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Second Chronicles

From Commentary on the Old Testament

C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud

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2 Chronicles - Keil and Delitzsch

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2 Chronicles

History of Solomon's Kingship.—Ch. 1–9.

2 Chronicles 1–9. The kingship of Solomon centres in the building of the temple of the Lord, and the account of that begins in 2 Chronicles 2 with a statement of the preparations which Solomon made for the accomplishment of this great work, so much pressed upon him by his father, and concludes in 2 Chronicles 7 with the answer which the Lord gave to his consecrating prayer in a vision. In 2 Chronicles 1, before the history of the temple building, we have an account of the sacrifice at Gibeon by which Solomon inaugurated his reign (v. 1–13), with some short notices of his power and riches (vv. 14–17); and in 2 Chronicles 8 and 9, after the temple building, we have summary statements about the palaces and cities which he built (2 Chronicles 8:1–11), the arrangement of the regular religious service (vv. 12–16), the voyage to Ophir (vv. 17 and 18), the visit of the queen of Sheba (2 Chronicles 9:1–12), his riches and his royal magnificence and glory (vv. 13–28), with the concluding notices of the duration of his reign, and of his death (vv. 29, 30). If we compare with this the description of Solomon's reign in 1 Kings 1–11, we find that in the Chronicle not only are the narratives of his accession to the throne in consequence of Adonijah's attempted usurpation, and his confirming his kingdom by punishing the revolter (1 Kings 1 and 2), of his marriage to the Egyptian princess (2 Chronicles 3:1 and 2), his wise judgment (2 Chronicles 3:16–28), his public officers, his official men, his royal magnificence and glory (1 Kings 4:1–5:14), omitted, but also the accounts of the building of his palace (1 Kings 7:1–12), of his idolatry, and of the adversaries who rose against him (1 Kings 11:1–40). On the other hand, the description of the building and consecration of the temple is supplemented by various important details which are omitted from the first book of Kings. Hence it is clear that the author of the Chronicle purposed only to

portray more exactly the building of the house of God, and has only shortly touched upon all the other undertakings of this wise and fortunate king.

2 Chronicles 1

Ch. 1:1–17.—Solomon's Sacrifice, and the Theophany at Gibeon. Chariots, Horses, and Riches of Solomon.

2 Chronicles 1:1–13. *The sacrifice at Gibeon, and the theophany.*—Vv. 1–6. When Solomon had established himself upon his throne, he went with the princes and representatives of the congregation of Israel to Gibeon, to seek for the divine blessing upon his reign by a solemn sacrifice to be offered there before the tabernacle. V. 1 forms, as it were, the superscription of the account of Solomon's reign which follows. In וַיִּתְחַזַּק וַיִּגְרַ = Solomon established himself in his kingdom, i.e., he became strong and mighty in his kingdom, the older commentators saw a reference to the defeat of Adonijah, the pretender to the crown, and his followers (1 Kings 2). But this view of the words is too narrow; we find the same remark made of other kings whose succession to the throne had not been questioned (cf. 12:13; 13:21; 17:1, and 21:4), and the remark refers to the whole reign,—to all that Solomon undertook in order to establish a firm dominion, not merely to his entry upon it. With this view of the words, the second clause, "his God was with him, and made him very great," coincides. God gave His blessing to all that Solomon did for this end. With the last words cf. 1 Chronicles 29:25.

We have an account of the sacrifice at Gibeon (vv. 7–13) in 1 Kings 3:4–15 also. The two narratives agree in all the main points, but, in so far as their form is concerned, it is at once discernible that they are two independent descriptions of the same thing, but derived from the same sources. In 1 Kings 3 the theophany—in our text, on the contrary, that aspect of the sacrifice which connected it with the public worship—is more circumstantially

narrated. While in 1 Kings 3:4 it is briefly said the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, our historian records that Solomon summoned the princes and representatives of the people to this solemn act, and accompanied by them went to Gibeon. This sacrifice was no mere private sacrifice,—it was the religious consecration of the opening of his reign, at which the estates of the kingdom were present as a matter of course. “All Israel” is defined by “the princes over the thousands ..., the judges, and all the honourable,” then לְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל is again taken up and explained by the apposition רָאשֵׁי הָאָבוֹת: to all Israel, viz., the heads of the fathers’-houses. לְ is to be repeated before רָאשֵׁי. What Solomon said to all Israel through its representatives, is not communicated; but it may be gathered from what succeeds, that he summoned them to accompany him to Gibeon to offer the sacrifice. The reason why he offered his sacrifice at the בְּמָה, i.e., place of sacrifice, is given in v. 3f. There the Mosaic tabernacle stood, yet without the ark, which David had caused to be brought up from Kirjath-jearim to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13 and 15f.). In לוֹ בְּהֵכֵן the article בְּ represents the relative בְּאֶשֶׁר = בְּאֶשֶׁר or בְּמָקוֹם בְּאֶשֶׁר הֵכֵן לוֹ; cf. Jud. 5:27, Ruth 1:16, 1 Kings 21:19; see on 1 Chronicles 26:28. Although the ark was separated from the tabernacle, yet by the latter at Gibeon was the Mosaic altar of burnt-offering, and on that account the sanctuary at Gibeon was Jahve’s dwelling, and the legal place of worship for burnt-offerings of national-theocratic import. “As our historian here brings forward emphatically the fact that Solomon offered his burnt-offering at the legal place of worship, so he points out in 1 Chronicles 21:28–30:1, how David was only brought by extraordinary events, and special signs from God, to sacrifice on the altar of burnt-offering erected by him on the threshing-floor of Ornan, and also states how he was prevented from offering his burnt-offering in Gibeon” (Berth.). As to Bezaleel, the maker of the brazen altar, cf. Ex. 31:2 and 37:1. Instead of

אֶשֶׁר, which most manuscripts and many editions have before לְפָנַי, and which the Targ. and Syr. also express, there is found in most editions of the 16th century, and also in manuscripts, אֶשֶׁר, which the LXX and Vulgate also read. The reading אֶשֶׁר is unquestionably better and more correct, and the Masoretic pointing אֶשֶׁר, *posuit*, has arisen by an undue assimilation of it to Ex. 40:29. The suffix in יִדְרֶשְׁהוּ does not refer to the altar, but to the preceding word יהוה; cf. דְּרֶשׁ אֱלֹהִים, 1 Chronicles 21:30; 15:13, etc.

2 Chronicles 1:7–13. The theophany, cf. 1 Kings 3:5–15. In that night, i.e., on the night succeeding the day of the sacrifice. The appearance of God by night points to a dream, and in 1 Kings 35:15 we are expressly informed that He appeared in a vision. Solomon’s address to God, vv. 8–10, is in 1 Kings 5:6–10 given more at length. The mode of expression brings to mind 1 Chronicles 17:23, and recurs in 2 Chronicles 6:17, 1 Kings 8:26. מִדַּע, with Pathach in the second syllable, elsewhere מִדַּע (vv. 11, 12), occurs elsewhere only in Dan. 1:4, 17, Eccles. 10:20.

2 Chronicles 1:11, 12. The divine promise. Here עֲשֶׂה is strengthened by the addition וְנִכְסִים, treasures (Josh. 22:8; Eccles. 5:18; 6:2). אֶשֶׁר תִּשְׁפֹּט, *ut judicare possis*. In general, the mode of expression is briefer than in 1 Kings 3:11–13, and the conditional promise, “long life” (1 Kings 3:14), is omitted, because Solomon did not fulfil the condition, and the promise was not fulfilled. In v. 13 לְבָמָה is unintelligible, and has probably come into our text only by a backward glance at v. 3, instead of מִהַבְּמָה, which the contents demand, and as the LXX and Vulgate have rightly translated it. The addition, “from before the tabernacle,” which seems superfluous after the preceding “from the Bamah at Gibeon,” is inserted in order again to point to the place of sacrifice at Gibeon, and to the legal validity of the sacrifices offered there (Berth.). According

to 1 Kings 3:15, Solomon, on his return to Jerusalem, offered before the ark still other burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, and prepared a meal for his servants. This is omitted by the author of the Chronicle, because these sacrifices had no ultimate import for Solomon's reign, and not, as Then, supposes, because in his view only the sacrifices offered on the ancient brazen altar of burnt-offering belonging to the temple had legal validity. For he narrates at length in 1 Chronicles 21:18, 26ff. how God Himself directed David to sacrifice in Jerusalem, and how the sacrifice offered there was graciously accepted by fire from heaven, and the threshing-floor of Araunah thereby consecrated as a place of sacrifice; and it is only with the purpose of explaining to his readers why Solomon offered the solemn burnt-offering in Gibeon, and not, as we should have expected from 1 Chronicles 21, in Jerusalem, that he is so circumstantial in his statements as to the tabernacle. The last clause of v. 13, "and he was king over Israel," does not belong to the section treating of the sacrifice at Gibeon, but corresponds to the remark in 1 Kings 4:1, and forms the transition to what follows.

2 Chronicles 1:14–17. *Solomon's chariots, horses, and riches.*—In order to prove by facts the fulfilment of the divine promise which Solomon received in answer to his prayer at Gibeon, we have in 1 Kings 3:16–28 a narrative of Solomon's wise judgment, then in 2 Chronicles 4 an account of his public officers; and in 2 Chronicles 5:1–14 the royal magnificence, glory, and wisdom of his reign is further portrayed. In our Chronicle, on the contrary, we have in vv. 14–17 only a short statement as to his chariots and horses, and the wealth in silver and gold to be found in the land, merely for the purpose of showing how God had given him riches and possessions. This statement recurs verbally in 1 Kings 10:26–29, in the concluding remarks on the riches and splendour of Solomon's reign; while in the parallel passage, 2 Chronicles 9:13–28, it is repeated in an abridged form, and interwoven with other statements. From this we see in how

free and peculiar a manner the author of the Chronicle has made use of his authorities, and how he has arranged the material derived from them according to his own special plan.¹ For the commentary on this section, see on 1 Kings 10:26–28.

2 Chronicles 1:14, 15. Vv. 14, 15, with the exception of one divergence in form and one in matter, correspond word for word to 1 Kings 10:26 and 27. Instead of וַיָּנִיחָם, he led them (Kings), there stands in v. 15, as in 9:25, the more expressive word וַיִּנְיָחָם, "he laid them" in the chariot cities; and in v. 15 וְאֶת־הַזָּהָב is added to אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף, while it is omitted from both 1 Kings 10:27 and also 2 Chronicles 9:27. It is, however, very suitable in this connection, since the comparison "like stones" has reference to quantity, and Solomon had collected not only silver, but also gold, in quantity.

2 Chronicles 1:16, 17. Vv. 16, 17 coincide with 1 Kings 10:28, 29, except that מְקָרָא is used for מְקוֹה, and וַתַּעֲלֶה וַתַּצַּא is altered into וַיִּצְיָאוּ וַיִּעֲלֶה. For the commentary on these verses, see 1 Kings 10:28f.

Ch. 1:18–2:17. Solomon's Preparations for the Building of the Temple. (Cf. 1 Kings 5:15–32.)

2 Chronicles 1:18–2:17. The account of these is introduced by 1:18: "Solomon thought to build." אָמַר with an infinitive following does not signify here to command one to do anything, as e.g., in 1 Chronicles 21:17, but to purpose to do something, as e.g., in 1 Kings 5:19. For לְשֵׁם יְהוָה, see on 1 Kings 5:17. בַּיֵּת לְמַלְכוּתוֹ, house for his kingdom, i.e., the royal palace. The building of this palace is indeed shortly spoken of in 2:11; 7:11, and 8:1, but is not in the Chronicle described in detail as in 1 Kings 7:1–12.

2 Chronicles 2

2 Chronicles 2:1. With 2 Chronicles 2:1 begins the account of the preparations which Solomon made for the erection of these buildings, especially of the temple building, accompanied

by a statement that the king caused all the workmen of the necessary sort in his kingdom to be numbered. There follows thereafter an account of the negotiations with King Hiram of Tyre in regard to the sending of a skilful architect, and of the necessary materials, such as cedar wood and hewn stones, from Lebanon (vv. 2–15); and, in conclusion, the statements as to the levying of the statute labourers of Israel (v. 1) are repeated and rendered more complete (vv. 16, 17). If we compare the parallel account in 1 Kings 5:15–32, we find that Solomon's negotiation with Hiram about the proposed buildings is preceded (v. 15) by a notice, that Hiram, after he had heard of Solomon's accession, had sent him an embassy to congratulate him. This notice is omitted in the Chronicle, because it was of no importance in the negotiations which succeeded. In the account of Solomon's negotiation with Hiram, both narratives (Chronicles vv. 2–15 and 1 Kings 5:16–26) agree in the main, but differ in form so considerably, that it is manifest that they are free adaptations of one common original document, quite independent of each other, as has been already remarked on 1 Kings 5:15. On v. 1 see further on v. 16f.

