-16. When Elijah arrived at the city gate, he met a widow engaged in gathering wood. To discover whether it was to her that the Lord had sent him, he asked her for something to drink and for a morsel of bread to eat; whereupon she assured him, with an oath by Jehovah, that she had nothing baked (מִן־עֵשֶׂה = ἔγκρυφίως, a cake baked in hot ashes), but only a handful of meal in the כַּד (a pail or small vessel in which meal was kept) and a little oil in the pitcher, and that she was just gathering wood to dress this remnant for herself and her son, that they might eat it, and then die. From this statement of the widow it is evident, on the one hand, that the drought and famine had

spread across the Phoenician frontier, as indeed Menander of Ephesus attests;⁸⁵ on the other hand, the widow showed by the oath, "as Jehovah thy God liveth," that she was a worshipper of the true God, who spoke of *Jehovah* as his God, because she recognised the prophet as an Israelite.

1 Kings 17:13ff. In order, however, to determine with indisputable certainty whether this believing Gentile was the protectress assigned him by the Lord, Elijah comforted her, and at the same time desired her first of all to bake him a little cake מִן־עֵשֶׂה, i.e., of the last of the meal in the *Kad* and of the oil in the pitcher, and then to bake for herself and her son, adding this promise: Jehovah the God of Israel will not let the meal in the *Kad* and the oil in the pitcher fail, till He sends rain upon the earth again. And the widow did according to his word. She gave up the certain for the uncertain, because she trusted the word of the Lord, and received the reward of her believing confidence in the fact that during the whole time of the drought she suffered from no want of either meal or oil. This act of the pious Gentile woman, who had welcomed with a simple heart the knowledge of the true God that had reached her from Israel, must have been the source of strong consolation to Elijah in the hour of conflict, when his faith was trembling because of the multitude of idolaters in Israel. If the Lord Himself had raised up true worshipers of His name among the Gentiles, his work in Israel could not be put to shame. The believing widow, however, received from the prophet not only a material blessing, but a spiritual blessing also. For, as Christ tells His unbelieving contemporaries to their shame (Luke 4:25, 26), Elijah was not sent to this widow in order that he might be safely hidden at her house, although this object was better attained thereby than by his remaining longer in Israel; but because of her faith, namely, to strengthen and to increase it, he was sent to her, and not to one of the many widows in Israel, many of whom would also have received the prophet if they had been rescued by him from the

pressure of the famine. And the miraculous increase of the meal and oil did not merely subserve the purpose of keeping the prophet and the widow alive; but the relief of her bodily need was also meant to be a preparatory means of quieting her spiritual need as well. On the *Chethîb* תַּחַן, see at 1 Kings 6:19. In v. 15 the *Keri* כֵּרִי is an unnecessary emendation of the *Chethîb* כֵּרִי; the feminine form וְהָיָה is occasioned primarily by the preceding verbs, and may be taken as an indefinite neuter: "and there ate he and she." The offence which Thenius has taken at יָמִים (days) has no foundation, if we do not understand the sentence as referring merely to their eating once of the bread just baked, but take it generally as signifying that in consequence of their acting according to the word of Jehovah, they (Elijah, the widow, and her family) ate for days, i.e., until God sent rain again (v. 14).

1 Kings 17:17–24. *The widow's deceased son raised to life again.*—V. 17. After these events, when Elijah had taken up his abode in the upper room of her house, her son fell sick, so that he breathed out his life. עַד אֲשֶׁר יָגוּ, literally till no breath remained in him. That these words do not signify merely a death-like torpor, but an actual decease, is evident from what follows, where Elijah himself treats the boy as dead, and the Lord, in answer to his prayer, restores him to life again.

1 Kings 17:18. The pious woman discerned in this death a punishment from God for her sin, and supposed that it had been drawn towards her by the presence of the man of God, so that she said to Elijah, "What have we to do with one another (מִה־לִּי וְלָךְ; cf. Judg. 11:12; 2 Sam. 16:10), thou man of God? Hast thou come to me to bring my sin to remembrance (with God), and to kill my son?" In this half-heathenish belief there spoke at the same time a mind susceptible to divine truth and conscious of its sin, to which the Lord could not refuse His aid. Like the blindness in the case of the man born blind mentioned in John 9, the death of this

widow's son was not sent as a punishment for particular sins, but was intended as a medium for the manifestation of the works of God in her (John 9:3), in order that she might learn that the Lord was not merely the God of the Jews, but the God of the Gentiles also (Rom. 3:29).

1 Kings 17:19, 20. Elijah told her to carry the dead child up to the chamber in which he lived and lay it upon his bed, and then cried to the Lord, "Jehovah, my God! hast Thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, to slay her son?" These words, in which the word *also* refers to the other calamities occasioned by the drought, contain no reproach of God, but are expressive of the heartiest compassion for the suffering of his benefactress and the deepest lamentation, which, springing from living faith, pours out the whole heart before God in the hour of distress, that I may appeal to Him the more powerfully for His aid. The meaning is, "Thou, O Lord my God, according to Thy grace and righteousness, canst not possibly leave the son of this widow in death." Such confident belief carries within itself the certainty of being heard. The prophet therefore proceeds at once to action, to restore the boy to life.

1 Kings 17:21. He stretched himself (יָתַמְדָּה) three times upon him, not to ascertain whether there was still any life left in him, as Paul did in Acts 20:10, nor to warm the body of the child and set its blood in circulation, as Elisha did with a dead child (2 Kings 4:34),—for the action of Elisha is described in a different manner, and the youth mentioned in Acts 20:10 was only apparently dead,—but to bring down the vivifying power of God upon the dead body, and thereby support his own word and prayer.⁸⁶ He then cried to the Lord, "Jehovah, my God, I pray Thee let the soul of this boy return within it." עַל-קִרְבוֹ, inasmuch as the soul as the vital principle springs from above.

1 Kings 17:22, 23. The Lord heard this prayer: the boy came to life again; whereupon Elijah gave him back to his mother.

1 Kings 17:24. Through this miracle, in which Elijah showed himself as the forerunner of Him who raiseth all the dead to life, the pious Gentile woman was mightily strengthened in her faith in the God of Israel. She now not only recognised Elijah as a man of God, as in v. 18, but perceived that the word of Jehovah in his mouth was truth, by which she confessed *implicite* her faith in the God of Israel as the true God.

1 Kings 18

Elijah's Meeting with Ahab, and Victory over the Prophets of Baal.

1 Kings 18. As the judgment of drought and famine did not bring king Ahab to his senses and lead him to turn from his ungodly ways, but only filled him with exasperation towards the prophet who had announced to him the coming judgment; there was no other course left than to lay before the people with mighty and convincing force the proof that Jehovah was the only true God, and to execute judgment upon the priests of Baal as the seducers of the nation.

1 Kings 18:1-19. *Elijah's meeting with Ahab.*—Vv. 1 and 2a. In the third year of his sojourn at Zarephath the word of the Lord came to Elijah to show himself to Ahab; since God was about to send rain upon the land again. The time given, “the third year,” is not to be reckoned, as the Rabbins, Clericus, Thenius, and others assume, from the commencement of the drought, but from the event last mentioned, namely, the sojourn of Elijah at Zarephath. This view merits the preference as the simplest and most natural one, and is shown to be the oldest by Luke 4:25 and James 5:17, where Christ and James both say, that in the time of Ahab it did not rain for three years and six months. And this length of time can only be obtained by allowing more than two years for Elijah's stay at Zarephath.—From v. 2b to v. 6 we have parenthetical remarks introduced, to explain the circumstances which led to Elijah's meeting with Ahab. The verbs וַיִּקְרָא, וַיְהִי, וַיֵּאמֶר, and וַיַּחְלְקוּ (vv. 3, 4, 5, 6) carry on the circumstantial

clauses: “and the famine was ...” (v. 2b), and “Obadiah feared ...” (v. 3b), and are therefore to be expressed by the pluperfect. When the famine had become very severe in Samaria (the capital), Ahab, with Obadiah the governor of his castle (אֲשֶׁר עַל הַבַּיִת, see at 1 Kings 4:6), who was a God-fearing man, and on the persecution of the prophets of Jehovah by Jezebel had hidden a hundred prophets in caves and supplied them with food, had arranged for an expedition through the whole land to seek for hay for his horses and mules. And for this purpose they had divided the land between them, so that the one explored one district and the other another. We see from v. 4 that Jezebel had resolved upon exterminating the worship of Jehovah, and sought to carry out this intention by destroying the prophets of the true God. The hundred prophets whom Obadiah concealed were probably for the most part pupils (“sons”) of the prophets. חֲמִשִּׁים אִישׁ must signify, according to the context and also according to v. 13, “fifty each,” so that חֲמִשִּׁים must have fallen out through a copyist's error. וְלוֹא נִכְרִית מִן (a portion) of the cattle (מִן partitive). The *Keri* מִהֶבְהֵמָה is no doubt actually correct, but it is not absolutely necessary, as the *Chethîb* מִן בְּהֵמָה may be taken as an indefinite phrase: “any head of cattle.”

1 Kings 18:7, 8. Elijah met Obadiah on this expedition, and told him to announce his coming to the king.

1 Kings 18:9ff. Obadiah was afraid that the execution of this command might cost him his life, inasmuch as Ahab had sent in search of Elijah “to every kingdom and every nation,”—a hyperbole suggested by inward excitement and fear. וַאֲמָרוּ אֵין is to be connected with what follows in spite of the accents: “and if they said he is not here, he took an oath,” etc.

1 Kings 18:12, 13. “And if it comes to pass (that) I go away from thee, and the Spirit of Jehovah carries thee away whither I know not, and I come to tell Ahab (sc., that thou art here)

and he findeth thee not, he will slay me, and thy servant feareth the Lord from his youth," etc.; i.e., since I as a God-fearing man and a protector of the prophets cannot boast of any special favour from Ahab. מִנְעָרִי, from *my* youth up: "thy servant" being equivalent to "I myself." From the fear expressed by Obadiah that the Spirit of Jehovah might suddenly carry the prophet to some unknown place, Seb. Schmidt and others have inferred that in the earlier history of Elijah there had occurred some cases of this kind of sudden transportation, though they have not been handed down; but the anxiety expressed by Obadiah might very well have sprung from the fact, that after Elijah had announced the coming drought to Ahab, he disappeared, and, notwithstanding all the inquiries instituted by the king, was nowhere to be found. And since he was not carried off miraculously then (compare the לָךְ and וַיֵּלֶךְ, "get thee hence" and "he went," in 1 Kings 17:3, 5), there is all the less ground for imagining cases of this kind in the intermediate time, when he was hidden from his enemies. The subsequent translation of Elijah to heaven (2 Kings 2:11, 12), and the miraculous carrying away of Philip from the chamberlain of Mauritania (Acts 8:39), do not warrant any such assumption; and still less the passage which Clericus quotes from Ezekiel (Ezek. 3:12, 14), because the carrying of Ezekiel through the air, which is mentioned here, only happened in vision and not in external reality. If Obadiah had known of any actual occurrence of this kind, he would certainly have stated it more clearly as a more striking vindication of his fear.

1 Kings 18:15-19. But when Elijah assured him with an oath (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת, see at 1 Sam. 1:3) that he would show himself to Ahab that day, Obadiah went to announce it to the king; whereupon Ahab went to meet the prophet, and sought to overawe him with the imperious words, "Art thou here, thou troubler of Israel." (עָבַר, see at Gen. 34:30). But Elijah threw back this charge: "It is not I who have brought Israel into trouble, but thou and thy family, in that ye

have forsaken the commandments of Jehovah, and thou goest after Baalim." He then called upon the king to gather together all Israel to him upon Carmel, together with the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who ate of Jezebel's table, i.e., who were maintained by the queen.

Carmel, a mountain ridge "with many peaks, intersected by hundreds of larger and smaller ravines," which stands out as a promontory running in a north-westerly direction into the Mediterranean (see at Josh. 19:26), and some of the loftiest peaks of which rise to the height of 1800 feet above the level of the sea, when seen from the northern or outer side shows only "bald, monotonous rocky ridges, scantily covered with short and thorny bushes;" but in the interior it still preserves its ancient glory, which has procured for it the name of "fruit-field," the valleys being covered with the most beautiful flowers of every description, and the heights adorned with myrtles, laurels, oaks, and firs (cf. V. de Velde, *R. i. p.* 292ff.). At the north-western extremity of the mountain there is a celebrated Carmelite monastery, dedicated to Elijah, whom tradition represents as having lived in a grotto under the monastery; but we are certainly not to look there for the scene of the contest with the priests of Baal described in the verses which follow. The scene of Elijah's sacrifice is rather to be sought for on one of the south-eastern heights of Carmel; and Van de Velde (i. p. 320ff.) has pointed it out with great probability in the ruins of *el Mohraka*, i.e., "the burned place," "a rocky level space of no great circumference, and covered with old gnarled trees with a dense entangled undergrowth of bushes." For "one can scarcely imagine a spot better adapted for the thousands of Israel to have stood drawn up on than the gentle slopes. The rock shoots up in an almost perpendicular wall of more than 200 feet in height on the side of the vale of Esdraelon. On this side, therefore, there was no room for the gazing multitude; but, on the other hand, this wall made it visible over the whole plain, and from all the surrounding heights, so that even those left behind, who had not ascended Carmel, would

still have been able to witness at no great distance the fire from heaven that descended upon the altar.”—“There is not a more conspicuous spot on all Carmel than the abrupt rocky height of el Mohraka, shooting up so suddenly on the east.” Moreover, the soil was thoroughly adapted for the erection of the altar described in vv. 31 and 32: “it shows a rocky surface, with a sufficiency of large fragments of rock lying all around, and, besides, well fitted for the rapid digging of a trench.” There is also water in the neighbourhood, as is assumed in v. 34. “Nowhere does the Kishon run so close to Mount Carmel as just beneath el Mohraka,” which is “1635 feet above the sea, and perhaps 1000 feet above the Kishon. This height can be gone up and down in the short time allowed by the Scripture (vv. 40–44).” But it was possible to find water even nearer than this, to pour upon the burnt-offering in the manner described in vv. 34, 35. Close by the steep rocky wall of the height, just where you can descend to the Kishon through a steep ravine, you find, “250 feet it might be beneath the altar plateau, a vaulted and very abundant fountain built in the form of a tank, with a few steps leading down into it, just as one finds elsewhere in the old wells or springs of the Jewish times.”—“From such a fountain alone could Elijah have procured so much water at that time. And as for the distance between this spring and the supposed site of the altar, it was every way possible for men to go thrice thither and back again to obtain the necessary supply.” Lastly, el Mohraka is so situated, that the circumstances mentioned in vv. 42–44 also perfectly coincide (Van de Velde, pp. 322–325).

1 Kings 18:20–46. *Elijah’s contest with the prophets of Baal.*—Ahab sent through all Israel and gathered the prophets (of Baal) together upon Mount Carmel. According to vv. 21, 22, and 39, a number of the people (“all the people”) had also come with them. On the other hand, not only is there no further reference in what follows to the 400 prophets of Asherah (cf. vv. 25 and 40), but in v. 22 it is very obvious that the presence of the 450 prophets of Baal alone is supposed. We must therefore assume

that the Asherah prophets, foreboding nothing good, had found a way of evading the command of Ahab and securing the protection of Jezebel.⁸⁷ King Ahab also appeared upon Carmel (cf. v. 41), as he had no idea of Elijah’s intention, which was by no means “to prove to the king that he (Ahab) and not Elijah had brought Israel into trouble” (Vat., Seb. Schm.), but to put before the eyes of the whole nation a convincing practical proof of the sole deity of Jehovah and of the nothingness of the Baals, that were regarded as gods, and by slaying the priests of Baal to give a death-blow to idolatry in Israel.

1 Kings 18:21. Elijah addressed the assembled people as follows: “How long do ye limp upon both sides? Is Jehovah God, then go after Him; but if Baal be God, then go after him”—and the people answered him not a word. They wanted to combine the worship of Jehovah and Baal, and not to assume a hostile attitude towards Jehovah by the worship of Baal; and were therefore obliged to keep silence under this charge of infatuated halving, since they knew very well from the law itself that Jehovah demanded worship with a whole and undivided heart (Deut. 6:4, 5). This dividing of the heart between Jehovah and Baal Elijah called limping עַל שְׁתֵּי הַקְּעָפִים, “upon the two parties (of Jehovah and Baal).” For קְעָפִים the meaning “divided opinions, parties,” is well established by the use of קְעָפִים in Ps. 119:113; and the rendering of the LXX ἰγνύαι, the hollow of the knee, is only a paraphrase of the sense and not an interpretation of the word.

1 Kings 18:22–25. As the people adhered to their undecided double-mindedness, Elijah proposed to let the Deity Himself decide who was the true God, Jehovah or Baal. The prophets of Baal were to offer a sacrifice to Baal, and he (Elijah) would offer one to Jehovah. And the true God should make Himself known by kindling the burnt-offering presented to Him with fire from heaven, and in this way answering the invocation of His name. This proposal was based upon the account in Lev. 9.

As Jehovah had there manifested Himself as the God of Israel by causing fire to fall from heaven upon the first sacrifice presented in front of the tabernacle and to consume it, Elijah hoped that in like manner Jehovah would even now reveal Himself as the living God. And the form of decision thus proposed would necessarily appear all the fairer, because Elijah, the prophet of Jehovah, stood alone in opposition to a whole crowd of Baal's prophets, numbering no less than 450 men. And for that very reason the latter could not draw back, without publicly renouncing their pretensions, whether they believed that Baal would really do what was desired, or hoped that they might be able to escape, through some accident or stratagem, from the difficult situation that had been prepared for them, or fancied that the God of Elijah would no more furnish the proof of His deity that was desired of Him than Baal would. In order, however, to cut off every subterfuge in the event of their attempt proving a failure, Elijah not only yielded the precedence to them on the occasion of this sacrifice, but gave them the choice of the two oxen brought to be offered; which made the fairness of his proposal so much the more conspicuous to every one, that the people willingly gave their consent.

1 Kings 18:26-29. The prophets of Baal then proceeded to the performance of the duty required. They prepared (יַעֲשׂוּ) the sacrifice, and called solemnly upon Baal from morning to noon: "O Baal, hear us," limping round the altar; "but there was no voice, and no one to hear (to answer), and no attention." פֶּסֶחַ is a contemptuous epithet applied to the pantomimic sacrificial dance performed by these priests round about the altar,⁸⁸ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ("which one had made").

1 Kings 18:27. As no answer had been received before noon, Elijah cried out to them in derision: "Call to him with a loud voice, for he is God (sc., according to your opinion), for he is meditating, or has gone aside (שָׁיַג, *secessio*), or is on the journey (בְּדֶרֶךְ, on the way); perhaps he

is sleeping, that he may wake up." The ridicule lies more especially in the כִּי אֱלֹהִים הוּא (for he is a god), when contrasted with the enumeration of the different possibilities which may have occasioned their obtaining no answer, and is heightened by the earnest and threefold repetition of the כִּי. With regard to these possibilities we may quote the words of Clericus: "Although these things when spoken of God are the most absurd things possible, yet idolaters could believe such things, as we may see from Homer." The priests of Baal did actually begin therefore to cry louder than before, and scratched themselves with swords and lances, till the blood poured out, "according to their custom" (כְּמִשְׁפָּטָם). Movers describes this as follows (*Phönizier*, i. pp. 682, 683), from statements made by ancient authors concerning the processions of the strolling bands of the Syrian goddess: "A discordant howling opens the scene. They then rush wildly about in perfect confusion, with their heads bowed down to the ground, but always revolving in circles, so that the loosened hair drags through the mire; they then begin to bite their arms, and end with cutting themselves with the two-edged swords which they are in the habit of carrying. A new scene then opens. One of them, who surpasses all the rest in frenzy, begins to prophesy with signs and groans; he openly accuses himself of the sins which he has committed, and which he is now about to punish by chastising the flesh, takes the knotted scourge, which the *Galli* generally carry, lashes his back, and then cuts himself with swords till the blood trickles down from his mangled body." The climax of the Bacchantic dance in the case of the priests of Baal also was the prophesying (הִתְנַבֵּא), and it was for this reason, probably, that they were called prophets (נְבִיאִים). This did not begin till noon, and lasted till about the time of the evening sacrifice (עַד לְעֹלוֹת, not עַד עֹלוֹת, v. 29). עֹלוֹת הַמִּנְחָה, "the laying on (offering) of the meat-offering," refers to the daily evening sacrifice, which consisted of a burnt-offering

and a meat-offering (Ex. 29:38ff.; Num. 28:3–8), and was then offered, according to the Rabbinical observance (see at Ex. 12:6), in the closing hours of the afternoon, as is evident from the circumstances which are described in vv. 40ff. as having taken place on the same day and subsequently to Elijah's offering, which was presented at the time of the evening sacrifice (v. 36).

1 Kings 18:30–39. *Elijah's sacrifice.*—As no answer came from Baal, Elijah began to prepare for his own sacrifice. V. 30. He made the people come nearer, that he might have both eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses present at his sacrifice, and restored the altar of Jehovah which was broken down. Consequently, there was already an altar of Jehovah upon Carmel, which either dated from the times anterior to the building of the temple, when altars of Jehovah were erected in different places throughout the land (see at 1 Kings 3:2), or, what is more probable, had been built by pious worshippers belonging to the ten tribes since the division of the kingdom (Hengstenberg, *Dissertations on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. p. 183, trans.), and judging from 1 Kings 19:10, had been destroyed during the reign of Ahab, when the worship of Baal gained the upper hand.

1 Kings 18:31, 32. Elijah took twelve stones, "according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come (Gen. 32:29; 35:10), Israel shall be thy name," and built these stones into an altar. The twelve stones were a practical declaration on the part of the prophet that the division of the nation into two kingdoms was at variance with the divine calling of Israel, inasmuch as according to the will of God the twelve tribes were to form *one* people of Jehovah, and to have a common sacrificial altar; whilst the allusion to the fact that Jehovah had given to the forefather of the nation the name of Israel, directs attention to the wrong which the seceding ten tribes had done in claiming the name of Israel for themselves, whereas it really belonged to the whole nation. בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה (in the name of Jehovah) belongs to יִבְנֶהָ (built), and signifies by

the authority and for the glory of Jehovah. "And made a trench as the space of two seahs of seed (i.e., so large that you could sow two seahs⁸⁹ of seed upon the ground which it covered) round about the altar." The trench must therefore have been of considerable breadth and depth, although it is impossible to determine the exact dimensions, as the kind of seed-corn is not defined. He then arranged the sacrifice upon the altar, and had four *Kad* (pails) of water poured three times in succession upon the burnt-offering which was laid upon the pieces of wood, so that the water flowed round about the altar, and then had the trench filled with water.⁹⁰ Elijah adopted this course for the purpose of precluding all suspicion of even the possibility of fraud in connection with the miraculous burning of the sacrifice. For idolaters had carried their deceptions to such a length, that they would set fire to the wood of the sacrifices from hollow spaces concealed beneath the altars, in order to make the credulous people believe that the sacrifice had been miraculously set on fire by the deity. Ephraem Syrus and Joh. Chrysostom both affirm this; the latter in his *Oratio in Petrum Apost. et Eliam proph.* t. ii. p. 737, ed. Montf., the genuineness of which, however, is sometimes called in question.

1 Kings 18:36, 37. After these preparations at the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah drew near and prayed: "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (this name is used with deliberate purpose instead of Jacob: see at v. 31), let it be known this day that Thou art God in Israel, and I am Thy servant, and do all these things through Thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me, that this people may know that Thou Jehovah art God, and turnest back their hearts!" (i.e., back from idols to Thyself.) This clearly expresses not only the object of the miracle which follows, but that of miracles universally. The perfects עָשִׂיתָ and הִסְבֵּתָ are used to denote not only what has already occurred, but what will still take place and is as certain as if it had taken place already. עָשִׂיתָ refers not merely to the predicted drought and to what Elijah has

just been doing (Thenius), but to the miracle which was immediately about to be performed; and תְּהַבֵּתָהּ to the conversion of the people to the Lord their God, for which Elijah's coming had already prepared the way, and which was still further advanced by the following miracle.

1 Kings 18:38. Then fire of Jehovah fell and consumed the burnt-offering and the pieces of wood, etc. אֵשׁ יְהוָה, the fire proceeding from Jehovah, was not a natural flash of lightning, which could not produce any such effect, but miraculous fire falling from heaven, as in 1 Chron. 21:26, 2 Chron. 7:1) see at Lev. 9:24), the supernatural origin of which was manifested in the fact, that it not only consumed the sacrifice with the pile of wood upon the altar, but also burned up (*in calcem redegit*—Cler.) the stones of the altar and the earth that was thrown up to form the trench, and licked up the water in the trench. Through this miracle Jehovah not only accredited Elijah as His servant and prophet, but proved Himself to be the living God, whom Israel was to serve; so that all the people who were present fell down upon their faces in worship, as they had done once before, viz., at the consecration of the altar in Lev. 9:24, and confessed "Jehovah is God:" הָאֱלֹהִים, the true or real God.