2 Chronicles 2:2–9. Solomon, through his ambassadors, addressed himself to Hiram king of Tyre, with the request that he would send him an architect and building wood for the temple. On the Tyrian king Hiram or Hiram, the contemporary of David and Solomon, see the discussion on 2 Sam. 5:11. According to the account in 1 Kings 5, Solomon asked cedar wood from Lebanon from Hiram; according to our account, which is more exact, he desired an architect, and cedar, cypress, and other wood. In 1 Kings 5 the motive of Solomon's request is given in the communication to Hiram, viz., that David could not carry out the building of the proposed temple on account of his wars, but that Jahve had given him (Solomon) rest and peace, so that he now, in accordance with the divine promise to David, desired to carry on the building (vv. 17–19). In the Chronicles vv. 2–5, on the contrary, Solomon reminds the Tyrian king of the friendliness with which he had

supplied his father David with cedar wood for his palace, and then announces to him his purpose to build a temple to the Lord, at the same time stating that it was designed for the worship of God, whom the heavens and the earth cannot contain. It is clear, therefore, that both authors have expanded the fundamental thoughts of their authority in somewhat freer fashion. The apodosis of the clause beginning with כָּאֲשֶׁר is wanting, and the sentence is an anacolouthon. The apodosis should be: "do so also for me, and send me cedars." This latter clause follows in vv. 6, 7, while the first can easily be supplied, as is done e.g., in the Vulg., by *sic fac mecum*.

2 Chronicles 2:3. "Behold, I will build." הִנֵּה with a participle of that which is imminent, what one intends to do. לְהַקְדִּישׁ לוֹ, to sanctify (the house) to Him. The infinitive clause which follows (לְהַקְטִיר וּגו') defines more clearly the design of the temple. The temple is to be consecrated by worshipping Him there in the manner prescribed, by burning incense, etc. קִטְרֶת סַמִּים, incense of odours, Ex. 25:6, which was burnt every morning and evening on the altar of incense, Ex. 30:7f. The clauses which follow are to be connected by zeugma with לְהַקְטִיר, i.e., the verbs corresponding to the objects are to be supplied from הַקְטִיר: "and to spread the continual spreading of bread" (Ex. 25:30), and to offer burnt-offerings, as is prescribed in Num. 28 and 29. לְעוֹלָם זָאת וּגו', for ever is this enjoined upon Israel, cf. 1 Chronicles 23:31.

2 Chronicles 2:4. In order properly to worship Jahve by these sacrifices, the temple must be large, because Jahve is greater than all gods; cf. Ex. 18:11, Deut. 10:17.

2 Chronicles 2:5. No one is able (עָצַר בּוֹחַ) as in 1 Chronicles 29:14) to build a house in which this God could dwell, for the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him. These words are a reminiscence of Solomon's prayer (1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chronicles 6:18). How should I

(Solomon) be able to build Him a house, *scil.* that He should dwell therein? In connection with this, there then comes the thought: and that is not my purpose, but only to offer incense before Him will I build a temple. הַקִּטִּיר is used as *pars pro toto*, to designate the whole worship of the Lord. After this declaration of the purpose, there follows in v. 6 the request that he would send him for this end a skilful chief workman, and the necessary material, viz., costly woods. The chief workman was to be a man wise to work in gold, silver, etc. According to 2 Chronicles 4:11–16 and 1 Kings 7:13ff., he prepared the brazen and metal work, and the vessels of the temple; here, on the contrary, and in v. 13 also, he is described as a man who was skilful also in purple weaving, and in stone and wood work, to denote that he was an artificer who could take charge of all the artistic work connected with the building of the temple. To indicate this, all the costly materials which were to be employed for the temple and its vessels are enumerated. אַרְגָּמָן, the later form of אַרְגָּמָן, deep-red purple, see on Ex. 25:4. בְּרָמִיל, occurring only here, vv. 6, 13, and in 3:14, in the signification of the Heb. תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי, crimson or scarlet purple, see on Ex. 25:4. It is not originally a Hebrew word, but is probably derived from the Old-Persian, and has been imported, along with the thing itself, from Persia by the Hebrews. תְּבִלָּת, deep-blue purple, hyacinth purple, see on Ex. 25:4. פְּתִיחַ פְּתוּחִים, to make engraved work, and Ex. 28:9, 11, 36, and 39:6, of engraving precious stones, but used here, as כָּל־פְּתוּחַ, v. 13, shows, in the general signification of engraved work in metal or carved work in wood; cf. 1 Kings 6:29. לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם־הַחֲכָמִים depends upon לַעֲשׂוֹת: to work in gold ..., together with the wise (skilful) men which are with me in Judah. אֲשֶׁר הִכִּין, *quos comparavit*, cf. 1 Chronicles 28:21; 22:15.

2 Chronicles 2:7. The materials Hiram was to send were cedar, cypress, and alummim wood from Lebanon. אֲלֻגְמִים, v. 7 and 9:10, instead of

אֲלֻמְגִים, 1 Kings 10:11, probably means sandal wood, which was employed in the temple, according to 1 Kings 10:12, for stairs and musical instruments, and is therefore mentioned here, although it did not grow in Lebanon, but, according to 9:10 and 1 Kings 10:11, was procured at Ophir. Here, in our enumeration, it is inexactly grouped along with the cedars and cypresses brought from Lebanon.

2 Chronicles 2:8. The infinitive וְלִהְיוֹת cannot be regarded as the continuation of לְכָרוֹת, nor is it a continuation of the imperat. שְׁלַח לִי (v. 7), with the signification, “and let there be prepared for me” (Berth.). It is subordinated to the preceding clauses: send me cedars, which thy people who are skilful in the matter hew, and in that my servants will assist, in order, viz., to prepare me building timber in plenty (the ו is *explic*). On v. 8b cf. v. 4. The infin. abs. הִפְלֵא is used adverbially: “wonderfully” (Ew. § 280, c). In return, Solomon promises to supply the Tyrian workmen with grain, wine, and oil for their maintenance,—a circumstance which is omitted in 1 Kings 5:10; see on v. 14. לְחֹטְבֵים is more closely defined by לְכַרְתֵי הָעֵצִים, and לְ is the introductory לְ: “and behold, as to the hewers, the fellers of trees.” הָטַב, to hew (wood), and to dress it (Deut. 29:10; Josh. 9:21, 23), would seem to have been supplanted by הָצַב, which in vv. 1, 17 is used for it, and it is therefore explained by כָּרַת הָעֵצִים. “I will give wheat מְכוֹת to thy servants” (the hewers of wood). The word מְכוֹת gives no suitable sense; for “wheat of the strokes,” for threshed wheat, would be a very extraordinary expression, even apart from the facts that wheat, which is always reckoned by measure, is as a matter of course supposed to be threshed, and that no such addition is made use of with the barley. מְכוֹת is probably only an orthographical error for מְבִלָּת, food, as may be seen from 1 Kings 5:25.

2 Chronicles 2:10–15. *The answer of King Hiram; cf. 1 Kings 5:21–25.*—Hiram answered בְּכֹתֵב, in a writing, a letter, which he sent to Solomon. In 1 Kings 5:21 Hiram first expresses his joy at Solomon's request, because it was of importance to him to be on a friendly footing with the king of Israel. In the Chronicle his writing begins with the congratulation: because Jahve loveth His people, hath He made thee king over them. Cf. for the expression, 9:8 and 1 Kings 10:9. He then, according to both narratives, praises God that He has given David so wise a son. וַיֹּאמֶר, v. 11, means: then he said further. The praise of God is heightened in the Chronicle by Hiram's entering into Solomon's religious ideas, calling Jahve the Creator of heaven and earth. Then, further, בְּיָדְךָ הוֹרַם is strengthened by יוֹדֵעַ שְׂכָל וּבִינָה, having understanding and discernment; and this predicate is specially referred to Solomon's resolve to build a temple to the Lord. Then in v. 12f. he promises to send Solomon the artificer Hiram-Abi. On the title אָבִי, my father, i.e., minister, counsellor, and the descent of this man, cf. the commentary on 1 Kings 7:13, 14. In v. 13 of the Chronicle his artistic skill is described in terms coinciding with Solomon's wish in v. 6, only heightened by small additions. To the metals as materials in which he could work, there are added stone and wood work, and to the woven fabrics בּוּץ (byssus), the later word for שֵׁשׁ; and finally, to exhaust the whole, he is said to be able וְלַחֲשֹׁב כָּל-מַח, to devise all manner of devices which shall be put to him, as in Ex. 31:4, he being thus raised to the level of Bezaleel, the chief artificer of the tabernacle. עַם-יִשְׂרָאֵל is dependent upon לְעֵשׂוֹת, as in v. 6. The promise to send cedars and cypresses is for the sake of brevity here omitted, and only indirectly indicated in v. 15. In v. 14, however, it is mentioned that Hiram accepted the promised supply of grain, wine, and oil for the labourers; and v. 15 closes with the promise to fell the wood required in Lebanon, and to cause it to be sent in floats to Joppa (Jaffa), whence Solomon

could take it up to Jerusalem. The word צָרָךְ, "need," is a ἄπαξ λεγ. in the Old Testament, but is very common in Aramaic writings. רִפְסָדוֹת, "floats," too, occurs only here instead of דִּבְרוֹת, 1 Kings 5:23, and its etymology is unknown. If we compare vv. 12–15 with the parallel account in 1 Kings 5:22–25, we find that, besides Hiram's somewhat verbose promise to fell the desired quantity of cedars and cypresses on Lebanon, and to send them in floats by sea to the place appointed by Solomon, the latter contains a request from Hiram that Solomon would give him לְחֹם, maintenance for his house, and a concluding remark that Hiram sent Solomon cedar wood, while Solomon gave Hiram, year by year, 20,000 kor of wheat as food for his house, i.e., the royal household, and twenty kor beaten oil, that is, of the finest oil. In the book of Kings, therefore, the promised wages of grain, wine, and oil, which were sent to the Tyrian woodcutters, is passed over, and only the quantity of wheat and finest oil which Solomon gave to the Tyrian king for his household, year by year, in return for the timber sent, is mentioned. In the Chronicle, on the contrary, only the wages or payment to the woodcutters is mentioned, and the return made for the building timber is not spoken of; but there is no reason for bringing these two passages, which treat of different things, into harmony by alterations of the text. For further discussion of this and of the measures, see on 1 Kings 5:22.

2 Chronicles 2:16, 17. In vv. 16 and 17 the short statement in v. 1 as to Solomon's statute labourers is again taken up and expanded. Solomon caused all the men to be numbered who dwelt in the land of Israel as strangers, viz., the descendants of the Canaanites who were not exterminated, "according to the numbering (סְפָר) occurs only here) as his father David had numbered them." This remark refers to 1 Chronicles 22:2, where, however, it is only said that David commanded the strangers to be assembled. But as he caused them to be assembled in order to secure labourers for the building of the temple, he doubtless caused

them to be numbered; and to this reference is here made. The numbering gave a total of 153,000 men, of whom 70,000 were made bearers of burdens, 80,000 חֹצֵב, i.e., probably hewers of stone and wood בְּהָרָה, i.e., on Lebanon, and 3600 foremen or overseers over the workmen, לְהַעֲבִיד אֶת־הָעָם, to cause the people to work, that is, to hold them to their task. With this cf. 1 Kings 5:29f., where the number of the overseers is stated at 3300. This difference is explained by the fact that in the Chronicle the total number of overseers, of higher and lower rank, is given, while in the book of Kings only the number of overseers of the lower rank is given without the higher overseers. Solomon had in all 550 higher overseers of the builders (Israelite and Canaanite),—cf. 1 Kings 9:23; and of these, 250 were Israelites, who alone are mentioned in 2 Chronicles 8:10, while the remaining 300 were Canaanites. The total number of overseers is the same in both accounts—3850; who are divided in the Chronicle into 3600 Canaanitish and 250 Israelitish, in the book of Kings into 3300 lower and 550 higher overseers (see on 1 Kings 5:30). It is, moreover, stated in 1 Kings 5:27f. that Solomon had levied a force of 30,000 statute labourers from among the people of Israel, with the design that a third part of them, that is, 10,000 men, should labour alternately for a month at a time in Lebanon, looking after their own affairs at home during the two following months. This levy of workmen from among the people of Israel is not mentioned in the Chronicle.

2 Chronicles 3

Ch. 3–5:1. The Building of the Temple. (Cf. 1 Kings 6; 7:13–51.)