1 Kings 18:40–46. Elijah availed himself of this enthusiasm of the people for the Lord, to deal a fatal blow at the prophets of Baal, who turned away the people from the living God. He commanded the people to seize them, and had them slain at the brook Kishon, and that not so much from revenge, i.e., because it was at their instigation that queen Jezebel had murdered the prophets of the true God (v. 13), as to carry out the fundamental law of the Old Testament kingdom of God, which prohibited idolatry on pain of death, and commanded that false prophets should be destroyed (Deut. 17:2, 3; 13:13ff.).⁹¹

1 Kings 18:41. Elijah then called upon the king, who had eaten nothing from morning till evening in his eagerness to see the result of the contest between the prophet and the priests of

Baal, to come up from the brook Kishon to the place of sacrifice upon Carmel, where his wants were provided for, and to partake of meat and drink, for he (Elijah) could already hear the noise of a fall of rain. קוֹל is without a verb, as is often the case (e.g., Isa. 13:4; 52:8, etc.); literally, it is the sound, the noise. After the occasion of the curse of drought, which had fallen upon the land, had been removed by the destruction of the idolatrous priest, the curse itself could also be removed. "But this was not to take place without the prophet's saying it, and by means of this gift proving himself afresh to be the representative of God" (O. v. Gerlach).

1 Kings 18:42ff. While the king was refreshing himself with food and drink, Elijah went up to the top of Carmel to pray that the Lord would complete His work by fulfilling His promise (v. 1) in sending rain; and continued in prayer till the visible commencement of the fulfilment of his prayer was announced by his servant, who, after looking out upon the sea seven times, saw at last a small cloud ascend from the sea about the size of a man's hand.⁹² The peculiar attitude assumed by Elijah when praying (Jas. 5:18), viz., bowing down even to the earth (יִגְהַר) and putting his face between his knees, probably the attitude of deep absorption in God, was witnessed by Shaw and Chardin in the case of certain dervishes (vid., Harmar, *Beobachtungen*, iii. pp. 373–4).

1 Kings 18:44. As soon as the small cloud ascended from the sea, Elijah sent his servant to tell the king to set off home, that he might not be stopped by the rain. יָרַד, go down, sc. from Carmel to his chariot, which was standing at the foot of the mountain.⁹³

1 Kings 18:45. Before any provision had been made for it (עַד-כִּי וְעַד-כִּי: hither and thither, i.e., while the hand is being moved to and fro, "very speedily;" cf. Ewald, § 105, b.) the heaven turned black with clouds and wind, i.e., with storm-clouds (Thenius), and there came a great fall of rain, while Ahab drove along the road to Jezreel. It was quite possible for the king to reach Jezreel the same evening from that point,

namely, from the foot of Carmel below *el Mohraka*: but only thence, for every half-hour farther west would have taken him too far from his capital for it to be possible to accomplish the distance before the rain overtook him (V. de Velde, i. p. 326). *Jezeel*, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. 19:18), was probably the summer residence of Ahab (see at Josh. 21:1). The distance from *el Mohraka* thither is hardly 2 3/4 German geographical miles (? 14 Engl. miles—Tr.) in a straight line.

1 Kings 18:46. When Ahab drove off, the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah, so that he ran before Ahab as far as Jezreel,—not so much for the purpose of bringing the king to his residence unhurt (Seb. Schm.), as to give him a proof of his humility, and thus deepen the impression already made upon his heart, and fortify him all the more against the strong temptations of his wife, who abused his weakness to support the cause of ungodliness. This act of Elijah, whom Ahab had hitherto only known as a stern, imperious, and powerful prophet, by which he now showed himself to be his faithful subject and servant, was admirably adapted to touch the heart of the king, and produce the conviction that it was not from any personal dislike to him, but only in the service of the Lord, that the prophet was angry at his idolatry, and that he was not trying to effect his ruin, but rather his conversion and the salvation of his soul. יְדִי יְהוָה, the hand (i.e., the power) of the Lord, denotes the supernatural strength with which the Lord endowed him, to accomplish superhuman feats. This formula is generally applied to the divine inspiration by which the prophets were prepared for their prophesying (cf. 2 Kings 3:15; Ezek. 1:3; 3:15, etc.).

1 Kings 19

Elijah's Flight into the Desert, the Revelation of God at Horeb, and Elisha's Call to Be a Prophet.

1 Kings 19. The hope of completing his victory over the idolaters and overthrowing the worship of Baal, even in the capital of the

kingdom, with which Elijah may have hastened to Jezreel, was frustrated by the malice of the queen, who was so far from discerning any revelation of the almighty God in the account given her by Ahab of what had occurred on Carmel, and bending before His mighty hand, that, on the contrary, she was so full of wrath at the slaying of the prophets of Baal as to send to the prophet Elijah to threaten him with death. This apparent failure of his ministry was the occasion of a severe inward conflict, in which Elijah was brought to a state of despondency and fled from the land. The Lord allowed His servant to pass through this conflict, that he might not exalt himself, but, being mindful of his own impotence, might rest content with the grace of his God, whose strength is mighty in the weak (2 Cor. 12:8, 9), and who would refine and strengthen him for the further fulfilment of his calling.

1 Kings 19:1–8. *Elijah's flight into the desert and guidance to Horeb.*—Vv. 1, 2. When "Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and all, how he had slain all the prophets (of Baal)," she sent a messenger to Elijah in her impotent wrath, with a threat, which she confirmed by an oath (see at 1 Kings 2:23), that in the morning she would have him slain like the prophets whom he had put to death. The early commentators detected in this threat the *impotentia muliebris iracundiae*, and saw that all that Jezebel wanted was to get rid of the man who was so distressing and dangerous to her, because she felt herself unable to put him to death, partly on account of the people, who were enthusiastic in his favour, and partly on account of the king himself, upon whom the affair at Carmel had not remained without its salutary effect.

1 Kings 19:3, 4. But when Elijah saw (וַיִּרְאֵהוּ), sc. how things stood, or the audacity of Jezebel, from which the failure of his work was evident, he rose up and went to Beersheba in Judah, i.e., Bir-seba on the southern frontier of Canaan (see at Gen. 21:31). The expression אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה, "which to Judah," i.e., which belonged to the kingdom of Judah, for Beersheba was really

allotted to the tribe of Simeon (Josh. 19:2), is appended not merely as a geographical indication that Elijah went outside the land, but to show that he meant to leave the kingdom of Israel, the scene of his previous labours, just as Jeremiah in a similar internal conflict gave utterance to the wish that he could leave his people, if he had but a lodging-place in the wilderness (Jer. 9:2). וַיֵּרָא is not to be altered into וַיִּירָא, *et timuit*, after the LXX and Vulg., notwithstanding the fact that some Codd. have this reading, which only rests upon an erroneous conjecture. For it is obvious that Elijah did not flee from any fear of the vain threat of Jezebel, from the fact that he did not merely withdraw into the kingdom of Judah, where he would have been safe under Jehoshaphat from all the persecutions of Jezebel, but went to Beersheba, and thence onwards into the desert there to pour out before the Lord God his weariness of life (v. 4). וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-נַפְשׁוֹ, he went upon his soul, or his life, i.e., not to save his life (as I once thought, with many other commentators), for his wish to die (v. 4) is opposed to this; but to care for his soul in the manner indicated in v. 4, i.e., to commit his soul or his life to the Lord his God in the solitude of the desert, and see what He would determine concerning him.⁹⁴—He left his servant in Beersheba, while he himself went a day's journey farther into the desert (Paran), not merely because he was so filled with weariness of life in his dark oppression, that he thought he should have no further need of his servant, and therefore left him behind in Beersheba, but that he might pour out his heart before God alone in the desert and yield himself up to His guidance. For however unquestionably his lamentation in v. 4, for example, expresses a weariness of life, this merely indicates the feeling which had taken possession of his soul after a day's journey in the barren desert. And even there he lays his wish to die before God in prayer; so that this feeling is merely to be regarded as one result of the spiritual conflict, which is bodily exhaustion had now raised to a height that it cannot have

reached when he was in Beersheba. If, therefore, he did not start with the intention of making a pilgrimage to Horeb, he had certainly gone into the desert for the purpose of seeing whether the Lord would manifest His mercy to him, as He had formerly done to His people under Moses, or whether He would withdraw His hand entirely from him. After a day's journey he sat down under a רִתְּם (construed here as a feminine, in v. 5 as a masculine), a species of broom (*genista Retem* in *Forskål*), which is the finest and most striking shrub of the Arabian desert, growing constantly in the beds of streams and in the valleys, where places of encampment are frequently selected for the sake of the shelter which they afford by night from the wind and by day from the sun (Rob. *Pal.* i. 299). וַיִּשְׁאַל ... לָמוּת: and wished that his soul might die (a kind of accusative with infinitive; see Ewald, § 336, *b.*), and said, רַב עָתָה, "Enough now; take, Lord, my soul, for I am not better than my fathers;" i.e., I have worked and endured enough, and deserve no longer life than my fathers. From this it appears that Elijah was already of a great age.

1 Kings 19:5ff. In this disturbed state of mind he lay down and slept under a broom-tree. Then the Lord came with His power to the help of the despairing man. "An angel touched him (wakened him out of his sleep), and said to him: Arise, eat." And behold he saw at his head עֶגְתָּא, a bread cake baked over red-hot stones, a savoury article of food which is still a great favourite with the Bedouins (see at Ge. 18:6; 19:3), and a pitcher of water, and ate and drank, and lay down again.

1 Kings 19:7. But the angel wakened him a second time, and called upon him to eat with these words: "for the way is too far for thee" (רַב הַדֶּרֶךְ, *iter est majus quam pro viribus tuis*—Vat.).

1 Kings 19:8. "Then he arose, ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to the mount of God at Horeb." As the angel did not tell him whither he was to

go, and Elijah wandered to Horeb in consequence of this strengthening, it appears to have been his intention from the very beginning to go into the desert, and see whether the Lord would still further acknowledge him and his work; so that in the support and strength imparted by the angel he saw an indication that he was to follow the footsteps of the divine grace still farther into the desert, and make a pilgrimage to Horeb, with the hope that there perhaps the Lord would reveal to him His counsel concerning the further guidance of the people of His covenant, as He had formerly done to His servant Moses, and give him the necessary instruction for the continuance of his prophetic service. *Horeb* is called the mount of God here, as it was proleptically in Ex. 3:1, as the place where the Lord confirmed the covenant, already made with the patriarchs, to their descendants, and adopted the tribes of Israel as His people and made them into a kingdom of God. The distance from Beersheba to Horeb is about 200 miles. Consequently Elijah would not have required forty days to travel there, if the intention of God had been nothing more than to cause him to reach the mountain, or “to help him on his way” (Thenius). But in the strength of the food provided by the angel Elijah was not only to perform the journey to Horeb, but to wander in the desert for forty days and forty nights, i.e., forty whole days, as Moses had formerly wandered with all Israel for forty years; that he might know that the Lord was still the same God who had nourished and sustained His whole nation in the desert with manna from heaven for forty years. And just as the forty years’ sojourn in the desert had been to Moses a time for the trial of faith and for exercise in humility and meekness (Num. 12:3), so was the strength of Elijah’s faith to be tried by the forty days’ wandering in the same desert, and to be purified from all carnal zeal for the further fulfilment of His calling, in accordance with the divine will. What follows shows very clearly that this was the object of the divine guidance of Elijah (cf. Hengstenberg, *Diss. on the Pentateuch*, vol. i. 171, 172).

1 Kings 19:9–18. *Appearance of God at Horeb.*—V. 9. When Elijah arrived at Horeb, he went into *the* cave (the definite article in הַמְצֵרָה, with the obvious connection between the appearance of God, which follows here, and that described in Ex. 33:12ff., points back to the cleft in the rock, נִקְרַת הַצֹּר, in which Moses had stood while the glory of Jehovah passed by (see at Ex. 33:22), and there he passed the night. And behold the word of the Lord came to him (in the night): “What doest thou here, Elijah?” This question did not involve a reproof, as though Elijah had nothing to do there, but was simply intended to lead him to give utterance to the thoughts and feelings of his heart.