2 Chronicles 3:1–5:1. The description of the building begins with a statement of the place where and of the time when the temple was built (2 Chronicles 3:1, 2). Then follows an account of the proportions of the building, a description of the individual parts, commencing on the outside and advancing inwards. First we

have the porch (vv. 3, 4), then the house, i.e., the interior apartment or the holy place (vv. 5–7), then the holiest of all, and cherubim therein (vv. 8–13), and the veil of partition between the holy place and the most holy (v. 14). After that we have the furniture of the court, the pillars of the porch (vv. 15–17), the brazen altar (2 Chronicles 4:1), the brazen sea (2 Chronicles 4:2–5), the ten lavers (v. 6), the furniture of the holy place, candlesticks and tables (vv. 7, 8), and of the two courts (vv. 9, 10), and finally a summary enumeration of the brazen and golden utensils of the temple (vv. 11, 12). The description in 1 Kings 6 and 7 is differently arranged; the divine promise which Solomon received while the building was in progress, and a description of the building of the palace, being inserted: see on 1 Kings 6 and 7.

2 Chronicles 3. The building of the temple.—Vv. 1–3. The statements as to the place where the temple was built (v. 1) are found here only. Mount Moriah is manifestly the mountain in the land of Moriah where Abraham was to have sacrificed his son Isaac (Gen. 22:2), which had received the name הַמִּזְבֵּיחַ, i.e., “the appearance of Jahve,” from that event. It is the mountain which lies to the north-east of Zion, now called Haram after the most sacred mosque of the Mohammedans, which is built there; cf. Rosen, *das Haram von Jerusalem*, Gotha 1866. אֶשֶׁר נִרְאָה “אֶשֶׁר נִרְאָה” is usually translated: “which was pointed out to David his father.” But רָאָה has not in Niphal the signification “to be pointed out,” which is peculiar to the Hophal (cf. Ex. 25:40; 26:30, Deut. 4:35, etc.); it means only “to be seen,” “to let oneself be seen,” to appear, especially used of appearances of God. It cannot be shown to be anywhere used of a place which lets itself be seen, or appears to one. We must therefore translate: “on mount Moriah, where He had appeared to David his father.” The unexpressed subject יהוה is easily supplied from the context; and with בְּהָרָה אֶשֶׁר, “on the mountain where,” cf. בְּמִקוֹם אֶשֶׁר, Gen. 35:13f., and Ew. § 331, c, 3. אֶשֶׁר הַכֵּין is separated from

what precedes, and connected with what follows, by the Athnach under אָבִיּוֹ, and is translated, after the LXX, Vulg., and Syr., as a hyperbaton thus: "in the place where David had prepared," *scil.* the building of the temple by the laying up of the materials there (1 Chronicles 22:5; 29:2). But there are no proper analogies to such a hyperbaton, since Jer. 14:1 and 46:1 are differently constituted. Berth. therefore is of opinion that our text can only signify, "which temple he prepared on the place of David," and that this reading cannot be the original, because הָכִין occurs elsewhere only of David's activity in preparing for the building of the temple, and "place of David" cannot, without further ceremony, mean the place which David had chosen. He would therefore transpose the words thus: בְּמִקְוֹם אֲשֶׁר הָכִין דָּוִד. But this conjecture is by no means certain. In the first place, the mere transposition of the words is not sufficient; we must also alter בְּמִקְוֹם into מִמִּקְוֹם, to get the required sense; and, further, Bertheau's reasons are not conclusive. הָכִין means not merely to make ready for (*zurüsten*), to prepare, but also to make ready, make (*bereiten*), found e.g., 1 Kings 6:19, Ezra 3:3; and the frequent use of this word in reference to David's action in preparing for the building of the temple does not prove that it has this signification here also. The clause may be quite well translated, with J. J. Rambach: "*quam domum praeparavit (Salomo) in loco Davidis.*" The expression "David's place," for "place which David had fixed upon," cannot in this connection be misunderstood, but yet it cannot be denied that the clause is stiff and constrained if we refer it to אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה. We would therefore prefer to give up the Masoretic punctuation, and construe the words otherwise, connecting אֲשֶׁר הָכִין with the preceding thus: where Jahve had appeared to his father David, who had prepared (the house, i.e., the building of it), and make בְּמִקְוֹם ד' with the following designation of the place, to depend upon לְבָנוֹת

as a further explanation of the בְּהַר הַסֵּם, viz., in the place of David, i.e., on the place fixed by David on the threshing-floor of the Jebusite Ornan; cf. 1 Chronicles 21:18.—In v. 2 וַיְהִי לְבָנוֹת 2 is repeated in order to fix the time of the building. In 1 Kings 6:1 the time is fixed by its relation to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. בַּשְּׁנִי, which the older commentators always understood of the second day of the month, is strange. Elsewhere the day of the month is always designated by the cardinal number with the addition of לְחֹדֶשׁ or יוֹם, the month having been previously given. Berth. therefore considers בַּשְּׁנִי to be a gloss which has come into the text by a repetition of הַשְּׁנִי, since the LXX and Vulg. have not expressed it.

2 Chronicles 3:3. "And this is Solomon's founding, to build the house of God;" i.e., this is the foundation which Solomon laid for the building of the house of God. The infin. הוֹסֵד is used here and in Ezra 3:11

substantively. The measurements only of the length and breadth of the building are given; the height, which is stated in 1 Kings 6:2, is omitted here. The former, i.e., the ancient measurement, is the Mosaic or sacred cubit, which, according to Ezek. 40:5 and 43:13, was a handbreadth longer than the civil cubit of the earlier time; see on 1 Kings 6:2.

2 Chronicles 3:4–7. *The porch and the interior of the holy place.*—V. 4. The porch which was before (i.e., in front of) the length (of the house), was twenty cubits before the breadth of the house, i.e., was as broad as the house. So understood, the words give an intelligible sense. הָאֲרָךְ with the article refers back to הָאֲרָךְ in v. 3 (the length of the house), and עַל־פָּנָי in the two defining clauses means "in front;" but in the first clause it is "lying in front of the house," i.e., built in front; in the second it is "measured across the front of the breadth of the house."² There is certainly either a corruption of the text, or a wrong number in the statement of the height of the porch, 120 cubits; for a front

120 cubits high to a house only thirty cubits high could not be called אֵימָה; it would have been a מִגְדָּל, a tower. It cannot with certainty be determined whether we should read twenty or thirty cubits; see in 1 Kings 6:3. He overlaid it (the porch) with pure gold; cf. 1 Kings 6:21.

2 Chronicles 3:5–7. The interior of the holy place.—V. 5. The “great house,” i.e., the large apartment of the house, the holy place, he wainscotted with cypresses, and overlaid it with good gold, and carved thereon palms and garlands. הִפָּה from הִפֵּה, to cover, cover over, alternates with the synonymous צָפָה in the signification to coat or overlay with wood and gold. תְּמָרִים as in Ezek. 41:18, for תְּמָרוֹת, 1 Kings 6:29, 35, are artificial palms as wall ornaments. שְׁרָשְׁרוֹת are in Ex. 28:14 small scroll-formed chains of gold wire, here spiral chain-like decorations on the walls, garlands of flowers carved on the wainscot, as we learn from 1 Kings 6:18.

2 Chronicles 3:6. And he garnished the house with precious stones for ornament (of the inner sides of the walls); cf. 1 Chronicles 29:2, on which Bähr on 1 Kings 6:7 appositely remarks, that the ornamenting of the walls with precious stones is very easily credible, since among the things which Solomon brought in quantity from Ophir they are expressly mentioned (1 Kings 10:11), and it was a common custom in the East so to employ them in buildings and in vessels; cf. *Symbolik des mos. Cult.* i. S. 280, 294, 297. The gold was from פְּרִיזִים. This, the name of a place rich in gold, does not elsewhere occur, and has not as yet been satisfactorily explained. Gesen. with Wilson compares the Sanscrit *parvam*, the first, foremost, and takes it to be the name of the foremost, i.e., eastern regions; others hold the word to be the name of some city in southern or eastern Arabia, whence Indian gold was brought to Palestine.—In v. 7 the garnishing of the house with gold is more exactly and completely described. He garnished the house, the beams (of the roof), the thresholds (of the doors), and its walls and its

doors with gold, and carved cherubs on the walls. For details as to the internal garnishing, decoration, and gilding of the house, see 1 Kings 6:18, 29, and 30, and for the doors, vv. 32–35.

2 Chronicles 3:8–14. *The most holy place, with the figures of the cherubim and the veil;* cf. 1 Kings 6:19–28.—The length of the most holy place in front of the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, consequently measured in the same way as the porch (v. 4); the breadth, i.e., the depth of it, also twenty cubits. The height, which was the same (1 Kings 6:20), is not stated; but instead of that we have the weight of the gold which was used for the gilding, which is omitted in 1 Kings 6, viz., 600 talents for the overlaying of the walls, and 50 shekels for the nails to fasten the sheet gold on the wainscoting. He covered the upper chambers of the most holy place also with gold; see 1 Chronicles 28:11. This is not noticed in 1 Kings 6.

2 Chronicles 3:10ff. The figures of the cherubim are called מַעֲשֵׂה צַעְצְעִים, sculpture work. The ἀπ. λεγ. צַעְצְעִים comes from צוּעַ, Arab. *ṣâgê, formavit, finxit*, and signifies sculptures. The plur. יָצְפוּ, “they overlaid them,” is indefinite. The length of the wings was five cubits, and the four outspread wings extended across the whole width of the most holy place from one wall to the other. The repetition of the clauses כָּנְף הָאֶחָד ... כָּנְף הָאֶחָד (vv. 11, 12) has a distributive force: the top of one wing of each cherub reached the wall of the house, that of the other wing reached the wing of the other cherub standing by. In the repetition the masc. מְגִיעַ alternates with the fem. מְגִיעַת, being construed in a freer way as the principal gender with the fem. כָּנְף, and also with דִּבְקָה, *adhaerebat*, in the last clause.—In v. 12 Bertheau would strike out the word כָּנְפֵי because it does not suit פְּרִשִׁים, which occurs in 1 Chronicles 28:17, 2 Chronicles 5:8, 1 Kings 8:7, in the transitive signification, “to stretch out the wings.” But nothing is gained by that, for we must then supply the erased word after

פְּרָשִׁים again. And, moreover, the succeeding clause is introduced by וְהֵם, just because in the first clause the wings, and not the cherubim, were the subject. We hold the text to be correct, and translate: "the wings of these cherubim were, for they stretched them out, twenty cubits." וְהֵם refers to הַכְּרוּבִים. They stood upon their feet, consequently upright, and were, according to 1 Kings 6:26, ten cubits high. "And their faces towards the house," i.e., turned towards the holy place, not having their faces turned towards each other, as was the case with the cherubim upon the Capporeth (Ex. 25:20).

2 Chronicles 3:14. The veil between the holy place and the most holy, not mentioned in 1 Kings 6:21, was made of the same materials and colours as the veil on the tabernacle, and was inwoven with similar cherub figures; cf. Ex. 26:31. כְּרָמִיל וּבוּץ as in 2:13. עָלָה עַל, to bring upon; an indefinite expression for: to weave into the material.

2 Chronicles 3:15–17. *The two brazen pillars* before the house, i.e., before the porch, whose form is more accurately described in 1 Kings 7:15–22. The height of it is here given at thirty-five cubits, while, according to 1 Kings 7:15, 2 Kings 25:17, Jer. 52:21, it was only eighteen cubits. The number thirty-five has arisen by confounding יח = 18 with לה = 35; see on 1 Kings 7:16. הַצִּפָּה (ἀπ. λεγ.) from צָפָה, overlay, cover, is the hood of the pillar, i.e., the capital, called in 1 Kings 7:16ff. כְּתֹרֶת, crown, capital, five cubits high, as in 1 Kings 7:16.

2 Chronicles 3:16. "And he made little chains on the collar (Halsreife), and put it on the top of the pillars, and made 100 pomegranates, and put them on the chains." In the first clause of this verse, בְּדַבִּיר, "in (on) the most holy place," has no meaning, for the most holy place is not here being discussed, but the pillars before the porch, or rather an ornament on the capital of these pillars. We must not therefore think of chains in the most holy place, which extended thence out to the pillars, as the Syriac and

Arabic seem to have done, paraphrasing as they do: chains of fifty cubits (i.e., the length of the holy place and the porch). According to 1 Kings 7:17–20 and v. 41f., compared with 2 Chronicles 4:12, 13, each capital consisted of two parts. The lower part was a circumvolution (Wulst) covered with chain-like net-work, one cubit high, with a setting of carved pomegranates one row above and one row below. The upper part, or that which formed the crown of the capital, was four cubits high, and carved in the form of an open lily-calyx. In our verse it is the lower part of the capital, the circumvolution, with the chain net-work and the pomegranates, which is spoken of. From this, Bertheau concludes that דַּבִּיר must signify the same as the more usual שְׁבָכָה, viz., "the lattice-work which was set about the top of the pillars, and served to fasten the pomegranates," and that בְּדַבִּיר has arisen out of בְּרִבִּיד by a transposition of the letters. בְּרִבִּיד (chains) should be read here. This conjecture so decidedly commends itself, that we regard it as certainly correct, since רִבִּיד denotes in Gen. 41:42, Ezek. 16:11, a necklace, and so may easily denote also a ring or hoop; but we cannot adopt the translation "chains on a ring," nor the idea that the שְׁבָכָה, since it surrounded the head of the pillars as a girdle or broad ring, is called the ring of the pillars. For this idea does not agree with the translation "chains in a ring," even when they are conceived of as "chain-like ornaments, which could scarcely otherwise be made visible on the ring than by open work." Then the chain-like decorations were not, as Bertheau thinks, on the upper and under border of the ring, but formed a net-work which surrounded the lower part of the capital of the pillar like a ring, as though a necklace had been drawn round it. רִבִּיד consequently is not the same as שְׁבָכָה, but rather corresponds to that part of the capital which is called גְּלוֹת (גְּלוֹת) in 1 Kings 7:14; for the שְׁבָכוֹת served to cover the גְּלוֹת, and were consequently placed on or

over the גְּלוֹת, as the pomegranates were on the chains or woven work. הַגְּלָה denotes the curve, the circumvolution, which is in 1 Kings 7:20 called הַבִּטָּן, a broad-arched band, bulging towards the middle, which formed the lower part of the capital. This arched part of the capital the author of the Chronicle calls רִבִּיד, ring or collar, because it may be regarded as the neck ornament of the head of the pillar, in contrast to the upper part of the capital, that consisted in lily-work, i.e., the ball wrought into the form of an open lily-calyx (בַּתְּרֵת).

2 Chronicles 3:17. As to the position of the pillars, and their names, see on 1 Kings 7:21.

2 Chronicles 4

2 Chronicles 4:1–11a. The sacred furniture and the courts of the temple.—Vv. 1–6. The copper furniture of the court. V. 1. *The altar of burnt-offering.* Its preparation is passed over in 1 Kings 6 and 7, so that there it is only mentioned incidentally in connection with the consecration of the temple, 8:22, 54, and 9:25. It was twenty cubits square (long and broad) and ten cubits high, and constructed on the model of the Mosaic altar of burnt-offering, and probably of brass plates, which enclosed the inner core, consisting of earth and unhewn stones; and if we may judge from Ezekiel's description, 2 Chronicles 43:13–17, it rose in steps, as it were, so that at each step its extent was smaller; and the measurement of twenty cubits refers only to the lowest scale, while the space at the top, with the hearth, was only twelve cubits square; cf. my *Bibl. Archaeol.* i. S. 127, with the figure, plate iii. fig. 2.

2 Chronicles 4:2–5. *The brazen sea* described as in 1 Kings 7:23–26. See the commentary on that passage, and the sketch in my *Archaeol.* i. plate iii. fig. 1. The differences in substance, such as the occurrence of בְּקָרִים and הַבְּקָר, v. 3, instead of פְּקָעִים and הַפְּקָעִים, and 3000 baths instead of 2000, are probably the result of orthographical errors in the Chronicle. נִכִּיל in v. 5 appears superfluous after the preceding

מְחֻזֵּק, and Berth. considers it a gloss which has come from 1 Kings into our text by mistake. But the expression is only pleonastic: "receiving baths, 3000 it held;" and there is no sufficient reason to strike out the words.

2 Chronicles 4:6. *The ten lavers* which, according to 1 Kings 7:38, stood upon ten brazen stands, i.e., chests provided with carriage wheels. These stands, the artistic work on which is circumstantially described in 1 Kings 7:27–37, are omitted in the Chronicle, because they are merely subordinate parts of the lavers. The size or capacity of the lavers is not stated, only their position on both sides of the temple porch, and the purpose for which they were designed, "to wash therein, viz., the work of the burnt-offering (the flesh of the burnt-offering which was to be burnt upon the altar) they rinsed therein," being mentioned. For details, see in 1 Kings 7:38f. and the figure in my *Archaeol.* i. plate iii. fig. 4. Occasion is here taken to mention in a supplementary way the use of the brazen sea.

2 Chronicles 4:7–9. *The golden furniture of the holy place and the courts.* These three verses are not found in the parallel narrative 1 Kings 7, where in v. 39b the statement as to the position of the brazen sea (v. 10 of Chron.) follows immediately the statement of the position of the stands with the lavers. The candlesticks and the table of the shew-bread are indeed mentioned in the summary enumeration of the temple furniture, 1 Kings 7:48 and 49, as in the corresponding passage of the Chronicle (vv. 19 and 20) they again occur; and in 1 Kings 6:36 and 7:12, in the description of the temple building, the inner court is spoken of, but the outer court is not expressly mentioned. No reason can be given for the omission of these verses in 1 Kings 7; but that they have been omitted or have dropped out, may be concluded from the fact that not only do the whole contents of our fourth chapter correspond to the section 1 Kings 7:23–50, but both passages are rounded off by the same concluding verse (Chronicles 5:1 and 1 Kings 51).

2 Chronicles 4:7. He made ten golden candlesticks **בְּמִשְׁפָּטָם**, according to their right, i.e., as they should be according to the prescript, or corresponding to the prescript as to the golden candlesticks in the Mosaic sanctuary (Ex. 25:31ff.). **מִשְׁפָּט** is the law established by the Mosaic legislation.

2 Chronicles 4:8. Ten golden tables, corresponding to the ten candlesticks, and, like these, placed five on the right and five on the left side of the holy place. The tables were not intended to bear the candlesticks (Berth.), but for the shew-bread; cf. on v. 19 and 1 Chronicles 28:16. And a hundred golden basins, not for the catching and sprinkling of the blood (Berth.), but, as their connection with the tables for the shew-bread shows, wine flagons, or sacrificial vessels for wine libations, probably corresponding to the **מְנַקִּיּוֹת** on the table of shew-bread in the tabernacle (Ex. 25:29). The signification, wine flagons, for **מְזֻרְקִים**, is placed beyond a doubt by Amos 6:6.

2 Chronicles 4:9. The two courts are not further described. For the court of the priests, see on 1 Kings 6:36 and 7:12. As to the great or outer court, the only remark made is that it had doors, and its doors, i.e., the folds or leaves of the doors, were overlaid with copper. In v. 10 we have a supplementary statement as to the position of the brazen sea, which coincides with 1 Kings 7:39; see on the passage. In v. 11a the heavier brazen (copper) utensils, belonging to the altar of burnt-offering, are mentioned: **סִירוֹת**, pots for the removal of the ashes; **יָעִים**, shovels, to take the ashes out from the altar; and **מְזֻרְקוֹת**, basins to catch and sprinkle the sacrificial blood. This half verse belongs to the preceding, notwithstanding that Hiram is mentioned as the maker. This is clear beyond doubt, from the fact that the same utensils are again introduced in the summary catalogue which follows (v. 16).

2 Chronicles 4:11–22. *Summary catalogue of the temple utensils and furniture.*—Vv. 11b18. The brass work wrought by Hiram.

2 Chronicles 4:19–22. The golden furniture of the holy place and the gilded doors of the temple. This section is found also in 1 Kings 7:40b50. The enumeration of the things wrought in brass coincides to a word, with the exception of trifling linguistic differences and some defects in the text, with 1 Kings 7:40b47. In v. 12 **הַגְּלוֹת וְהַבְּתָרוֹת** is the true reading, and we should so read in 1 Kings 7:41 also, since the **גְּלוֹת**, circumvolutions, are to be distinguished from the **בְּתָרוֹת**, crowns; see on 3:16. In v. 14 the first **עָשָׂה** is a mistake for **עָשָׂר**, the second for **עָשָׂרָה**, Kings v. 43; for the verb **עָשָׂה** is not required nor expected, as the accusative depends upon **לַעֲשׂוֹת**, v. 11, while the number cannot be omitted, since it is always given with the other things. In v. 16 **מְזֻלְגוֹת** is an orthographic error for **מְזֻרְקוֹת**; cf. v. 11 and 1 Kings 7:44. **וְאֵת-כָּל-כְּלֵיָהֶם** is surprising, for there is no meaning in speaking of the utensils of the utensils enumerated in vv. 12–16c. According to 1 Kings 7:45, we should read **אֵת כָּל-הַכְּבָלִים** **הָאֵלֶּה**. As to **אָבִיו**, see on 2:12. **נְחֹשֶׁת מְרוּקָה** is accusative of the material, of polished brass; and so also **נְחֹשֶׁת מְרוּקָה**, 1 Kings 7:45, with a similar signification. In reference to the rest, see the commentary on 1 Kings 7:40ff.

2 Chronicles 4:19–22. In the enumeration of the golden furniture of the holy place, our text diverges somewhat more from 1 Kings 7:48–50. On the difference in respect to the tables of the shew-bread, see on 1 Kings 7:48. In v. 20 the number and position of the candlesticks in the holy place are not stated as they are in 1 Kings 7:49, both having been already given in v. 7. Instead of that, their use is emphasized: to light them, according to the right, before the most holy place (**בְּמִשְׁפָּטָם** as in v. 7). As to the decorations and subordinate utensils of the candlesticks, see on 1 Kings 7:49. To **זָהָב**, v. 21 (accus. of the material), is added **זָהָב מְכֻלָּוֹת זָהָב**, "that is perfect gold." **מְכֻלָּה**, which occurs only

here, is synonymous with מְקַלֵּל, perfection. This addition seems superfluous, because before and afterwards it is remarked of these vessels that they were of precious gold (זָהָב סָגוּר), and it is consequently omitted by the LXX, perhaps also because מְקַלֵּיִם was not intelligible to them. The words, probably, are meant to indicate that even the decorations and the subordinate utensils of the candlesticks (lamps, snuffers, etc.) were of solid gold, and not merely gilded.

2 Chronicles 4:22. מְזַמְרוֹת, knives, probably used along with the snuffers for the cleansing and trimming of the candlesticks and lamps, are not met with among the utensils of the tabernacle, but are here mentioned (Chronicles and Kings), and in 2 Kings 12:14 and Jer. 52:18, among the temple utensils. Along with the מְזַרְקוֹת, sacrificial vessels (see on v. 8), in 1 Chronicles 28:17 מְזַלְגוֹת, forks of gold, are also mentioned, which are not elsewhere spoken of. Among the utensils of the tabernacle we find only מְזַלְגוֹת of brass, flesh-forks, as an appurtenance of the altar of burnt-offering (Ex. 27:3; 38:3, Num. 4:14; cf. 1 Sam. 2:13f.), which, however, cannot be intended here, because all the utensils here enumerated belonged to the holy place. What purpose the golden forks served cannot be determined, but the mention of golden knives might lead us to presuppose that there would be golden forks as well. That the forks are not mentioned in our verse does not render their existence doubtful, for the enumeration is not complete: e.g., the סְפוֹת, 1 Kings 7:50, are also omitted. כְּפוֹת, vessels for the incense, and מְחַתוֹת, extinguishers, as in 1 Kings 7:50. Instead of וּפְתַח הַבַּיִת דְּלְתוֹתָיו, “and as regards the opening (door) of the house, its door-leaves,” in 1 Kings 7:50 we have וְהַפְּתָח וְלְדִלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת, “and the hinges of the door-leaves of the house.” This suggests that פֶּתַח is only an orthographical error for פְּתָח; but then if we take it to be so, we must alter דְּלְתוֹתָיו into

לְדִלְתוֹתָיו. And, moreover, the expression פֶּתַח הַבַּיִת, door-hinges of the house, is strange, as פֶּתַח properly denotes a recess or space between, and which renders the above-mentioned conjecture improbable. The author of the Chronicle seems rather himself to have generalized the expression, and emphasizes merely the fact that even the leaves of the doors in the most holy place and on the holy place were of gold;—of course not of solid gold; but they were, as we learn from 3:7, overlaid with gold. This interpretation is favoured by the simple זָהָב being used without the predicate סָגוּר. To the sing. פֶּתַח no objection can be made, for the word in its fundamental signification, “opening,” may easily be taken collectively.—Ch. 5:1 contains the conclusion of the account of the preparation of the sacred utensils as in 1 Kings 7:51, and with it also the whole account of the building of the temple is brought to an end. The ו before אֶת־הַבְּכֹסֶף and אֶת־הַזָּהָב corresponds to the Lat. *et—et*, both—and also. As to David’s offerings, cf. 1 Chronicles 18:10 and 11; and on the whole matter, compare also the remarks on 1 Kings 7:51.

2 Chronicles 5

Ch. 5:2–7:22.—The Dedication of the Temple.
(Cf. 1 Kings 8 and 9:1–9.)