1 Kings 19:10. Elijah answered: “I have striven zealously for Jehovah the God of hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, destroyed Thine altars, and killed Thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left, and they seek my life.” In these words there was not only the greatest despair expressed as to the existing condition of things, but also a carnal zeal which would gladly have called down the immediate vengeance of the Almighty upon all idolaters. The complaint contained, on the one hand, the tacit reproof that God had looked on quietly for so long a time at the conduct of the ungodly, and had suffered things to come to such an extremity, that he, His prophet, was the only one left of all the true worshippers of God, and, on the other hand, the indirect appeal that He would interpose at last with His penal judgments. Because Elijah had not seen the expected salutary fruits of his zeal for the Lord, he thought that all was lost, and in his gloomy state of mind overlooked what he had seen a short time before with his own eyes, that even in the neighbourhood of the king himself there lived a pious and faithful worshipper of Jehovah, viz., Obadiah, who had concealed a hundred prophets from the revenge of Jezebel, and that the whole of the people assembled upon Carmel had given glory to the Lord, and at his command had seized the prophets of Baal and put them to death, and therefore that the true worshippers of the Lord could not all have

vanished out of Israel. קנא קנאתי ליהוה recalls to mind the zeal of Phinehas (Num. 25:11ff.), which put an end to the whoredom of the sons of Israel with the daughters of Moab. But whereas Phinehas received the promise of an everlasting priesthood for his zeal, Elijah had seen so little fruit from his zeal against the worshippers of Baal, that they actually sought his life. מזבחותי are altars, which pious Israelites in the kingdom of the ten tribes had built in different places for the worship of Jehovah (see at 1 Kings 18:30).

1 Kings 19:11ff. The Lord replied to the prophet's complaint first of all by the manifestation of His control of the phenomena of nature (vv. 11–13), and then by a verbal explanation of His design (vv. 15–18).

In this divine revelation men have recognised from the very earliest times a repetition of the appearance of God which was granted to Moses upon Sinai. As God, in token of His grace, granted the prayer of Moses that he might see His glory, after he had striven zealously for the honour of the Lord when the people rebelled by worshipping the golden calf; so did He also display His glory upon Horeb to Elijah as a second Moses for the purpose of strengthening his faith, with this simple difference, that He made all His goodness pass by Moses, and declared His name in the words, "Jehovah, a gracious and merciful God," etc. (Ex. 34:6, 7), whereas He caused Elijah first of all to behold the operation of His grace in certain phenomena of nature, and then afterwards made known to him His will with regard to Israel and to the work of His prophets. This difference in the form of the revelation, while the substance and design were essentially the same, may be explained from the difference not only in the historical circumstances, but also in the state of mind of the two servants to whom He manifested His glory. In the case of Moses it was burning love for the welfare of his people which impelled him to offer the prayer that the Lord would let him see His glory, as a sign that He would not forsake His people; and this prayer was granted him, so far as a man is ever

able to see the glory of God, to strengthen him for the further discharge of the duties of his office. Hidden in the cleft of the rock and shielded by the hand of God, he saw the Lord pass by him, and heard Him utter in words His inmost being. Elijah, on the other hand, in his zeal for the honour of God, which was not quite free from human passion, had been led by the want of any visible fruit from his own labour to overlook the work of the Lord in the midst of His people; so that he had fled into the desert and wished to be released from this world by death, and had not been brought out of his despair by the strengthening with meat and drink which he had received from the angel, and which enabled him to travel for forty days to the mount of God without suffering from want, a fact which was intended to remind him of the ancient God of the fathers, to whose omnipotence and goodness there is no end; so that it was in a most gloomy state of mind that he reached Horeb at last. And now the Lord designed not only to manifest His glory as the love in which grace and righteousness are united, but also to show him that his zeal for the honour of the Lord was not in harmony with the love and grace and long-suffering of God. "The design of the vision was to show to the fiery zeal of the prophet, who wanted to reform everything by means of the tempest, the gentle way which God pursues, and to proclaim the long-suffering and mildness of His nature, as the voice had already done to Moses on that very spot; hence the beautiful change in the divine appearance" (Herder, *Geist der hebr. Poesie*, 1788, ii. p. 52).

1 Kings 19:11, 12. After God had commanded him to come out of the cave and stand upon the mountain (that part of the mountain which was in front of the cave) before Him, "behold Jehovah went by (the participle עָבַר is used to give a more vivid representation of the scene); and a great and strong tempest, rending mountains and breaking rocks in pieces, before Jehovah—it was not in the tempest that Jehovah was; and after the tempest an earthquake—it was not in the earthquake that

Jehovah was; and after the earthquake fire—it was not in the fire that Jehovah was; and after the fire a still, gentle rustling.” קוֹל דְּמָמָה דַּקָּה, literally the tone of a gentle blowing. On the change of gender in רִיחַ גְּדוּלָה וְחֶזֶק, see Ewald, § 174, e.—Tempest, earthquake, and fire, which are even more terrible in the awful solitude of the Horeb mountains than in an inhabited land, are signs of the coming of the Lord to judgment (cf. Ps. 18:8ff.). It was in the midst of such terrible phenomena that the Lord had once come down upon Sinai, to inspire the people who were assembled at the foot of the mountain with a salutary dread of His terrible majesty, of the fiery zeal of His wrath and love, which consumes whatever opposes it (see at Ex. 19:16ff.). but now the lord was not in these terrible phenomena; to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment. It was in a soft, gentle rustling that He revealed Himself to him.

1 Kings 19:13, 14. When Elijah heard this, he covered up his face in his cloak (אֶדְרֵת; see at 2 Kings 1:8) and went out to the entrance to the cave. And behold he heard the question a second time, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” and answered with a repetition of his complain (see vv. 9 and 10).—While the appearance of God, not in the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, but in a gentle rustling, revealed the Lord to him as a merciful and gracious God, long-suffering, and of great goodness and truth (Ex. 34:6), the answer to his complaint showed him that He did not leave guilt unpunished (Ex. 34:7), since the Lord gave him the following command, vv. 15ff.: “Go back in thy way to the desert of Damascus, and anoint Hazael king over Aram (see 2 Kings 8:12, 13), and Jehu the son of Nimshi king over Israel (see 2 Kings 9:2), and Elisha the son of Shaphat prophet in thy stead” (see v. 19); and then added this promise, which must have quieted his zeal, that was praiseworthy in the feelings from which it sprang, although it had assumed too passionate a form, and have given him courage to continue his prophetic work: “And it will come to pass,

that however escapeth the sword of Hazael, him will Jehu slay, and whoever escapeth the sword of Jehu, him will Elisha slay.”

1 Kings 19:18. But in order that he might learn, to his shame, that the cause of the Lord in Israel appeared much more desperate to his eye, which was clouded by his own dissatisfaction, than it really was in the eye of the God who knows His own by number and by name, the Lord added: “I have seven thousand left in Israel, all knees that have not bent before Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him.”

מִדְּבַרְהָ דַּמְשֶׁק, into the desert of Damascus (with the *He loc.* with the construct state as in Deut. 4:41, Josh. 12:1, etc.; cf. Ewald, § 216, b.), i.e., the desert lying to the south and east of the city of Damascus, which is situated on the river *Barady*; not *per desertum in Damascus* (Vulg., Luth., etc.); for although Elijah would necessarily pass through the Arabian desert to go from Horeb to Damascus, it was superfluous to tell him that he was to go that way, as there was no other road. The words “return by thy way ... and anoint Hazael,” etc., are not to be understood as signifying that Elijah was to go at once to Damascus and anoint Hazael there, but simply that he was to do this at a time which the Spirit would more precisely indicate. According to what follows, all that Elijah accomplished immediately was to call Elisha to be his successor; whereas the other two commissions were fulfilled by Elisha after Elijah’s ascension to heaven (2 Kings 8 and 9). The opinion that Elijah also anointed Hazael and Jehu immediately, but that this anointing was kept secret, and was repeated by Elisha when the time for their public appearance arrived, has not only very little probability in itself, but is directly precluded by the account of the anointing of Jehu in 2 Kings 9. The anointing of Hazael and Jehu is mentioned first, because God had chosen these two kings to be the chief instruments of His judgments upon the royal family and people for their idolatry. It was only in the case of Jehu that a real anointing took place (2 Kings 9:6); Hazael was merely told by Elisha that he would be king (2 Kings 8:13), and

Elisha was simply called by Elijah to the prophetic office by having the cloak of the latter thrown upon him. Moreover, the Messianic passage, Isa. 61:1, is the only one in which there is any allusion to the anointing of a prophet. Consequently *חֲשֹׁבֶה* must be taken figuratively here as in Judg. 9:8, as denoting divine consecration to the regal and prophetic offices. And so, again, the statement that Elisha would slay those who escaped the sword of Jehu is not to be understood literally. Elisha slew by the word of the Lord, which brought judgments upon the ungodly, as we see from 2 Kings 2:24 (cf. Jer. 1:10; 18:7). The “seven thousand,” who had not bowed the knee before Baal, are a round number for the *ἐκλογή* of the godly, whom the Lord had preserved for Himself in the sinful kingdom, which was really very large in itself, however small it might be in comparison with the whole nation. The number *seven* is the stamp of the works of God, so that seven thousand is the number of the “remnant according to the election of grace” (Rom. 11:5), which had then been preserved by God. *Kissing* Baal was the most usual form in which this idol was worshipped, and consisted not merely in throwing kisses with the hand (cf. Job 31:27, and Plin. *h. n.* 28, 8), but also in kissing the images of Baal, probably on the feet (cf. Cicero *in Verr.* 4, 43).

1 Kings 19:19–21. *Call of Elisha to be a prophet.*—V. 19. As he went thence (*viz.*, away from Horeb), Elijah found *Elisha* the son of Shaphat at Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley (see at Judg. 7:22), occupied in ploughing; “twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he himself with the twelfth” (a very wealthy man therefore), and threw his cloak to him as he passed by. The prophet’s cloak was sign of the prophet’s vocation so that throwing it to him was a symbol of the call to the prophetic office.

1 Kings 19:20. Elisha understanding the sign, left the oxen standing, ran after Elijah, and said to him, “Let me kiss my father and my mother,” i.e., take leave of my parents, and when I will follow thee. For the form *חֲשֹׁבֶה* see Ewald, § 228, *b.* As he has ploughed his earthly field with

his twelve pair of oxen, he was not to plough the spiritual field of the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 9:62). Elijah answered, “Go, return, for what have I done to thee?” *לָךְ שׁוּב* belong together, as in v. 15; so that Elijah thereby gave him permission to return to his father and mother. *כִּי* signifies *for*, not *yet* (Thenius); for there is no antithesis here, according to which *כִּי* might serve for a more emphatic assurance (Ewald, § 330, *b.*). The words “what have I done to thee?” can only mean, I have not wanted to put any constraint upon thee, but leave it to thy free will to decide in favour of the prophetic calling.

1 Kings 19:21. Then Elisha returned, took the pair of oxen with which he had been ploughing, sacrificed, i.e., slaughtered them (*זָבַח* used figuratively), boiled the flesh with the plough, gave a farewell meal to the people (of his place of abode), i.e., his friends and acquaintance, and then followed Elijah as his servant, i.e., his assistant. The suffix in *בְּשֵׁלָם* refers to *הַבָּקָר*, and is more precisely defined by the apposition *הַבָּשָׂר*, “namely, the flesh of the oxen.”

1 Kings 20

Ahab’s Double Victory over Benhadad of Syria.

1 Kings 20. Even if the impression which the miracle upon Carmel had made upon Ahab, who was weak rather than malevolent, remained without any lasting fruit, the Lord did very quickly manifest His mercy towards him, by sending a prophet with a promise of victory when the Syrians invaded his kingdom, and by giving the Syrians into his power. This victory was a fruit of the seven thousand who had not bent their knee before Baal. Elijah was also to learn from this that the Lord of Sabaoth had not yet departed from the rebellious kingdom.

1 Kings 20:1–22. The First Victory.—V. 1. Benhadad, the son of that Benhadad who had conquered several cities of Galilee in the reign of Baasha (1 Kings 15:20), came up with a great army—there were thirty-two kings with him, with horses and chariots—and besieged

Samaria. The thirty-two kings with him (יְהוּדָא) were vassals of Benhadad, rulers of different cities and the territory belonging to them, just as in Joshua's time almost every city of Canaan had its king; they were therefore bound to follow the army of Benhadad with their troops.