2 Chronicles 5:2–7:22. This solemnity, to which Solomon had invited the elders and heads of all Israel to Jerusalem, consisted in four acts: (a) the transfer of the ark into the temple (2 Chronicles 5:2–6:11); (b) Solomon’s dedicatory prayer (2 Chronicles 6:12–42); (c) the solemn sacrifice (2 Chronicles 7:1–10); and (d) the Lord’s answer to Solomon’s prayer (2 Chronicles 7:11–22). By the first two acts the temple was dedicated by the king and the congregation of Israel to its holy purpose; by the two last it was consecrated by Jahve to be the dwelling-place of His name. If we compare our account of this solemnity with the account given in the book of Kings, we find that they agree in their main substance, and for the most

part even verbally coincide. Only, in the Chronicle the part performed by the priests and Levites is described more in detail; and in treating of the third act, instead of the blessing spoken by Solomon (1 Kings 8:54–61), we have in Chronicles 7:1–3 a narrative of the devouring of the sacrifices by fire from heaven.

2 Chronicles 5:2–6:11. The first part of the celebration was the transfer of the ark from Mount Zion to the temple (2 Chronicles 5:2–14), and in connection with this we have the words in which Solomon celebrates the entry of the Lord into the new temple (2 Chronicles 6:1–11). This section has been already commented on in the remarks on 1 Kings 8:1–21, and we have here, consequently, only to set down briefly those discrepancies between our account and that other, which have any influence upon the meaning.—In v. 3 the name of the month, בִּירַח הָאֶתְנַיִם (Kings v. 2), with which the supplementary clause, “that is the seventh month,” is there connected, is omitted, so that we must either change הַחֹדֶשׁ into בְּחֹדֶשׁ, or supply the name of the month; for the festival is not the seventh month, but was held in that month.

2 Chronicles 5:4. Instead of הַלְוִיִּם, we have in 2 Kings הַכֹּהֲנָיִם, the priests bare the ark; and since even according to the Chronicle (v. 7) the priests bare the ark into the holy place, we must understand by הַלְוִיִּם such Levites were also priests.—In v. 5, too the words הַכֹּהֲנָיִם הַלְוִיִּם are inexact, and are to be corrected by Kings v. 4, הַכֹּהֲנָיִם וְהַלְוִיִּם. For even if the Levitic priests bare the ark and the sacred utensils of the tabernacle into the temple, yet the tabernacle itself (the planks, hangings, and coverings of it) was borne into the temple, to be preserved as a holy relic, not by priests, but only by Levites. The conj. ו before הַלְוִיִּם has probably been omitted only by a copyist, who was thinking of הַכֹּהֲנָיִם הַלְוִיִּם (Josh. 3:3, Deut. 17:9, 18, etc.).—In v. 8 וַיִּכְסּוּ is an orthographical error for וַיִּכְסּוּ, 1 Kings 8:7; cf. 1 Chronicles 28:18, Ex. 25:20.—In

v. 9, too, מִן־הָאֶרֶז, has probably come into our text only by a copyist’s mistake instead of מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ (Kings v. 8).

2 Chronicles 5:10. אֲשֶׁר נָתַן, who had given, i.e., laid in, is not so exact as אֲשֶׁר הֵנִיחַ שָׁם (Kings v. 9), but may be justified by a reference to Ex. 40:20.

2 Chronicles 5:11–13a. Vv. 11b13a describe the part which the priests and Levitical singers and musicians took in the solemn act of transferring the ark to the temple,—a matter entirely passed over in the narrative in Kings 8:11, which confines itself to the main transaction. The mention of the priests gives occasion for the remark, v. 11b, “for all the priests present had sanctified themselves, but the courses were not to be observed,” i.e., the courses of the priests (1 Chronicles 24) could not be observed. The festival was so great, that not merely the course appointed to perform the service of that week, but also all the courses had sanctified themselves and co-operated in the celebration. In reference to the construction אֵין לְשִׁמּוֹר, cf. Ew. § 321, b.

2 Chronicles 5:12. All the Levitic singers and musicians were also engaged in it, to make the festival glorious by song and instrumental music: “and the Levites, the singers, all of them, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, and their sons and brethren, clad in byssus, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, stood eastward from the altar, and with them priests to 120, blowing trumpets.” The ל before כָּלֵם and the following noun is the introductory ל: “as regards.” On the form מַחְצָרִים, see on 1 Chronicles 15:24; on these singers and musicians, their clothing, and their instruments, see on 1 Chronicles 15:17–28 and 2 Chronicles 25:1–8.

2 Chronicles 5:13a. V. 13a runs thus literally: “And it came to pass, as one, regarding the trumpeters and the singers, that they sang with one voice to praise and thank Jahve.” The meaning is: and the trumpeters and singers, together as one man, sang with one voice to

praise. כְּאָחַד is placed first for emphasis; stress is laid upon the subject, the trumpeters and singers, by the introductory לְ; and הִיָּה is construed with the following infinitive (לְהִשְׁמִיעַ): it was to sound, to cause to hear, for they were causing to hear, where לְ *c. infin.* is connected with הִיָּה, as the participle is elsewhere, to describe the circumstances; cf. Ew. § 237. But in order to express very strongly the idea of the *unisono* of the trumpet-sound, and the singing accompanied by the harp-playing, which lies in כְּאָחַד, כְּאָחַד, קוֹל is added to לְהִשְׁמִיעַ. By וְכֹהֲרִים קוֹל וגו' all that was to be said of the song and music is drawn together in the form of a protasis, to which is joined מְלֵא, וְהַבֵּית מְלֵא, the apodosis both of this latter and also of the protasis which was interrupted by the parenthesis in v. 11: "When the priests went forth from the holy place, for ... (v. 11), and when they lifted up the voice with trumpets and with cymbals, and the (other) instruments of song, and with the praise of Jahve, that He is good, that His mercy endureth for ever (cf. 1 Chronicles 16:34), then was the house filled with the cloud of the house of Jahve." The absence of the article before עָנַן requires us thus to connect the בַּיִת יְהוָה at the close of the verse with עָנַן (*stat. constr.*), since the indefinite עָנַן (without the article) is not at all suitable here; for it is not any cloud which is here spoken of, but that which overshadowed the glory of the Lord in the most holy place.

2 Chronicles 6

2 Chronicles 5:14–6:11. V. 14, again, agrees with 1 Kings 8:6, and has been there commented upon, 2 Chronicles 6:1–11. The words with which Solomon celebrates this wondrous evidence of the divine favour, entirely coincide with the narrative in 1 Kings 8:12–21, except that in v. 5f. the actual words of Solomon's speech are more completely given than in 1 Kings 8:16, where the words, "and I have not chosen a man to be prince over my

people Israel, and I have chosen Jerusalem that my name might be there," are omitted. For the commentary on this address, see on 1 Kings 8:12–21.

2 Chronicles 6:12–42. *Solomon's dedicatory prayer* likewise corresponds exactly with the account of it given in 1 Kings 8:22–53 till near the end (vv. 40–42), where it takes quite a different turn. Besides this, in the introduction (v. 13) Solomon's position during the prayer is more accurately described, it being there stated that Solomon had caused a high stage (בַּיִת, a basin-like elevation) to be erected, which he ascended, and kneeling, spoke the prayer which follows. This fact is not stated in 1 Kings 8:22, and Then. and Berth. conjecture that it has been dropped out of our text only by mistake.

Perhaps so, but it may have been passed over by the author of the books of Kings as a point of subordinate importance. On the contents of the prayer, which begins with the joyful confession that the Lord had fulfilled His promise to David in reference to the building of the temple, and proceeds with a request for a further bestowment of the blessing promised to His people, and a supplication that all prayers made to the Lord in the temple may be heard, see the Com. on 1 Kings 8:22ff. The conclusion of the prayer in the Chronicle is different from that in 1 Kings 8. There the last supplication, that the prayers might be heard, is followed by the thought: for they (the Israelites) are Thy people and inheritance; and in the further amplification of this thought the prayer returns to the idea with which it commenced. In the narrative of the Chronicle, on the other hand, the supplications conclude with the general thought (v. 40): "Now, my God, let, I beseech Thee, Thine eyes be open, and Thine ears attend unto the prayer of this place" (i.e., unto the prayer spoken in this place). There follows, then, the conclusion of the whole prayer,—a summons to the Lord (v. 41f.): "And now, Lord God, arise into Thy rest, Thou and the ark of Thy strength; let Thy priests, Lord God, clothe themselves in salvation, and Thy saints rejoice in good! Lord God, turn not away the face of

Thine anointed: remember the pious deeds of Thy servant David.” חֲסִדִּים as in 2 Chronicles 33:32; 35:26, and Neh. 13:14. On this Thenius remarks, to 1 Kings 8:53: “This conclusion is probably authentic, for there is in the text of the prayer, 1 Kings 8, no special expression of dedication, and this the summons to enter into possession of the temple very fittingly supplies. The whole contents of the conclusion are in perfect correspondence with the situation, and, as to form, nothing better could be desired. It can scarcely be thought an arbitrary addition made by the chronicler for no other reason than that the summons spoken of, if taken literally, is irreconcilable with the entrance of the cloud into the temple, of which he has already given us an account.” Berth. indeed thinks that it does not thence follow that our conclusion is authentic, and considers it more probable that it was introduced because it appeared more suitable, in place of the somewhat obscure words in 1 Kings 8:51–53, though not by the author of the Chronicle, and scarcely at an earlier time. The decision on this question can only be arrived at in connection with the question as to the origin of the statements peculiar to the Chronicle contained in 2 Chronicles 7:1–3.

If we consider, in the first place, our verses in themselves, they contain no thought which Solomon might not have spoken, and consequently nothing which would tend to show that they are not authentic. It is true that the phrase אֲזַיִדָּה קִשְׁבוֹת occurs only here and in 7:15, and again in Ps. 130:2, and the noun נִחָ instead of מְנוּחָה is found only in Esth. 9:16–18 in the form נִחָ; but even if these two expressions be peculiar to the later time, no further conclusion can be drawn from that, than that the author of the Chronicle has here, as often elsewhere, given the thoughts of his authority in the language of his own time. Nor is the relation in which vv. 41 and 42 stand to Ps. 132:8–10 a valid proof of the later composition of the conclusion of our prayer. For (a) it is still a question whether our verses

have been borrowed from Ps. 132, or the verses of the psalm from our passage; and (b) the period when Ps. 138 was written is so doubtful, that some regard it as a Solomonic psalm, while others place it in the post-exilic period. Neither the one nor the other of these questions can be determined on convincing grounds. The appeal to the fact that the chronicler has compounded the hymn in 1 Chronicles 15 also out of post-exilic psalms proves nothing, for even in that case it is at least doubtful if that be a correct account of the matter. But the further assertion, that the conclusion (v. 42) resembles Isa. 55:3, and that recollections of this passage may have had some effect also on the conclusion (v. 41), is undoubtedly erroneous, for חֲסִדֵי דָוִד in v. 42 has quite a different meaning from that which it has in Isa. 55:3. There חֲסִדֵי דָוִד are the favours granted to David by the Lord; in v. 42, on the contrary, they are the pious deeds of David,—all that he had done for the raising and advancement of the public worship (see above). The phrase קוּמָה וּגֹי, “Arise, O Lord God, into Thy rest,” is modelled on the formula which was spoken when the ark was lifted and when it was set down on the journey through the wilderness, which explains both קוּמָה and the use of לְנוּחָה, which is formed after בְּנוּחָה, Num. 10:36. The call to arise into rest is not inconsistent with the fact that the ark had already been brought into the most holy place, for קוּמָה has merely the general signification, “to set oneself to anything.” The idea is, that God would now take the rest to which the throne of His glory had attained, show Himself to His people from this His throne to be the God of salvation, endue His priests, the guardians of His sanctuary, with salvation, and cause the pious to rejoice in His goodness. יִשְׂמְחוּ בְּטוֹב is generalized in Ps. 132:9 into יִרְנְנוּ פִּי. הֲשִׁב פָּנָיו, to turn away the face of any one, i.e., to deny the request, cf. 1 Kings 2:16.

2 Chronicles 7

2 Chronicles 7:1–22. *The divine confirmation of the dedication of the temple.*—Vv. 1–10. The consecration of the sacrificial service by fire from heaven (vv. 1–3), and the sacrifices and festival of the people (vv. 4–10).