1 Kings 20:2ff. During the siege Benhadad sent messengers into the city to Ahab with this demand: "Thy silver and thy gold are mine, and the best of thy wives and thy sons are mine;" and Ahab answered with pusillanimity: "According to thy word, my lord king, I and all that is mine are thine." Benhadad was made still more audacious by this submissiveness, and sent messengers the second time with the following notice (v. 6): "Yea, if I send my servants to thee to-morrow at this time, and they search thy house and thy servants' houses, all that is the pleasure of thine eyes they will put into their hands and take." אִם כִּי does not mean "only = certainly" here (Ewald, § 356, *b.*), for there is neither a negative clause nor an oath, but אִם signifies *if* and כִּי introduces the statement, as in v. 5; so that it is only in the repetition of the כִּי that the emphasis lies, which can be expressed by *yea*. The words of Ahab in v. 9 show unquestionably that Benhadad demanded more the second time than the first. The words of the first demand, "Thy silver and thy gold," etc., were ambiguous. According to v. 5, Benhadad meant that Ahab should give him all this; and Ahab had probably understood him as meaning that he was to give him what he required, in order to purchase peace; but Benhadad had, no doubt, from the very first required an unconditional surrender at discretion. He expresses this very clearly in the second demand, since he announces to Ahab the plunder of his palace and also of the palaces of his nobles. כָּל-מִקְדָּמָה עֵינֶיךָ, all thy costly treasures. It was from this second demand that Ahab first perceived what Benhadad's intention had been; he therefore laid the matter before the elders of the land, i.e., the king's counsellors, v. 7: "Mark and see that this man seeketh evil," i.e., that he is aiming at our ruin,

since he is not contented with the first demand, which I did not refuse him.

1 Kings 20:8. The elders and all the people, i.e., the citizens of Samaria, advised that his demand should not be granted. אֶל-הַשָּׂמַע וְלֹא תִאָּזְנֶה, "hearken not (to him), and thou wilt not be willing" (אֶל is stronger than לֹא; yet compare Ewald, § 350, *a.*); whereupon Ahab sent the messengers away with this answer, that he would submit to the first demand, but that the second he could not grant.

1 Kings 20:10. Benhadad then attempted to overawe the weak-minded Ahab by strong threats, sending fresh messengers to threaten him with the destruction of the city, and confirming it by a solemn oath: "The gods do so to me—if the dust of Samaria should suffice for the hollow hands of all the people that are in my train." The meaning of this threat was probably that he would reduce the city to ashes, so that scarcely a handful of dust should be left; for his army was so powerful and numerous, that the rubbish of the city would not suffice for every one to fill his hand.

1 Kings 20:11. Ahab answered this loud boasting with the proverb: "Let not him that girdeth himself boast as he that looseneth the girdle," equivalent to the Latin, *ne triumphum canas ante victoriam*.

1 Kings 20:12. After this reply of Ahab, Benhadad gave command to attack the city, while he was drinking with his kings in the booths. סֹכּוֹת are booths made of branches, twigs, and shrubs, such as are still erected in the East for kings and generals in the place of tents (vid., Rosenmüller, *A. u. N. Morgenl.* iii. pp. 198–9). שִׁימוּ: take your places against the city, sc. to storm it (for שִׁים in the sense of arranging the army for battle, see 1 Sam. 11:11 and Job 1:17); not οἰκοδομήσατε χάρακα (LXX), or place the siege train.

1 Kings 20:13, 14. While the Syrians were preparing for the attack, a prophet came to Ahab and told him that Jehovah would deliver this great multitude (of the enemy) into his

hand that day, “that thou mayest know that I am Jehovah,” and that through the retainers of the governors of the provinces (שְׂרֵי הַמְּדִינֹת), who had fled to Samaria), i.e., by a small and weak host. In the appearance of the prophet in Samaria mentioned here and in vv. 28 and 35ff. there is no such irreconcilable contradiction to 1 Kings 18:4, 22, and 19:10, as Thenius maintains; it simply shows that the persecution of the prophets by Jezebel had somewhat abated, and therefore Elijah’s labour had not remained without fruit. מִי יֵאָסֵר הַסֵּם, who shall open the battle? אָסֵר answers to the German *anfäden* (to string, unite; Eng. *join* battle—Tr.); cf. 2 Chron. 13:3.

1 Kings 20:15, 16. Ahab then mustered his fighting men: there were 232 servants of the provincial governors; and the rest of the people, all the children of Israel, i.e., the whole of the Israelitish fighting men that were in Samaria (הַחֵיל, v. 19), amounted to 7000 men. And at noon, when Benhadad and his thirty-two auxiliary kings were intoxicated at a carousal in the booths (שֹׁתֵה שְׂבוּרֵי as in 1 Kings 16:9), he ordered his men to advance, with the servants of the provincial governors taking the lead. The 7000 men are not to be regarded as the 7000 mentioned in 1 Kings 19:18, who had not bowed their knee before Baal, as Rashi supposes, although the sameness in the numbers is apparently not accidental; but in both cases the number of the covenant people existing in Israel is indicated, though in 1 Kings 19:18 and 7000 constitute the ἐκλογὴ of the true Israel, whereas in the verse before us they are merely the fighting men whom the Lord had left to Ahab for the defence of his kingdom.

1 Kings 20:17, 18. When Benhadad was informed of the advance of these fighting men, in his drunken arrogance he ordered them to be taken alive, whether they came with peaceable or hostile intent.

1 Kings 20:19, 20. But they—the servants of the governors at the head, and the rest of the army behind—smote every one his man, so that the Aramaeans fled, and Benhadad, pursued by

the Israelites, escaped on a horse with some of the cavalry. וּפָרְשִׁים is in apposition to בְּנֵי־הָדָד, “he escaped, and horsemen,” sc. escaped with him, i.e., some of the horsemen of his retinue, whilst the king of Israel, going out of the city, smote horses and chariots of the enemy, who were not prepared for this sally of the besieged, and completely defeated them.

1 Kings 20:22. After this victory the prophet came to Ahab again, warning him to be upon his guard, for at the turn of the year, i.e., the next spring (see at 2 Sam. 11:1), the Syrian king would make war upon him once more.

1 Kings 20:23–34. The Second Victory.—Vv. 23, 24. The servants (ministers) of Benhadad persuaded their lord to enter upon a fresh campaign, attributing the defeat they had sustained to two causes, which could be set aside, viz., to the supposed nature of the gods of Israel, and to the position occupied by the vassal-kings in the army. The gods of Israel were mountain gods: when fighting with them upon the mountains, the Syrians had had to fight against and succumb to the power of these gods, whereas on the plain they would conquer, because the power of these gods did not reach so far. This notion concerning the God of Israel the Syrians drew, according to their ethnical religious ideas, from the fact that the sacred places of this God—not only the temple at Jerusalem upon Moriah, but also the altars of the high places—were erected upon mountains; since heathenism really had its mountain deities, i.e., believed in gods who lived upon mountains and protected and conducted all that took place upon them (cf. Dougltaei *Analect.* ss. i. 178, 179; Deyling, *Observv.* ss. iii. pp. 97ff.; Winer, *bibl. R. W.* i. p. 154), and in Syrophoenicia even mountains themselves had divine honours paid to them (vid., Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 667ff.). The servants of Benhadad were at any rate so far right, that they attributed their defeat to the assistance which God had given to His people Israel; and were only wrong in regarding the God of Israel as a local deity, whose power did not extend beyond the mountains. They also advised their lord (v.

24) to remove the kings in his army from their position, and appoint governors in their stead (תִּחַּֿ, see 1 Kings 10:15). The vassal-kings had most likely not shown the desired self-sacrifice for the cause of their superior in the war. And, lastly (v. 25), they advised the king to raise his army to its former strength, and then carry on the war in the plain. “Number thyself an army, like the army which has fallen from thee.”

תִּחַּֿ, “from with thee,” rendered correctly *de tuis* in the Vulgate, at least so far as the sense is concerned (for the form see Ewald, § 264, *b.*). But these prudently-devised measures were to be of no avail to the Syrians; for they were to learn that the God of Israel was not a limited mountain-god.

1 Kings 20:26. With the new year (see v. 22) Benhadad advanced to Aphek again to fight against Israel. *Aphek* is neither the city of that name in the tribe of Asher (Josh. 19:30 and 13:4), nor that on the mountains of Judah (Josh. 15:53), but the city in the plain of Jezreel not far from Endor (1 Sam. 29:1 compared with 28:4); since Benhadad had resolved that this time he would fight against Israel in the plain.

1 Kings 20:27. The Israelites, mustered and provided for (כִּלְכָּלִּי: supplied with ammunition and provisions), marched to meet them, and encamped before them “like two little separate flocks of goats” (i.e., severed from the great herd of cattle). They had probably encamped upon slopes of the mountains by the plain of Jezreel, where they looked like two miserable flocks of goats in contrast with the Syrians who filled the land.

1 Kings 20:28. Then the man of God (the prophet mentioned in vv. 13 and 22) came again to Ahab with the word of God: “Because the Syrians have said Jehovah is a mountain-God and not a God of the valleys, I will give this great multitude into thy hand, that ye may know that I am Jehovah.”

1 Kings 20:29, 30. After seven days the battle was fought. The Israelites smote the Syrians, a hundred thousand men in one day; and when the rest fled to Aphek, into the city, the wall fell

upon twenty-seven thousand men, ἵνα δὲ κακεῖνοι καὶ οὗτοι μάθωσιν ὡς θεήλατος ἡ πληγή (Theodoret). The flying Syrians had probably some of them climbed the wall of the city to offer resistance to the Israelites in pursuit, and some of them sought to defend themselves by taking shelter behind it. And during the conflict, through the special interposition of God, the wall fell and buried the Syrians who were there. The cause of the fall is not given. Thenius assumes that it was undermined, in order to remove all idea of any miraculous working of the omnipotence of God. Benhadad himself fled into the city “room to room,” i.e., from one room to another (cf. 1 Kings 22:25, 2 Chron. 18:24).

1 Kings 20:31, 32. In this extremity his servants made the proposal to him, that trusting in the generosity of the kings of Israel, they should go and entreat Ahab to show favour to him. They clothed themselves in mourning apparel, and put ropes on their necks, as a sign of absolute surrender, and went to Ahab, praying for the life of their king. And Ahab felt so flattered by the fact that his powerful opponent was obliged to come and entreat his favour in this humble manner, that he gave him his life, without considering how a similar act on the part of Saul had been blamed by the Lord (1 Sam. 15:9ff.). “Is he still alive? He is my brother!” was his answer to Benhadad’s servants.

1 Kings 20:33. And they laid hold of these words of Ahab as a good omen (יִשְׁחַּֿ), and hastened and bade him explain (i.e., bade him quickly explain); וַיִּשְׁאַּֿ, whether (it had been uttered) from himself, i.e., whether he had said it with all his heart (Maurer), and said, “Benhadad is thy brother.” The ἁπ. λεγ. ὑῶֿ, related to ὑῶֿ, *exuere*, signifies *abstrahere*, *nudare*, then figuratively, *aliquid facere nude*, i.e., *sine praetextu*, or *aliquid nude*, i.e., *sine fuco atque ambagibus testari, confirmare* (cf. Fürst, *Concord.* p. 398); then in the Talmud, to give an explanation (vid., *Ges. thes.* p. 476). This is perfectly applicable here, so that there is no necessity to alter the text, even if we thereby

obtained a better meaning than Thenius with his explanation, "they tore it out of him," which he takes to be equivalent to "they laid hold of him by his word" (!). Ahab thereupon ordered Benhadad to come and get up into his chariot.