2 Chronicles 7:1–3. At the conclusion of Solomon's prayer there fell fire from heaven, which devoured the burnt-offering and the thank-offering, and the glory of the Lord filled the house, so that the priests could not enter the house of Jahve. The assembled congregation, when they saw the fire and the glory of the Lord descend, bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped God to praise. Now since this narrative is not found in 1 Kings 8:54ff., and there a speech of Solomon to the whole congregation, in which he thanks God for the fulfilment of His promise, and expresses the desire that the Lord would hear his prayers at all times, and bestow the promised salvation on the people, is communicated, modern criticism has rejected this narrative of the Chronicle as a later unhistorical embellishment of the temple dedication. "If we turn our attention," says Berth. in agreement with Then., "to 2 Chronicles 5:11–14, and compare 2 Chronicles 5:14 with our second verse, we must maintain that our historian found that there existed two different narratives of the proceedings at the dedication of the temple, and received both into his work. According to the one narrative, the clouds filled the house (1 Kings 8:10, cf. 2 Chronicles 5:11–14); and after this was done Solomon uttered the prayer, with the conclusion which we find in 1 Kings 8; according to the other narrative, Solomon uttered the prayer, with the conclusion which we find in Chron., and God thereafter gave the confirmatory signs. Now we can hardly imagine that the course of events was, that the glory of Jahve filled the house (2 Chronicles 5:14); that then Solomon spoke the words and the prayer in 2 Chronicles 6; that while he uttered the prayer the glory of Jahve again left the house, and then came down in a way manifest to all the people (2 Chronicles

7:3), in order to fill the house for a second time." Certainly it was not so; but the narrative itself gives no ground for any such representation. Not a word is said in the text of the glory of Jahve having left the temple during Solomon's prayer. The supposed contradiction between 2 Chronicles 5:14 and the account in 2 Chronicles 7:1–3 is founded entirely on a misinterpretation of our verse. The course of events described here was, as the words run, this: Fire came down from heaven upon the sacrifices and devoured them, and the glory of the Lord filled the house; and this is in v. 3 more exactly and precisely repeated by the statement that the people saw the fire and the glory of Jahve descend upon the house. According to these plain words, the glory of Jahve descended upon the temple in the fire which came down from heaven. In the heavenly fire which devoured the sacrifices, the assembled congregation saw the glory of the Lord descend upon the temple and fill it. But the filling of the temple by the cloud when the ark was brought in and set in its place (2 Chronicles 5:15) can be without difficulty reconciled with this manifestation of the divine glory in the fire. Just as the manifestation of the gracious divine presence in the temple by a cloud, as its visible vehicle, does not exclude the omnipresence of God or His sitting enthroned in heaven, God's essence not being so confined to the visible vehicle of His gracious presence among His people that He ceases thereby to be enthroned in heaven, and to manifest Himself therefrom; so the revelation of the same God from heaven by a descending fire is not excluded or set aside by the presence of the cloud in the holy place of the temple, and in the most holy. We may consequently quite well represent to ourselves the course of events, by supposing, that while the gracious presence of God enthroned above the cherubim on the ark made itself known in the cloud which filled the temple, or while the cloud filled the interior of the temple, God revealed His glory from heaven, before the eyes of the assembled congregation, in the fire which descended upon the sacrifices, so that the temple was covered or

overshadowed by His glory. The parts of this double manifestation of the divine glory are clearly distinguished even in our narrative; for in 2 Chronicles 5:13, 14 the cloud which filled the house, as vehicle of the manifestation of the divine glory, and which hindered the priests from standing and serving (in the house, i.e., in the holy place and the most holy), is spoken of; while in our verses, again, it is the glory of God which descended upon the temple in the fire coming down from heaven on the sacrifices, and so filled it that the priests could not enter it, which is noticed.

Since, therefore, the two passages involve no contradiction, the hypothesis of a compounding together of discrepant narratives loses all standing ground; and it only remains to determine the mutual relations of the two narratives, and to answer the question, why the author of the book of Kings has omitted the account of the fire which came down from heaven upon the sacrifices, and the author of the Chronicle the blessing of the congregation (1 Kings 8:54–61). From the whole plan and character of the two histories, there can be no doubt that in these accounts we have not a perfect enumeration of all the different occurrences, but only a record of the chief things which were done. The authority made use of by both, however, doubtless contained both the blessing of the congregation (1 Kings 8:55–61) and the account of the fire which devoured the sacrifices (2 Chronicles 7:2, 3); and probably the latter preceded the blessing spoken by Solomon to the congregation (Kings). In all probability, the fire came down from heaven immediately after the conclusion of the dedicatory prayer, and devoured the sacrifices lying upon the altar of burnt-offering; and after this had happened, Solomon turned towards the assembled congregation and praised the Lord, because He had given rest to His people, of which the completion of the temple, and the filling of it with the cloud of the divine glory, was a pledge. To record this speech of Solomon to the congregation, falls wholly in with the plan of the book of Kings, in which the prophetic interest, the realization of the divine

purpose of grace by the acts and omissions of the kings, is the prominent one; while it did not lie within the scope of his purpose to enter upon a detailed history of the public worship. We should be justified in expecting the fire which devoured the sacrifices to be mentioned in the book of Kings, only if the temple had been first consecrated by this divine act to be the dwelling-place of the gracious presence of God, or a sanctuary of the Lord; but such significance the devouring of the sacrifices by fire coming forth from God did not possess. Jahve consecrated the temple to be the dwelling-place of His name, and the abode of His gracious presence, in proclaiming His presence by the cloud which filled the sanctuary, when the ark was brought into the most holy place. The devouring of the sacrifices upon the altar by fire from heaven was merely the confirmatory sign that the Lord, enthroned above the ark in the temple, accepted, well pleased, the sacrificial service carried on on the altar of this temple; and since the people could draw near to the Lord only with sacrifices before the altar, it was a confirmatory sign that He from His throne would bestow His covenant grace upon those who appeared before him with sacrifices; cf. Lev. 9:23f. Implicitly, this grace was already secured to the people by God's consecrating the sanctuary to be the throne of His grace by the cloud which filled the temple; and the author of the book of Kings thought it sufficient to mention this sign, and passed over the second, which only served as a confirmation of the first. With the chronicler the case was different; for his plan to portray in detail the glory of the worship of the former time, the divine confirmation of the sacrificial worship, which was to be carried on continually in the temple as the only legitimate place of worship, by fire from heaven, was so important that he could not leave it unmentioned; while the words of blessing spoken by Solomon to the congregation, as being already implicitly contained in the dedicatory prayer, did not appear important enough to be received into his book. For the rest, the sacrifices which the fire from heaven devoured are the sacrifices

mentioned in 2 Chronicles 5:6, which the king and the congregation had offered when the ark was borne into the temple. As there was an immense number of these sacrifices, they cannot all have been offered on the altar of burnt-offering, but, like the thank-offerings afterwards brought by Solomon and the congregation, must have been offered on the whole space which had been consecrated in the court for this purpose (v. 7). This is expressly attested by v. 7, for the *הַעֲלֹת* can only be the sacrifices in 5:6, since the sacrifices in v. 5 of our chapter were only *שְׁלָמִים*; cf. 1 Kings 8:62.

2 Chronicles 7:4–10. the sacrifices and the festival. After fire from heaven had devoured the sacrifices, and Solomon had praised the Lord for the fulfilment of His word, and sought for the congregation the further bestowal of the divine blessing (1 Kings 8:54–61), the dedication of the temple was concluded by a great thank-offering, of which we have in vv. 5, 6 an account which completely agrees with 1 Kings 8:62, 63.—In v. 6 the author of the Chronicles again makes express mention of the singing and playing of the Levites when these offerings were presented. In the performance of this sacrificial act the priests stood *עַל-מִשְׁמֶרֶתָם* in their stations; but that does not signify separated according to their divisions (Berth.), but *in officiis suis* (Vulg.), i.e., *ordines suos et functiones suas a Davide 1 Chronicles 24:7ff. institutas servarunt* (Ramb.); see on Num. 8:26. The Levites with the instruments of song of Jahve, which David had made, i.e., with the instruments invented and appointed by David for song to the praise of the Lord. *בְּהַלֵּל דָּוִד בְּיָדָם*, not *hymnos David canentes per manus suas* (Vulg.), taking *הַלֵּל דָּוִד* for the praising appointed by David, which by the hands of the Levites, i.e., was performed by the hands of the Levites (Berth.), but literally: when David sang praise by their hand (i.e., their service). This clause seems to be added to the relative clause, “which king David had made,” for nearer definition, and to signify that the Levites used the same instruments which David had

introduced when he praised God by the playing of the Levites. The form *מִחֲצָרִים* as in 1 Chronicles 15:24.

2 Chronicles 7:7. V. 7 contains a supplementary remark, and the *ו* relat. expresses only the connection of the thought, and the verb is to be translated in English by the pluperfect. For the rest, compare on vv. 4–10 the commentary on 1 Kings 8:62–66.

2 Chronicles 7:11–22. The Lord’s answer to Solomon’s dedicatory prayer. Cf. 1 Kings 9:1–9. The general contents, and the order of the thoughts in the divine answer in the two texts, agree, but in the Chronicle individual thoughts are further expounded than in the book of Kings, and expressions are here and there made clear. The second clause of v. 11 is an instance of this, where “and all the desire of Solomon, which he was pleased to do,” is represented by “and all that came into Solomon’s heart, to make in the house of the Lord and in his own house, he prosperously effected.” Everything else is explained in the Com. on 1 Kings 9.

2 Chronicles 8

Solomon’s City-Building, Statute Labour, Arrangement of Public Worship, and Nautical Undertakings. (Cf. 1 Kings 9:10–28.)

2 Chronicles 8. The building of the temple was the most important work of Solomon’s reign, as compared with which all the other undertakings of the king fall into the background; and these are consequently only summarily enumerated both in the book of Kings and in the Chronicle. In our chapter, in the first place, we have, (a) the building or completion of various cities, which were of importance partly as strongholds, partly as magazines, for the maintenance of the army necessary for the defence of the kingdom against hostile attacks (vv. 1–6); (b) the arrangement of the statute labour for the execution of all his building works (vv. 7–11); (c) the regulation of the sacrificial service and the public worship (vv. 12–16); and (d) the voyage to Ophir (vv. 17, 18). All these

undertakings are recounted in the same order and in the same aphoristic way in 1 Kings 9:10–28, but with the addition of various notes, which are not found in our narrative; while the Chronicle, again, mentions several not unimportant though subordinate circumstances, which are not found in the book of Kings; whence it is clear that in the two narratives we have merely short and mutually supplementary extracts from a more elaborate description of these matters.

2 Chronicles 8:1–6. *The city-building.*—V. 1. The date, “at the end of twenty years, when Solomon ... had built,” agrees with that in 1 Kings 9:10. The twenty years are to be reckoned from the commencement of the building of the temple, for he had spent seven years in the building of the temple, and thirteen years in that of his palace (1 Kings 6:38; 7:1).

2 Chronicles 8:2. V. 2 must be regarded as the apodosis of v. 1, notwithstanding that the object, the cities which ... precedes. The unusual position of the words is the result of the aphoristic character of the notice. As to its relation to the statement 1 Kings 9:10–13, see the discussion on that passage. **בָּנָה**, v. 2, is not to be understood of the fortification of these cities, but of their completion, for, according to 1 Kings 9:10, 13, they were in very bad condition. **וַיֵּשֶׁב**, he caused to dwell there, i.e., transplanted Israelites thither, cf. 2 Kings 17:6. The account of the cities which Solomon built, i.e., fortified, is introduced (v. 3) by the important statement, omitted in 1 Kings 9: “Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it.” **הָזִק עַל**, to be strong upon, that is, prevail against, conquer; cf. 27:5. Hamath-zobah is not the city Hamath in Zobah, but, as we learn from v. 4, the land or kingdom of Hamath. This did not lie, any more than the city Hamath, in Zobah, but bordered on the kingdom of Zobah: cf. 1 Chronicles 18:3; and as to the position of Zobah, see the Commentary on 2 Sam. 8:3. In David’s time Hamath and Zobah had their own kings; and David conquered them, and made their kingdoms

tributary (1 Chronicles 18:49). Because they bordered on each other, Hamath and Zobah are here bound together as a *nomen compos.* **יְהִזְק** **עָלֶיהָ** signifies at least this, that these tributary kingdoms had either rebelled against Solomon, or at least had made attempts to do so; which Solomon suppressed, and in order to establish his dominion over them fortified Tadmor, i.e., Palmyra, and all the store cities in the land of Hamath (see on 1 Kings 9:18f.); for, according to 1 Kings 11:23ff., he had Rezon of Zobah as an enemy during his whole reign; see on that passage.

2 Chronicles 8:5ff. Besides these, he made Upper and Nether Beth-horon (see on 1 Chronicles 7:24) into fortified cities, with walls, gates, and bars. **עָרֵי מְצוּר** is the second object of **וַיְבָן**, and **חֻמּוֹת וּגְוִי** is in apposition to that.

Further, he fortified Baalah, in the tribe of Dan, to defend the kingdom against the Philistines, and, according to 1 Kings 9:15–17, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer also,—which are omitted here, while in 1 Kings 9:17 Upper Beth-horon is omitted,—and store cities, chariot cities, and cavalry cities; see on 1 Kings 9:15–19.

2 Chronicles 8:7–10. *On the arrangement of the statute labour,* see on 1 Kings 9:20–23.—This note is in Chronicles abruptly introduced immediately after the preceding. V. 7 is an absolute clause: “as regards the whole people, those.” **מִן־בְּנֵיהֶם** (v. 8) is not partitive: some of their sons; but is only placed before the **אֲשֶׁר**: those of their sons (i.e., of the descendants of the whole Canaanite people) who had remained in the land, whom the Israelites had not exterminated; Solomon made a levy of these for statute labourers. The **מִן** is wanting in 1 Kings, but is not to be struck out here on that account. Much more surprising is the **אֲשֶׁר** after **מִן־בְּנֵי** **יִשְׂרָאֵל**, v. 9, which is likewise not found in 1 Kings, since the following verb **לֹא נָתַן** is not to be taken relatively, but contains the predicate of the subject contained in the words **מִן־בְּנֵי יִשְׂ**

This אָשֶׁר cannot be otherwise justified than by supposing that it is placed after מן בני ישׁ, as in Ps. 69:27 it is placed after the subject of the relative clause, and so stands for אֲשֶׁר מן בני ישׁ: those who were of the sons of Israel (i.e., Israelites) Solomon did not make ... The preplacing of מן בְּנֵיהֶם in v. 8 would naturally suggest that מן בני ישׁ should also precede, in order to bring out sharply the contrast between the sons of the Canaanites and the sons of Israel.

2 Chronicles 8:9. וְשָׂרֵי שְׁלִישָׁיו should be altered into שְׂרָיו וְשְׁלִישָׁיו as in 1 Kings 9:22, for שְׁלִישִׁים are not chariot combatants, but royal adjutants; see on Ex. 14:7 and 2 Sam. 23:8. Over the statute labourers 250 upper overseers were placed. שְׂרֵי נְצִיבִים, chief of the superiors, i.e., chief overseer. The Keth. נְצִיבִים, *praefecti*, is the true reading; cf. 1 Chronicles 18:13, 2 Chronicles 17:2. The Keri has arisen out of 1 Kings 9:23. These overseers were Israelites, while in the number 550 (1 Kings 9:23) the Israelite and Canaanite upper overseers are both included; see on 2:17. כְּלֵה־הָעַם refers to בְּנֵי הָעַם, v. 7, and denotes the Canaanite people who remained.

2 Chronicles 8:11. The remark that Solomon caused Pharaoh's daughter, whom he had married (1 Kings 3:1), to remove from the city of David into the house which he had built her, i.e., into that part of his newly-built palace which was appointed for the queen, is introduced here, as in 1 Kings 9:24, because it belongs to the history of Solomon's buildings, although in the Chronicle it comes in very abruptly, the author not having mentioned Solomon's marriage to the daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 3:1). The reason given for this change of residence on the part of the Egyptian princess is, that Solomon could not allow her, an Egyptian, to dwell in the palace of King David, which had been sanctified by the reception of the ark, and consequently assigned to her a dwelling in the city of David until he

should have finished the building of his palace, in which she might dwell along with him. הָמָּה is, as neuter, used instead of the singular; cf. Ew. § 318, *b*. See also on 1 Kings 3:1 and 9:24.

2 Chronicles 8:12–16. *The sacrificial service in the new temple.* Cf. 1 Kings 9:25, where it is merely briefly recorded that Solomon offered sacrifices three times a year on the altar built by him to the Lord. In our verses we have a detailed account of it. אָז, at that time, *scil.* when the temple building had been finished and the temple dedicated (cf. v. 1), Solomon offered burnt-offerings upon the altar which he had built before the porch of the temple. He no longer now sacrifices upon the altar of the tabernacle at Gibeon, as in the beginning of his reign (2 Chronicles 1:3ff.).

2 Chronicles 8:13. "Even sacrificing at the daily rate, according to the direction of Moses." These words give a supplementary and closer definition of the sacrificing in the form of an explanatory subordinate clause, which is interpolated in the principal sentence. For the following words לְשַׁבְּתוֹת וְגו' belong to the principal sentence (v. 12): he offered sacrifices ... on the sabbaths, the new moons, etc. The ו before בְּדִבְרֵי is explicative, and that = viz.; and the infin. לְהַעֲלוֹת, according to the later usage, instead of infin. absol.; cf. Ew. § 280, *d*. The preposition בְּ (before דִּבְרֵי) is the so-called *ב* *essentiae*: consisting in the daily (rate) to sacrifice (this); cf. Ew. § 299, *b*. The daily rate, i.e., that which was prescribed in the law of Moses for each day, cf. Lev. 23:37. לְמוֹעֲדוֹת is further explained by the succeeding clause: on the three chief festivals of the year.

2 Chronicles 8:14ff. He ordered the temple service, also, entirely according to the arrangement introduced by David as to the service of the priests and Levites. He appointed, according to the ordinance of David his father, i.e., according to the ordinance established by David, the classes of the priests (see on 1 Chronicles 24) to that service, and the Levites

to their stations (מְשָׁמְרוֹת as in 7:6), to praise (cf. 1 Chronicles 25), and to serve before the priests (1 Chronicles 23:28ff.), according to that which was appointed for every day, and the doorkeepers according to their courses, etc. (see 1 Chronicles 27:1–19). With the last words cf. Neh. 12:24.

2 Chronicles 8:15. This arrangement was faithfully observed by the priests and Levites. The verb סוּר is here construed *c. accus.* in the signification to transgress a command (cf. *Ew. § 282, a*), and it is therefore not necessary to alter מְצוֹת into מְצוֹת עַל־הַכֹּהֲנִים depends upon מְצוֹת: the king's command concerning the priests and the Levites, i.e., that which David commanded them. לְכֹל־דְּבַר וְגו', in regard to all things, and especially also in regard to the treasures; cf. 1 Chronicles 26:20–28.—With v. 16 the account of what Solomon did for the public worship is concluded: “Now all the work of Solomon was prepared until the (this) day, the foundation of the house of Jahve until its completion; the house of Jahve was finished.” מְלֵאכָה is explained by מוֹסֵד הַיּוֹם is the day on which, after the consecration of the completed temple, the regular public worship was commenced in it, which doubtless was done immediately after the dedication of the temple. Only when the regular worship according to the law of Moses, and with the arrangements as to the service of the priests and Levites established by David, had been commenced, was Solomon's work in connection with the temple completed, and the house of God שְׁלֵם, *integer*, perfect in all its parts, as it should be. The last clause, שְׁלֵם בֵּית י', is connected rhetorically with what precedes without the conjunction, and is not to be regarded as a subscription, “with which the historian concludes the whole narrative commencing with 2 Chronicles 1:18” (Berth.); for שְׁלֵם does not signify “ended,” or to be at an end, but to be set thoroughly (perfectly) in order.

2 Chronicles 8:17, 18. *Voyage to Ophir.* Cf. 1 Kings 9:26–28, and the commentary on that passage, where we have discussed the divergences of our narrative, and have also come to the conclusion that Ophir is not to be sought in India, but in Southern Arabia. By אָז the date of this voyage is made to fall in the period after the building of the temple and the palace, i.e., in the second half of Solomon's reign.

2 Chronicles 9

Visit of the Queen of Sheba. Solomon's Riches, and Royal Power and Glory; His Death. (Cf. 1 Kings 10 and 11:41–43.)

2 Chronicles 9:1–12. *The visit of the queen of Sheba.* Cf. 1 Kings 10:1–13.—This event is narrated as a practical proof of Solomon's extraordinary wisdom. The narrative agrees so exactly in both texts, with the exception of some few quite unimportant differences, that we must regard them as literal extracts from an original document which they have used in common. For the commentary on this section, see on 1 Kings 10:1–13.

2 Chronicles 9:13–21. Solomon's revenue in gold, and the use he made of it. Cf. 1 Kings 10:14–22, and the commentary there on this section, which is identical in both narratives, with the exception of some trifling differences. Before וְהַסְחָרִים מְבִיאִים the relative pronoun is to be supplied: “and what the merchants brought.” As to the derivation of the word פְּחוֹת, which comes from the Aramaic form פְּחָה, governor (v. 14), see on Hagg. 1:1.—אֲנִיּוֹת הַלְכוֹת תַּרְשִׁישִׁי, in v. 21, ships going to Tarshish, is an erroneous paraphrase of אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישִׁי, Tarshish-ships, i.e., ships built for long sea voyages; for the fleet did not go to Tartessus in Spain, but to Ophir in Southern Arabia (see on 1 Kings 9:26ff.). All the rest has been explained in the commentary on 1 Kings 10.

2 Chronicles 9:22–28. In vv. 22–28, all that remained to be said of Solomon's royal glory, his riches, his wisdom, and his revenues, is in

conclusion briefly summed up, as in 1 Kings 10:23–29. From v. 25 onwards, the account given in the Chronicle diverges from that in 1 Kings 10:26ff., in so far that what is narrated in 1 Kings 10:26–28 concerning Solomon's chariots and horses, and his trade with Egypt in horses, is here partly replaced by statements similar in import to those in 1 Kings 5, because the former matters had been already treated of in Chronicles 1:14–17.

2 Chronicles 9:25. V. 25 does not correspond to the passage 1 Kings 10:26, but in contents and language agrees with 1 Kings 5:6, and v. 26 with 1 Kings 5:1. Only the general estimate of Solomon's riches in gold and silver, in v. 27, repeated from 2 Chronicles 1:15, corresponds to 1 Kings 10:27. Finally, in v. 28 the whole description is rounded off; all that has already been said in 2 Chronicles 1:16 and 17 as to the trade in horses with Egypt (1 Kings 10:28, 29) being drawn together into one general statement.

2 Chronicles 9:29–31. Conclusion of Solomon's history.—V. 29. Sources; see the introduction, p. 28f.

2 Chronicles 9:30f. The length of his reign, his death and burial, and his successor, as in 1 Kings 11:42f.

2 Chronicles 10

The History of the Kingdom of Judah Until Its Fall.—Ch. 10–36.

2 Chronicles 10–36. After giving an account of the revolt of the ten tribes of Israel from the divinely chosen royal house of David (2 Chronicles 10), the author of the Chronicle narrates the history of the kingdom of Judah—to which he confines himself, to the exclusion of the history of the kingdom of the ten tribes—at much greater length than the author of the books of Kings has done. This latter portrays the development of both kingdoms, but treats only very briefly of the history of the kingdom of Judah, especially under its first rulers, and characterizes the attitude of the kings and people of Judah to the kingdom of Israel and to

the Lord only in the most general way. The author of the Chronicle, on the other hand, depicts the development of Judah under Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, and Jehoshaphat much more thoroughly, by communicating a considerable number of events which are omitted in the book of Kings. As we have already proved (p. 381), the purpose of the chronicler was to show, according to the varying attitude of the kings of the house of David to the Lord and to His law, how, on the one hand, God rewarded the fidelity of the kings and of the people to His covenant with prosperity and blessing, and furnished to the kingdom of Judah, in war with its enemies, power which secured the victory; and how, on the other, He took vengeance for every revolt of the kings and people, and for every fall into idolatry and superstition, by humiliations and awful judgments. And more especially from the times of the godless kings Ahaz and Manasseh does our author do this, pointing out how God suffered the people to fall ever deeper into feebleness, and dependence upon the heathen world powers, until finally, when the efforts of the pious kings Hezekiah and Josiah to bring back the people, sunk as they were in idolatry and moral corruption, to the God of their fathers and to His service failed to bring about any permanent repentance and reformation, He cast forth Judah also from His presence, and gave over Jerusalem and the temple to destruction by the Chaldeans, and caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah to be led away into exile to Babylon.

Ch. 10.—Revolt of the Ten Tribes from Rehoboam and the House of David. (Cf. 1 Kings 12:1–19.)

2 Chronicles 10. This event is narrated in our chapter, except in so far as a few unessential differences in form are concerned, exactly as we have it in 1 Kings 12:1–19; so that we may refer for the exposition of it to the commentary on 1 Kings 12, where we have both treated the contents of this chapter, and have also

discussed the deeper and more latent causes of this event, so important in its consequences.

2 Chronicles 11

Ch. 11 and 12.—Rehoboam's Reign.

2 Chronicles 11–12. When the ten tribes had renounced their allegiance to Rehoboam the son of Solomon, and had made Jeroboam their king (1 Kings 12:20), Rehoboam wished to compel them by force of arms again to submit to him, and made for this purpose a levy of all the men capable of bearing arms in Judah and Benjamin. But the prophet Shemaiah commanded him, in the name of the Lord, to desist from making war upon the Israelites, they being brethren, and Rehoboam abandoned his purpose (vv. 1–4, cf. 1 Kings 12:21–24), and began to establish his dominion over Judah and Benjamin. His kingdom, moreover, was increased in power by the immigration of the priests and Levites, whom Jeroboam had expelled from the priesthood, and also of many God-fearing Israelites out of the ten tribes, to Judah (vv. 13–17). Rehoboam also set his family affairs in order, by nominating from among his many sons, whom his wives had borne to him, Abijah to be his successor on the throne, and making provision for the others in different parts of the country (vv. 18–23). But when he had established his royal authority, he forsook the law of Jahve, and was punished for it by the inroad of the Egyptian king Shishak, who marched through his land with a numerous host, took Jerusalem, and plundered the palace and the temple (2 Chronicles 12:1–11), but without wholly ruining Judah; and Rehoboam was king until his death, and his son succeeded him on the throne (vv. 12–16).