1 Kings 20:34. Benhadad, in order to keep Ahab in this favourable mood, promised to give him back at once the cities which his father had taken away from Ahab's father, and said, "Thou mayest make thyself roads in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." There is no account of any war between Omri and Benhadad I; it is simply stated in 1 Kings 15:20 that Benhadad I had taken away several cities in Galilee from the Israelites during the reign of Baasha. This cannot be the war intended here, however, not indeed because of the expression *מֵאַתְּ אֲבִיךָ*, since *בָּן* might certainly be taken in a broader sense as referring to Baasha as an ancestor of Ahab, but chiefly on account of the statement that Benhadad had made himself roads in Samaria. This points to a war between Omri and Benhadad, after the building of Samaria into the capital of the kingdom, of which no account has been preserved. *שִׁים הַצֹּת לוֹ*, "to make himself roads," cannot be understood as referring either to fortifications and military posts, or to roads for cattle and free pasturage in the Syrian kingdom, since Samaria and Damascus were cities; not can it signify the establishment of custom-houses, but only the clearing of portions of the city for the purpose of trade and free intercourse (Cler., Ges. etc.), or for the establishment of bazaars, which would occupy a whole street (Böttcher, Thenius; see also Movers, *Phönizier*, ii. 3, p. 135).—"And I," said Ahab, "will let thee go upon a covenant" (a treaty on oath), and then made a covenant with him, giving him both life and liberty. Before *וְאָנִי* we must supply in thought *וַיֵּאמֶר אֶהְיֶה*. This thoroughly impolitic proceeding on the part of Ahab arose not merely from a natural and inconsiderate generosity and credulity of mind (G. L. Bauer, Thenius), but from an unprincipled weakness, vanity, and blindness. To let a cruel and faithless foe go unpunished, was not only

the greatest harshness to his own subjects, but open opposition to God, who had announced to him the victory, and delivered the enemy of His people into his hand.⁹⁵ Even if Ahab had no express command from God to put Benhadad to death, as Saul had in 1 Sam. 15:3, it was his duty to punish this bitter foe of Israel with death, if only to secure quiet for his own subjects; as it was certainly to be foreseen that Benhadad would not keep the treaty which had been wrung from him by force, as was indeed very speedily proved (see 1 Kings 22:1).

1 Kings 20:35–43. *The verdict of God upon Ahab's conduct towards Benhadad.*—Vv. 35, 36. A disciple of the prophets received instructions from God, to announce to the king that God would punish him for letting Benhadad go, and to do this, as Nathan had formerly done in the case of David (2 Sam. 12:1ff.), by means of a symbolical action, whereby the king was led to pronounce sentence upon himself. The disciples of the prophets said to his companion, "in the word of Jehovah," i.e., by virtue of a revelation from God (see at 1 Kings 13:2), "Smite me;" and when the friend refused to smite him, he announced to him that because of this disobedience to the voice of the Lord, after his departure from him a lion would meet him and smite him, i.e., would kill him; a threat which was immediately fulfilled. This occurrence shows with how severe a punishment all opposition to the commandments of God to the prophets was followed, as a warning for others; just as in the similar occurrence in 1 Kings 13:24.

1 Kings 20:27. The disciple of the prophets then asked another to smite him, and he smote him, "smiting and wounding," i.e., so that he not only smote, but also wounded him (vid., Ewald, § 280, a.). He wished to be smitten and wounded, not to disguise himself, or that he might be able to appeal loudly to the king for help to obtain his rights, as though he had suffered some wrong (Ewald), nor merely to assume the deceptive appearance of a warrior returning from the battle (Thenius), but to show to Ahab symbolically what he had to

expect from Benhadad whom he had released (C. a Lap., Calm., etc.).

1 Kings 20:38. With these wounds he placed himself in the king's path, and disguised himself (יְתַחַפֵּשׂ as in 1 Sam. 28:8) by a bandage over his eyes. אֶפְרָא does not mean ashes (Syr., Vulg., Luth., etc.), but corresponds to the Chaldee מְעַפְרָא, head-band, τελαμών (LXX).

1 Kings 20:39, 40. When the king passed by, he cried out to him and related the following fictitious tale: He had gone to the war, and a man had come aside to him (סוֹר as in Ex. 3:3, Judg. 14:8, etc.), and had given a man (a prisoner) into his care with this command, that he was to watch him, and if he should be missing he was to answer for his life with his own life, or to pay a talent of silver (as a punishment). The rest may be easily imagined, namely the request to be saved from this punishment. Ahab answered (v. 40), כִּן מִשְׁפָּטְךָ, "thus thy sentence, thou hast decided," i.e., thou hast pronounced thine own sentence, and must endure the punishment stated.

1 Kings 20:41, 42. Then the disciple of the prophets drew the bandage quickly from his eyes, so that the king recognised him as a prophet, and announced to him the word of the Lord: "Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man of my ban (i.e., Benhadad, who has fallen under my ban), thy life shall stand for his life, and thy people for his people," i.e., the destruction to which Benhadad was devoted will fall upon thee and thy people. The expression אִישׁ־חַרְמִי (man of my ban) showed Ahab clearly enough what ought to have been done with Benhadad. A person on whom the ban was pronounced was to be put to death (Lev. 27:29).

1 Kings 20:43. The king therefore went home, and returned sullen (סָר, from סָרַר) and morose to Samaria.

1 Kings 21

The Murder and Robbery of Naboth.

1 Kings 21. After these events Ahab was seized with such a desire for a vineyard which was situated near his palace at Jezreel, that when Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused to part with his paternal inheritance, he became thoroughly dejected, until his wife Jezebel paved the way for the forcible seizure of the desired possession by the shameful execution of Naboth (vv. 1–15). But when Ahab was preparing to take possession of the vineyard, Elijah came to meet him with the announcement, that both he and his wife would be visited by the Lord with a bloody death for this murder and robbery, and that his idolatry would be punished with the extermination of all his house (vv. 16–26). Ahab was so affected by this, that he humbled himself before God; whereupon the Lord told Elijah, that the threatened judgment should not burst upon his house till after Ahab's death (vv. 27–29).

1 Kings 21:1–15. Ahab wanted to obtain possession of the vineyard of Naboth, which was in Jezreel (אֶשְׁרָא refers to כְּרָם), near the palace of the king, either in exchange for another vineyard or for money, that he might make a vegetable garden of it. From the fact that Ahab is called the king of Samaria we may infer that Jezreel, the present *Zerin* (see at Josh. 19:18), was only a summer residence of the king.

1 Kings 21:3. Naboth refused to part with the vineyard, because it was the inheritance of his fathers, that is to say, on religious grounds (חֵלְלָהּ לִי מִיְהוָה), because the sale of a paternal inheritance was forbidden in the law (Lev. 25:23–28; Num. 36:7ff.). He was therefore not merely at liberty as a personal right to refuse the king's proposal, but bound by the commandment of God.

1 Kings 21:4. Instead of respecting this tender feeling of shrinking from the transgression of the law and desisting from his coveting, Ahab went home, i.e., to Samaria (cf. v. 8), sullen and

morose (סָר וְנָעַר) as in 1 Kings 20:43), lay down upon his bed, turned his face (viz., to the wall; cf. 2 Kings 20:2)—“after the manner of sorrowful persons, who shrink from and refuse all conversation, and even the sight of others” (Seb. Schmidt)—and did not eat. This childish mode of giving expression to his displeasure at Naboth’s refusal to comply with his wish, shows very clearly that Ahab was a man sold under sin (v. 20), who only wanted the requisite energy to display the wickedness of his heart in vigorous action.

1 Kings 21:5–7. When Jezebel learned the cause of Ahab’s ill-humour, she said to him, “Thou, dost thou now exercise royal authority over Israel.” אָתָּה is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the sentence is to be taken as an ironical question, as it has been by the LXX. “I (if thou hast not courage enough to act) will procure thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

1 Kings 21:8, 9. The shameless woman then wrote a letter in the name of Ahab, sealed it below with the royal seal, which probably bore the king’s signature and was stamped upon the writing instead of signing the name, as is done at the present day among Arabs, Turks, and Persians (vid., Paulsen, *Reg. der Morgenl.* p. 295ff.), to give it the character of a royal command (cf. Esther 8:13, Dan. 6:17), and sent this letter (the *Chethîb* חֶתֶב־כְּתוּבִים is correct, and the *Keri* has arisen from a misunderstanding) to the elders and nobles of his town (i.e., the members of the magistracy, Deut. 16:18), who lived near Naboth, and therefore had an opportunity to watch his mode of life, and appeared to be the most suitable persons to institute the charge that was to be brought against him. The letter ran thus: “Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth at the head of the people, and set two worthless men opposite to him, that they may give evidence against him: Thou hast blasphemed God and king; and lead him out and stone him, that he may die.” Jezebel ordered the fasting for a sign, as though some public crime or heavy load of guilt rested upon

the city, for which it was necessary that it should humble itself before God (1 Sam. 7:6). The intention was, that at the very outset the appearance of justice should be given to the legal process about to be instituted in the eyes of all the citizens, and the stamp of veracity impressed upon the crime of which Naboth was to be accused. בְּרֹאשׁ הָעָם ... הוֹשִׁיבוּ, “seat him at the head of the people,” i.e., bring him to the court of justice as a defendant before all the people. The expression may be explained from the fact, that a sitting of the elders was appointed for judicial business, in which Naboth and the witnesses who were to accuse him of blasphemy took part *seated*. To preserve the appearance of justice, two witnesses were appointed, according to the law in Deut. 17:6, 7; 19:15, Num. 35:30; but worthless men, as at the trial of Jesus (Matt. 26:60). בְּרַךְ אֱלֹהִים, to bless God, i.e., to bid Him farewell, to dismiss Him, as in Job 2:9, equivalent to blaspheming God. God and king are mentioned together, like God and prince in Ex. 22:27, to make it possible to accuse Naboth of transgressing this law, and to put him to death as a blasphemer of God, according to Deut. 13:11 and 17:5, where the punishment of stoning is awarded to idolatry as a practical denial of God. Blaspheming the king is not to be taken as a second crime to be added to the blasphemy of God; but blaspheming the king, as the visible representative of God, was *eo ipso* also blaspheming God.

1 Kings 21:11–13. The elders of Jezreel executed this command without delay; a striking proof both of deep moral corruption and of slavish fear of the tyranny of the ruthless queen.

1 Kings 21:14, 15. When the report of Naboth’s execution was brought to her, she called upon Ahab to take possession of his vineyard (רֶשֶׁת = רֶשֶׁת, Deut. 2:24). As Naboth’s sons were put to death at the same time, according to 2 Kings 9:26, the king was able to confiscate his property; not, indeed, on any rule laid down in the Mosaic law, but according to a principle involved in the very idea of high

treason. Since, for example, in the case of blasphemy the property of the criminal was forfeited to the Lord as *cherem* (Deut. 13:16), the property of traitors was regarded as forfeited to the king.

1 Kings 21:16–26. But when Ahab went down to Jezreel to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth, Elijah came to meet him by the command of God, with the word of the Lord, “Hast thou murdered and also taken possession?” The question served to sharpen his conscience, since Ahab was obliged to admit the fact. *אִשָּׁר בְּשָׁמְרוֹן* means “who lives at Samaria,” for when Elijah came to meet him, Ahab was in Jezreel, Elijah then said to him still further: “Thus saith the Lord: In the place where the dogs have licked the blood of Naboth, will they also lick thine, yea, thy blood.” *גַּם אֶתָּה* serves as an emphatic repetition of the suffix (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). This threat was only so far fulfilled upon Ahab, from the compassion of God, and in consequence of his humbling himself under the divine judgment (vv. 27–29), that dogs licked his blood at Samaria when the carriage was washed in which he had died (1 Kings 22:38); but it was literally fulfilled in the case of his son Joram, whose corpse was cast into Naboth’s piece of ground (2 Kings 9:25, 26).

1 Kings 21:20. Ahab answered, “Hast thou found me (met with me), O mine enemy?” (not, hast thou ever found me thine enemy?—Vulg., Luth.) i.e., dost thou come to meet me again, mine enemy? He calls Elijah his enemy, to take the sting from the prophet’s threat as an utterance caused by personal enmity. But Elijah fearlessly replied, “I have found (thee), because thou sellest thyself to do evil in the eyes of the Lord.” He then announced to him, in vv. 21, 22, the extermination of his house, and to Jezebel, as the principal sinner, the most ignominious end (v. 23). *הָרַע לְעֵשׂוֹת הָרַע* to sell one’s self to do evil, i.e., to give one’s self to evil so as to have no will of one’s own, to make one’s self the slave of evil (cf. v. 25, 2 Kings 17:17). The consequence of this is *πεπραῖσθαι ὑπὸ τῆν*

ἀμαρτίαν (Rom. 7:14), sin exercising unlimited power over the man who gives himself up to it as a slave. For vv. 21, 22, see 1 Kings 14:10, 11; 15:29, 30; 16:3, 12, 13. The threat concerning Jezebel (v. 23) was literally fulfilled, according to 2 Kings 9:30ff. *חָל*, written defectively for *חָלִיל*, as in 2 Sam. 20:15, is properly the open space by the town-wall, *pomoerium*. Instead of *בְּחָל* we have *בְּחָלֶק* in the repetition of this threat in 2 Kings 9:10, 36, 37, and consequently Thenius and others propose to alter the *חָל* here. But there is no necessity for this, as *בְּחָלֶק*, on the portion, i.e., the town-land, of Jezreel (not, in the field at Jezreel), is only a more general epithet denoting the locality, and *חָל* is proved to be the original word by the LXX.

1 Kings 21:25, 26. Vv. 25 and 26 contain a reflection on the part of the historian concerning Ahab’s ungodly conduct, whereby he brought such an ignominious end upon himself and his house. *רַק לֹא הָיָה וְגוֹ*, “only there has not been (one) like Ahab,” i.e., there was no one else like Ahab, “who sold himself,” etc. *הַסְתִּיתָהּ* for *הַסְתִּיתָהּ*, from *סוֹת*, to entice, to seduce or lead astray (cf. Ewald, § 114, *a*, and Ges. § 72, Anm. 6). *וַיִּתְעַב*, and he acted abominably. *Amorites*: for Canaanites, as in Gen. 15:16, etc.

1 Kings 21:27–29. This terrible threat made such an impression upon Ahab, that he felt deep remorse, and for a time at least was sincerely penitent. Rending the clothes, putting on the mourning garment of hair (*שָׂק*), and fasting, are frequently mentioned as external signs of humiliation before God or of deep mourning on account of sin. *וַיֵּלֶךְ אֵט*, he walked about lightly (slowly), like one in deep trouble. This repentance was neither hypocritical, nor purely external; but it was sincere even if it was not lasting and produced no real conversion. For the Lord Himself acknowledge it to be humiliation before Him (v. 29), and said to Elijah, that because of it He would not bring the threatened calamity upon Ahab’s house in his

own lifetime, but only in the days of his son. אָבִי for אָבִיָּא, as in v. 21.

1 Kings 22

War of Ahab and Jehoshaphat against the Syrians, and Death of Ahab. Reigns of Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahaziah of Israel.

1 Kings 22:1–40. Allied Campaign of Ahab and Jehoshaphat against the Syrians at Ramoth, and Death of Ahab (compare 2 Chron. 18:2–34).—V. 1. “And they rested three years; there was no war between Aram and Israel,” יָשַׁב here is to keep quiet, to undertake nothing, as in Judg. 5:17, etc. The subject to וַיֵּשְׁבוּ is Aram and Israel mentioned in the second clause. The length of time given here points back to the end of the war described in 1 Kings 20.

1 Kings 22:2–4. In the third year (not necessarily “towards the end of it,” as Thenius supposes, for Jehoshaphat’s visit preceded the renewal of the war) Jehoshaphat visited the king of Israel, with whom he had already formed a marriage alliance by marrying his son to Ahab’s daughter (2 Chron. 18:1; 2 Kings 8:18). Ahab then said to his servants that the king of Syria had kept the city of *Ramoth* in Gilead (probably situated on the site of the present *Szalt*: see at Deut. 4:43), which he ought to have given up, according to the conditions of the peace in 1 Kings 20:34, and asked Jehoshaphat whether he would go with him to the war against Ramoth, which the latter promised to do. “I as thou, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses;” i.e., I am at thy service with the whole of my military power. In the place of the last words we have therefore in the Chronicles בְּמִלְחָמָה וְעִמָּךְ, “I am with thee in the war,” i.e., I will assist thee in the war.

1 Kings 22:5, 6. But as Jehoshaphat wished also to inquire the word of the Lord concerning the war, Ahab gathered together about 400 prophets, who all predicted as out of one mouth a prosperous result to the campaign. These 400 prophets are neither the 400 prophets of

Asherah who had not appeared upon Carmel when Elijah was there (1 Kings 18:19, 20), nor prophets of Baal, as some of the earlier commentators supposed, since Ahab could not inquire of them אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה. On the other hand, they were not “true prophets of Jehovah and disciples of the prophets” (Cler., Then.), but prophets of Jehovah worshipped under the image of an ox, who practised prophesying as a trade without any call from God, and even if they were not in the pay of the idolatrous kings of Israel, were at any rate in their service. For Jehoshaphat did not recognise them as genuine prophets of Jehovah, but inquired whether there was not such a prophet still in existence (v. 7), that they might inquire the will of the Lord of him (מֵאוֹתוֹ).

1 Kings 22:8. Ahab then named to him one, but one whom he hated, because he never prophesied good concerning him, but only evil,⁹⁶ namely, *Micah* the son of Jimlah. Josephus and the Rabbins suppose him to have been the prophet, whose name is not given, who had condemned Ahab in the previous war for setting Benhadad at liberty (1 Kings 20:35ff.). But there is no foundation for this, and it is mere conjecture. At any rate, Ahab had already come to know Micah as a prophet of evil, and, as is evident from v. 26, had had him imprisoned on account of an unwelcome prophecy. Ahab’s dislike to this prophet had its root in the belief, which was connected with heathen notions of prophecy and conjuring, that the prophets stood in such a relation to the Deity that the latter necessarily fulfilled their will; a belief which had arisen from the fact that the predictions of true prophets always came to pass (see at Num. 22:6 and 17).

1 Kings 22:9. By Jehoshaphat’s desire, Ahab nevertheless sent a chamberlain (סָרִיס; see at 1 Sam. 8:15 and Gen. 37:36) to fetch Micah (מִיָּהּ, bring quickly).

1 Kings 22:10–12. In the meantime the prophets of the calves continued to prophesy success before the two kings, who sat upon thrones “clothed in robes,” i.e., in royal attire,

upon a floor in front of the gate of Samaria. תַּרְגָּו, a threshing-floor, i.e., a levelled place in the open air. In order to give greater effect to their announcement, one of them, named *Zedekiyah* the son of Cnaanah, made himself iron horns, probably iron spikes held upon the head (Thenius), and said, "With these wilt thou thrust down Aram even to destruction." This symbolical action was an embodiment of the figure used by Moses in the blessing of Joseph (Deut. 33:17): "Buffalo horns are his (Joseph's) horns, with them he thrusts down nations" (vid., Hengstenberg, *Beitrr.* ii. p. 131), and was intended to transfer to Ahab in the case before them that splendid promise which applied to the tribe of Ephraim. But the pseudo-prophet overlooked the fact that the fulfilment of the whole of the blessing of Moses was dependent upon fidelity to the Lord. All the rest of the prophets adopted the same tone, saying, "Go to Ramoth, and prosper," i.e., and thou wilt prosper. (On this use of two imperatives see Ges. § 130, 2).

1 Kings 22:13, 14. The messenger who fetched Micah tried on the way to persuade him to prophesy success to the king as the other prophets had done; but Micah replied with a solemn oath, that he would only speak what Jehovah said to him.

1 Kings 22:15–28. *Micah's prophecy concerning the war, and his testimony against the lying prophets.*—Vv. 15, 16. When Micah had come into the presence of the king, he replied to his question, "Shall we go against Ramoth?" etc., in just the same words as the pseudo-prophets, to show the king how he would speak if he were merely guided by personal considerations, as the others were. From the verbal agreement in his reply, and probably also from the tone in which he spoke, Ahab perceived that his words were ironical, and adjured him to speak only truth in the name of Jehovah. Micah then told him what he had seen in the spirit (v. 17): "I saw all Israel scatter itself upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd;" and then added the word of the Lord: "These have no master; let them return every one to his house

in peace." That is to say, Ahab would fall in the war against Ramoth in Gilead, and his army scatter itself without a leader upon the mountains of Gilead, and then every one would return home, without being pursued and slain by the enemy. Whilst Zedekiyah attempted to give greater emphasis to his prophecy by symbolically transferring to Ahab's enterprise the success predicted by Moses, Micah, on the other hand, showed to the king out of the law that would really take place in the intended war, namely, that very state of things which Moses before his departure sought to avert from Israel, by the prayer that the Lord would set a man over the congregation to lead them out and in, that the congregation might not become as sheep that have no shepherd (Num. 27:16, 17).

1 Kings 22:18. But although Ahab had asked for a true word of the Lord, yet he endeavoured to attribute the unfavourable prophecy to Micah's persona enmity, saying to Jehoshaphat, "Did I not tell thee that he prophesies nothing good concerning me, but only evil (misfortune)?"

1 Kings 22:19ff. Micah was not led astray, however, by this, but disclosed to him by a further revelation the hidden ground of the false prophecy of his 400 prophets. לָכֵן שָׁמַע וגו', "therefore, sc. because thou thinkest so, hear the word of Jehovah: I saw the Lord sit upon His throne, and all the army of heaven stand around him (עָמַד עָלָיו as in Gen. 18:8, etc.) on His right hand and on His left. And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? and one spake so, the other so; and the spirit came forth (from the ranks of the rest), stood before Jehovah, and said, I will persuade him ... I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And He (Jehovah) said, Persuade, and thou wilt also be able; go forth and do so. And now Jehovah has put a lying spirit into the mouth of all his prophets; but Jehovah (Himself) has spoken evil (through me) concerning thee." The vision described by Micah was not merely a subjective drapery introduced by the prophet, but a

simple communication of the real inward vision by which the fact had been revealed to him, that the prophecy of those 400 prophets was inspired by a lying spirit. The spirit (הַרוּחַ) which inspired these prophets as a lying spirit is neither Satan, nor any evil spirit whatever, but, as the definite article and the whole of the context show, the personified spirit of prophecy, which is only so far a πνεῦμα ἀκάθαρτον τῆς πλάνης (Zech. 13:2; 1 John 4:6) and under the influence of Satan as it works as רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר in accordance with the will of God. For even the predictions of the false prophets, as we may see from the passage before us, and also from Zech. 13:2 and the scriptural teaching in other passages concerning the spiritual principle of evil, were not mere inventions of human reason and fancy; but the false prophets as well as the true were governed by a supernatural spiritual principle, and, according to divine appointment, were under the influence of the evil spirit in the service of falsehood, just as the true prophets were moved by the Holy Spirit in the service of the Lord. The manner in which the supernatural influence of the lying spirit upon the false prophets is brought out in Micah's vision is, that the spirit of prophecy (רוּחַ הַנְּבוּאָה) offers itself to deceive Ahab as רוּחַ שֶׁקֶר in the false prophets. Jehovah sends this spirit, inasmuch as the deception of Ahab has been inflicted upon him as a judgment of God for his unbelief. But there is no statement here to the effect that this lying spirit proceeded from Satan, because the object of the prophet was simply to bring out the working of God in the deception practised upon Ahab by his prophets.—The words of Jehovah, "Persuade Ahab, thou wilt be able," and "Jehovah has put a lying spirit," etc., are not to be understood as merely expressing the permission of God, as the fathers and the earlier theologians suppose. According to the Scriptures, God does work evil, but without therefore willing it and bringing forth sin. The prophet's view is founded upon this thought: Jehovah has ordained that Ahab, being led astray by a prediction of his prophets inspired

by the spirit of lies, shall enter upon the war, that he may find therein the punishment of his ungodliness. As he would not listen to the word of the Lord in the mouth of His true servants, God had given him up (παρέδωκεν, Rom. 1:24, 26, 28) in his unbelief to the working of the spirits of lying. But that this did not destroy the freedom of the human will is evident from the expression תַּפְתֵּהוּ, "thou canst persuade him," and still more clearly from גַּם תּוּכַל, "thou wilt also be able," since they both presuppose the possibility of resistance to temptation on the part of man.

Zedekiah was so enraged at this unveiling of the spirit of lying by which the pseudo-prophets were impelled, that he smote Micah upon the cheek, and said (v. 24): "Where did the Spirit of Jehovah depart from me, to speak to thee?" To אֵי-יָזָה the Chronicles add as an explanation, הֵדְדָה: "by what way had he gone from me?" (cf. 2 Kings 3:8, and Ewald, § 326, a.) Zedekiah was conscious that he had not invented his prophecy himself, and therefore it was that he rose up with such audacity against Micah; but he only proved that it was not the Spirit of God which inspired him. If he had been inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, he would not have thought it necessary to try and give effect to his words by rude force, but he would have left the defence of his cause quietly to the Lord, as Micah did, who calmly replied to the zealot thus (v. 25): "Thou wilt see it (that the Spirit of Jehovah had departed from thee) on the day when thou shalt go from chamber to chamber to hide thyself" (הֶחֱבֵה for הֶחֱבֵה, see Ges. § 75, Anm. 21). This was probably fulfilled at the close of the war, when Jezebel or the friends of Ahab made the pseudo-prophets suffer for the calamitous result; although there is nothing said about this in our history, which confines itself to the main facts.

1 Kings 22:26, 27. But Ahab had Micah taken back to Amon the commander of the city, and to Joash the king's son, with the command to put him in prison and to feed him with bread and water of affliction, till he came safe back

(בְּשָׁלוֹם) from the war. From the expression הַשִּׁבְרֵהוּ, “lead him back,” it evidently follows that Micah had been fetched from the commander of the city, who had no doubt kept him in custody, as the city-prison was probably in his house. The opposite cannot be inferred from the words “put him into the prison;” for this command, when taken in connection with what follows, simply enjoins a more severe imprisonment.

1 Kings 22:28. In his consciousness of the divine truth of his announcement, Micah left the king with these words: “If thou come back safe, Jehovah has not spoken by me. Hear it, all ye nations.” עַמִּים does not mean people, for it is only in the antique language of the Pentateuch that the word has this meaning, but nations; and Micah thereby invokes not only the persons present as witnesses of the truth of his words, but the nations generally, Israel and the surrounding nations, who were to discern the truth of his word from the events which would follow (see at Mic. 1:2).

1 Kings 22:29–40. *The issue of the war, and death of Ahab.*—V. 29. Ahab, disregarding Micah’s prophecy, went on with the expedition, and was even joined by Jehoshaphat, of whom we should have thought that, after what had occurred, he at any rate would have drawn back. He was probably deterred by false shame, however, from retracting the unconditional promise of help which he had given to Ahab, merely in consequence of a prophetic utterance, which Ahab had brought against his own person from Micah’s subjective dislike. But Jehoshaphat narrowly escaped paying the penalty for it with his life (v. 32), and on his fortunate return to Jerusalem had to listen to a severe reproof from the prophet Jehu in consequence (2 Chron. 19:2).

1 Kings 22:30, 31. And even Ahab could not throw off a certain fear of the fulfilment of Micah’s prophecy. He therefore resolved to go to the battle in disguise, that he might not be recognised by the enemy. הִתְחַפֵּשׂ וָבָא (“disguise myself and go into the battle,” i.e., I will go into

the battle in disguise): an *infin. absol.*,—a broken but strong form of expression, which is frequently used for the imperative, but very rarely for the first person of the voluntative (cf. Ewald, § 328, c.), and which is probably employed here to express the anxiety that impelled Ahab to take so much trouble to ensure his own safety. (Luther has missed the meaning in his version; in the Chronicles, on the contrary, it is correctly given.) וְאַתָּה לְבַשׁ, “but do thou put on thy clothes.” These words are not to be taken as a command, but simply in this sense: “thou mayest (canst) put on thy (royal) dress, since there is no necessity for thee to take any such precautions as I have to take.” There is no ground for detecting any cunning, *vafrities*, on the part of Ahab in these words, as some of the older commentators have done, as though he wished thereby to divert the predicted evil from himself to Jehoshaphat. but we may see very clearly that Ahab had good reason to be anxious about his life, from the command of the Syrian king to the captains of his war-chariots (v. 31) to fight chiefly against the king of Israel. We cannot infer from this, however, that Ahab was aware of the command. The measure adopted by him may be sufficiently accounted for from his fear of the fulfilment of Micah’s evil prophecy, to which there may possibly have been added some personal offence that had been given on his part to the Syrian king in connection with the negotiations concerning the surrender of Ramoth, which had no doubt preceded the war. The thirty-two commanders of the war-chariots and cavalry are, no doubt, the commanders who had taken the place of the thirty-two kings (1 Kings 21:24). “Fight not against small and great, but against the king of Israel only,” i.e., endeavour above all others to fight against the king of Israel and to slay him.

1 Kings 22:32, 33. And when the leaders of the war-chariots saw Jehoshaphat in the battle in his royal clothes, they took him for the king of Israel (Ahab), and pressed upon him. Then Jehoshaphat cried out; and from this they perceived that he was not the king of Israel, and

turned away from him. וְהֵמָּה אָמְרוּ אֵד וּגוּ, “and they thought, it is only (i.e., no other than) the king of Israel.” יָסְרוּ עָלָיו, “they bent upon him.” Instead of this we have in the Chronicles יִסְבוּ עָלָיו, “they surrounded him,” and Thenius proposes to alter our text to this; but there is no necessity for doing so, as סוּר also occurs in a similar sense and connection in 1 Kings 20:39. How far Jehoshaphat was saved by his crying out, is not precisely stated. He probably cried out to his followers to come to his aid, from which the Syrians discovered that he was not the king of Israel, whom they were in search of. The chronicler adds (1 Kings 2:18, 31): “and the Lord helped him and turned them off from him;” thus believingly tracing the rescue of the king to its higher causality, though without our having any right to infer from this that Jehoshaphat cried aloud to God for help, which is not implied in the words of the Chronicles.

1 Kings 22:34. But notwithstanding the precaution he had taken, Ahab did not escape the judgment of God. “A man drew his bow in his simplicity” (לְתִמּוֹ as in 2 Sam. 15:11), i.e., without trying to hit any particular man, “and shot the king of Israel between the skirts and the coat of mail.” דְּבָקִים are “joints by which the iron thorax was attached to the hanging skirt, which covered the abdomen” (Cler.). The true coat of mail covered only the breast, to somewhere about the last rib; and below this it had an appendage (skirts) consisting of moveable joints. Between this appendage and the true coat of mail there was a groove through which the arrow passed, and, entering the abdomen, inflicted upon the king a mortal wound; so that he said to his charioteer: הִפֵּךְ יָדַי, *verte manus tuas*, i.e., turn round (cf. 2 Kings 9:23). The *Chethib* יָדַי (plural) is the only correct reading, since the driver held the reins in both his hands. כִּי הִחַלֵּיתִי: for I am wounded.

1 Kings 22:35. “And the conflict ascended,” i.e., became more violent. The use of the verb עָלָה in

this sense may be accounted for on the supposition that it is founded upon the figure of a rising stream, which becomes more and more impetuous the higher it rises (vid., Isa. 8:7). “And the king was stationed (i.e., remained or kept himself in an upright posture) upon the chariot before the Syrians,” that he might not dishearten his soldiers, “and died in the evening, and poured the blood of the wounds in the middle hollow (חֵיק) of the chariot.”

1 Kings 22:36. Towards sunset the cry went through the army (הַמַּחֲנֶה, the army drawn up in battle array), “Every one into his city and into his land!”—In v. 37 the historian shows how the word of the Lord was fulfilled in the case of Ahab. “Thus the king died and came to Samaria:” equivalent to, thus the king reached Samaria dead; and he was buried there.

1 Kings 22:38. When they washed the chariot at the pool of Samaria, the dogs licked his blood, while the harlots were bathing (in the pool). וְהִזְנוֹת רְחֻצוּ is a circumstantial clause, and רָחַץ means to bathe, as in Ex. 2:5. This explanation, which is sustained by the grammar and is the only tenable one, disposes of the several arbitrary interpretations of these words, together with the emendations of the text of which Thenius is so fond. In this way was the word of the Lord through Elijah (1 Kings 21:19) and the unknown prophet (1 Kings 20:42) fulfilled; also the prediction of Micah (v. 17). Ahab had paid the penalty with his own life for sparing the life of Benhadad (1 Kings 20:42), and his blood was licked up by the dogs (1 Kings 21:19). The fact that the dogs licked up the blood and the harlots were bathing in the pool, when the chariot that was stained with the blood of Ahab was being washed, is mentioned as a sign of the ignominious contempt which was heaped upon him at his death.

1 Kings 22:39, 40. Close of Ahab’s history. We have no further account of his buildings. “The ivory palace,” i.e., the palace inlaid with ivory, he had probably built in his capital Samaria (cf. Amos 3:15).

1 Kings 22:41–50. Reign of Jehoshaphat of Judah.—The account of this in the books before us is a very condensed one. Beside the two campaigns in which he joined with Ahab and Joram of Israel against the Syrians and Moabites, and which are described in the history of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings 22:1–35 and 2 Kings 3), we have simply a short notice of his attempt to restore the trade with Ophir, and a general statement of the spirit of his reign; whereas we learn from the extract preserved in the Chronicles from the annals of the kings, that he also carried on a victorious war against the Edomites and Ammonites (2 Chron. 20), and did a great deal to promote the spread of the knowledge of the law among his people, and to carry out the restoration of a better administration of justice, and to improve the condition of the army (2 Chron. 16 and 19).

1 Kings 22:41–44. Vv. 41–44, which give the age of Jehoshaphat when he ascended the throne, and the duration and character of his reign, are also found with slight deviations in 2 Chron. 20:31–33, in the closing summary of the history of his reign.

1 Kings 22:43. “He walked entirely in the way of his father Asa and departed not from it, to do what was well-pleasing to the Lord,” whereas Asa’s heart had become more estranged from the Lord in the last years of his reign (see 1 Kings 15:18ff.).—On the worship of the high places (v. 43), see at 1 Kings 15:14.

1 Kings 22:44. He maintained peace with the king of Israel, i.e., with every one of the Israelitish kings who were contemporaneous with him, viz., Ahab, Ahaziah, and Joram, whereas hitherto the two kingdoms had assumed an attitude of hostility towards each other. Even if this friendly bearing towards Israel was laudable in itself, Jehoshaphat went beyond the bounds of what was allowable, since he formed a marriage alliance with the house of Ahab, by letting his son Joram marry a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel (2 Chron. 18:1).

1 Kings 22:45. The brave deeds (הַגְּבוּרָה) which he performed include both his efforts to strengthen his kingdom, partly by raising

fortifications and organizing the military force, and partly by instructing the people in the law and improving the administration of justice (2 Chron. 17:7–19 and 19:4–11), and also the wars which he waged, viz., the expeditions already mentioned.—For v. 46 see 1 Kings 15:12.

1 Kings 22:47. “There was (then) no (real) king in Edom; a vicegerent was king,” i.e., governed the country. This remark is introduced here merely on account of what follows, namely, to show how it was that Jehoshaphat was able to attempt to restore the maritime trade with Ophir. If we observe this connection between the verse before us and what follows, we cannot infer from it, as Ewald does (*Gesch.* iii. pp. 464 and 474ff.), that the Edomites with Egyptian help had forced from Rehoboam both their liberty and also their right to have a king of their own blood, and had remained in this situation till Jehoshaphat completely subjugated them again. (See the remarks on 1 Kings 11:21, 22.) All that can be gathered from 2 Chron. 20 is, that the Edomites, in league with the Ammonites and other desert tribes, made an incursion into Judah, and therefore tried to throw off the supremacy of Judah, but did not succeed in their attempt.

1 Kings 22:48, 49. The brief notice concerning Jehoshaphat’s attempt to build Tarshish ships (for the word, see pp. 105f) for the voyage to Ophir is expanded in 2 Chron. 20:36, 37, where we learn that Jehoshaphat had allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for this purpose, and that the prophet Eliezer predicted the destruction of his ships on account of this alliance. When the ships had been broken in pieces in Eziongeber, no doubt by a storm, Ahaziah made this fresh proposal to him: “Let my people sail with thy people;” but Jehoshaphat would not. Ahaziah evidently wanted to persuade Jehoshaphat to make another attempt, after the destruction of the ships which were first built; but Jehoshaphat did not agree to it any more, because it was impossible for him, after the fulfilment of Eliezer’s prediction, to expect a more favourable result. Thus the two accounts can be harmonized in a very simple manner,

with the exception of the words “to go to Tarshish,” which we find in the Chronicles in the place of “to go to Ophir,” the reading in our text, and which sprang from an erroneous interpretation of the expression “ships of Tarshish” (see above, pp. 105f). The *Chethîb* עֶשֶׂר is an error of the pen for קֶרִי (*Keri*); but נִשְׁבְּרָה (*Chethîb*) is not to be altered into נִשְׁבְּרוּ, since the construction of a singular verb with the subject following in the plural is by no means rare (vid., Ewald, § 317, a.). On Eziongeber and Ophir, see at 1 Kings 9:26 and 28.

1 Kings 22:51–53. Reign of Ahaziah of Israel.—V. 51. For the *datum* “in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat,” see at 2 Kings 1:17.

1 Kings 22:52, 53. Ahaziah walked in the way of his father and his mother, who had introduced the worship of Baal into the kingdom, and in the way of Jeroboam, who had set up the calves (cf. 1 Kings 16:30–33).—In v. 53 it is again expressly added, that he adored and worshipped Baal, as in 1 Kings 16:31.—With this general description of his character not only is the chapter brought to a close, but the first book of Kings also,—very unsuitably, however, since the further account of Ahaziah’s reign and of his death is given in 1 Kings 1 of the following book. It would have been incomparably more suitable to commence a fresh chapter with v. 52, and indeed to commence the second book there also.