The order in which these events are narrated is not chronological; they are rather grouped together according to their similarities. As Rehoboam began even in the third year of his reign to forsake the law of God, and King Shishak made war upon Judah as early as in his fifth year, the building of the fortresses may have been begun in the first three or four years, but cannot have been ended then; still less can

the sons of Rehoboam have been provided for in the time before Shishak's inroad.

2 Chronicles 11:1–4. *Rehoboam's attitude to the ten rebel tribes.* Cf. 1 Kings 12:21–24.—

Rehoboam's purpose, to subdue these tribes by force of arms, and bring them again under his dominion, and the abandonment of this purpose in consequence of the command of the prophet Shemaiah, belong in a certain measure to the history of the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David; for the revolt only became an accomplished fact when the prophet Shemaiah proclaimed in the name of the Lord that the matter was from the Lord. V. 3f. Of Jahve was the thing done; He had ordained the revolt as a chastisement of the seed of David for walking no more in His ways. Solomon had, by allowing himself to be seduced by his many foreign wives into departing from the Lord, exposed himself to the divine displeasure, and his successor Rehoboam increased the guilt by his impolitic treatment of the tribes dissatisfied with Solomon's rule, and had, if not brought about the revolt, yet hastened it; but yet the conduct of these tribes was not thereby justified. Their demand that the burdens laid upon them by Solomon should be lightened, flowed from impure and godless motives, and at bottom had its root in discontent with the theocratic rule of the house of David (see on 1 Kings 12:21ff.). The expression, "to all Israel in Judah and Benjamin," is deeper than "the whole house of Judah and Benjamin and the remnant of the people," i.e., those belonging to the other tribes who were dwelling in the tribal domains of Judah and Benjamin (1 Kings 12:23); for it characterizes all who had remained true to the house of David as Israel, i.e., those who walked in the footsteps of their progenitor Israel (Jacob).

2 Chronicles 11:5–12. *Rehoboam's measures for the fortifying of his kingdom.*—To defend his kingdom against hostile attacks, Rehoboam built cities for defence in Judah. The sing. לְמִצּוֹר is used, because the building of cities served for the defence of the kingdom. Judah is the name of the kingdom, for the fifteen fenced cities

enumerated in the following verses were situated in the tribal domains of both Benjamin and Judah.

2 Chronicles 11:6. In Judah lay Bethlehem, a small city mentioned as early as in Jacob's time (Gen. 35:19), two hours south of Jerusalem, the birthplace of David and of Christ (Mic. 5:1; Matt. 2:5, 11), now Beit-Lahm; see on Josh. 15:59. Etam is not the place bearing the same name which is spoken of in 1 Chronicles 4:32 and Judg. 15:8, and mentioned in the Talmud as the place where, near Solomon's Pools, the aqueduct which supplied Jerusalem with water commenced (cf. Robins. *Pal. sub voce*; Tobler, *Topogr. v. Jerus.* ii. S. 84ff., 855ff.);³ nor is it to be looked for, as Robins. *loc. cit.*, and *New Bibl. Researches*, maintains, in the present village *Urtâs (Artâs)*, for it has been identified by Tobl., *dritte Wand.* S. 89, with *Ain Attân*, a valley south-west from *Artâs*. Not only does the name *Attân* correspond more than *Artâs* with Etam, but from it the water is conducted to Jerusalem, while according to Tobler's thorough conviction it could not have been brought from *Artâs*. Tekoa, now Tekua, on the summit of a hill covered with ancient ruins, two hours south of Bethlehem; see on Josh. 15:59.

2 Chronicles 11:7. Beth-zur was situated where the ruin Beth-Sur now stands, midway between *Urtâs* and Hebron; see on Josh. 15:58. Shoko, the present Shuweike in Wady Sumt, 3 1/2 hours south-west from Jerusalem; see on Josh. 15:35. Adullam, in Josh. 15:35 included among the cities of the hill country, reckoned part of the lowland (Shephelah), i.e., the slope of the hills, has not yet been discovered. Tobler, *dritte Wand.* S. 151, conjectures that it is identical with the present Dula, about eight miles to the east of Beit-Jibrin; but this can hardly be correct (see against it, Arnold in Herzog's *Realenc.* xiv. S. 723. It is much more probable that its site was that of the present Deir Dubban, two hours to the north of Beit-Jibrin; see on Josh. 12:15.

2 Chronicles 11:8. Gath, a royal city of the Philistines, which was first made subject to the Israelites by David (1 Chronicles 18:1), and was

under Solomon the seat of its own king, who was subject to the Israelite king (1 Kings 2:39), has not yet been certainly discovered; see on Josh. 13:3.⁴ Mareshah, the city Marissa, on the road from Hebron to the land of the Philistines, was at a later time very important, and is not represented by the ruin Marash, twenty-four minutes to the south of Beit-Jibrin (Eleutheropolis); see on Josh. 15:44, and Tobl. *dritte Wand.* S. 129, 142f. Ziph is probably the Ziph mentioned in Josh. 15:55, in the hill country of Judah, of which ruins yet remain on the hill Ziph, about an hour and a quarter south-east of Hebron; see on Josh. 15:55. C. v. Raumer thinks, on the contrary, *Pal.* S. 222, Anm. 249, that our Ziph, as it is mentioned along with Mareshah and other cities of the lowland, cannot be identified with either of the Ziph mentioned in Josh. 15:24 and 55, but is probably Achzib in the lowland mentioned along with Mareshah, Josh. 15:44; but this is very improbable.

2 Chronicles 11:9. Adoraim (Ἀδωραῖμ in Joseph. Antt. viii. 10. 1), met with in 1 Macc. 13:20 as an Idumean city, Ἀδωρα, and so also frequently in Josephus, was taken by Hyrcanus, and rebuilt by Gabinius (Jos. Antt. xiii. 15. 4, and xiv. 5. 3) under the name Δῶρα, and often spoken of along with Marissa (s. Reland, *Palaest.* p. 547). Robinson (*Pal. sub voce*) has identified it with the present *Dâra*, a village about 7 1/2 miles to the westward of Hebron. Lachish, situated in the lowland of Judah, as we learn from Josh. 15:39, is probably the present Um Lakis, on the road from Gaza to Beit-Jibrin and Hebron, to the left hand, seven hours to the west of Beit-Jibrin, on a circular height covered with ancient walls and marble fragments, and overgrown with thistles and bushes; see on Josh. 10:3, and Pressel in Herz.'s *Realenc.* viii. S. 157f. Azekah, situated in the neighbourhood of Shoco (v. 7), and, according to 1 Sam. 17:1, in an oblique direction near Ephes-Dammim, i.e., *Damûm*, one hour east to the south of Beit-Nettif,⁵ has not been re-discovered; see on Josh. 10:10.

2 Chronicles 11:10. Zorah, Samson's birthplace, is represented by the ruin Sura, at the south-west end of the ridge, which encloses the Wady es Surar on the north; see on Josh. 15:33. To the north of that again lay Ajalon, now the village *Jâlo*, on the verge of the plain *Merj ibn Omeir*, four leagues to the west of Gibeon; see on Josh. 10:12 and 19:42. Finally, Hebron, the ancient city of the patriarchs, now called el Khalil (The friend of God, i.e., Abraham); see on Gen. 23:2. All these fenced cities lay in the tribal domain of Judah, with the exception of Zorah and Ajalon, which were assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:41f.). These two were probably afterwards, in the time of the judges, when a part of the Danites emigrated from Zorah and Eshtaol to the north of Palestine (Judg. 18:1), taken possession of by Benjamites, and were afterwards reckoned to the land of Benjamin, and are here named as cities which Rehoboam fortified in Benjamin. If we glance for a moment at the geographical position of the whole fifteen cities, we see that they lay partly to the south of Jerusalem, on the road which went by Hebron to Beersheba and Egypt, partly on the western slopes of the hill country of Judah, on the road by Beit-Jibrin to Gaza, while only a few lay to the north of this road towards the Philistine plain, and there were none to the north to defend the kingdom against invasions from that side. "Rehoboam seems, therefore, to have had much more apprehension of an attack from the south and west, i.e., from the Egyptians, than of a war with the northern kingdom" (Berth.). Hence we may conclude that Rehoboam fortified these cities only after the inroad of the Egyptian king Shishak.

2 Chronicles 11:11f. "And he made strong the fortresses, and put captains in them," etc.; i.e., he increased their strength by placing them in a thoroughly efficient condition to defend themselves against attacks, appointing commandants (גִּיּוֹדִים), provisioning them, and (v. 12) laying up stores of all kinds of arms. In this way he made them exceedingly strong. The last clause, v. 12, "And there were to him Judah

and Benjamin," corresponds to the statement, 10:19, that Israel revolted from the house of David, and forms the conclusion of the account (vv. 1–17a) of that which Rehoboam did to establish his power and consolidate his kingdom. There follows hereupon, in

2 Chronicles 11:13–17. Vv. 13–17, the account of the internal spiritual strengthening of the kingdom of Judah by the *migration of the priests and Levites, and many pious worshippers of Jahve out of all the tribes, to the kingdom of Judah.*

2 Chronicles 11:13. The priests and Levites in all Israel went over to him out of their whole domain. הִתְיַצַּב עַל, to present oneself before any one, to await his commands, cf. Zech. 6:5, Job 1:6; 2:1; here in the signification to place oneself at another's disposal, i.e., to go over to one. The suffix in גְּבוּלָם refers to "all Israel."

For—this was the motive of their migration, v. 14—the Levites (in the wider signification of the word, including the priests) forsook their territory and their possessions, i.e., the cities assigned to them, with the pasture lands for their cattle (Num. 35:1–8), *scil.* in the domain of the ten tribes; "for Jeroboam and his sons had driven them out from the priesthood of Jahve." To prevent his subjects from visiting the temple at Jerusalem, which he feared might ultimately cause the people to return to the house of David, Jeroboam had erected his own places of worship for his kingdom in Bethel and Dan, where Jahve was worshipped in the ox images (the golden calves), and had appointed, not the Levites, but men from the body of the people, to be priests in these so-called sanctuaries (1 Kings 12:26–31), consecrated by himself. By these innovations not only the priests and Levites, who would not recognise this unlawful image-worship, were compelled to migrate to Judah and Jerusalem, but also the pious worshippers of the Lord, who would not renounce the temple worship which had been consecrated by God Himself. All Jeroboam's successors held firmly by this calf-worship introduced by him, and consequently the driving out of the priests and Levites is here

said to have been the act of Jeroboam and his sons. By his sons are meant Jeroboam's successors on the throne, without respect to the fact that of Jeroboam's own sons only Nadab reached the throne, and that his dynasty terminated with him; for in this matter all the kings of Israel walked in the footsteps of Jeroboam.

2 Chronicles 11:15. And had ordained him priests for the high places. וַיַּעֲמֵד-לוֹ is a continuation of הַזְּנוּקָהם, v. 14. בָּמֹת are the places of worship which were erected by Jeroboam for the image-worship, called in 1 Kings 12:31 בָּמֹת בָּיִת; see on that passage. The gods worshipped in these houses in high places the author of the Chronicle calls שְׁעִירִים from their nature, and עֲגָלִים from their form. The word שְׁעִירִים is taken from Lev. 17:7, and signifies demons, so named from the Egyptian idolatry, in which the worship of goats, of Pan (Mendes), who was always represented in the form of a goat, occupied a prominent place; see on Lev. 17:7. For further details as to the עֲגָלִים, see on 1 Kings 12:28.

2 Chronicles 11:16. אַחֲרֵיהֶם, after them, i.e., following after the priests and Levites. With הַנְּתַנִּים אֶת-לִבָּבָם, who turned their hearts thereto, cf. 1 Chronicles 22:19. They went to Jerusalem to sacrifice there; i.e., as we learn from the context, not merely to offer sacrifices, but also to remain in the kingdom of Judah.

2 Chronicles 11:17. These immigrants—priests, Levites, and pious worshippers of Jahve—made the kingdom of Judah strong, by strengthening the religious foundation on which the kingdom was founded, and made Rehoboam strong three years, so that they (king and people) walked in the way of David and Solomon. The strengthening lasted only three years—only while the opposition to Jeroboam's action in the matter of religion was kept alive by the emigration of the pious people from the ten tribes. What occurred after these

three years is narrated only in 2 Chronicles 12.—Here there follows, in

2 Chronicles 11:18–23. Vv. 18–23, information as to *Rehoboam's family relationships*.—V. 18. Instead of בָּן we must read, with the Keri, many MSS, LXX, and Vulg., בַּת: Mahalath the daughter of Jerimoth, the son of David. Among the sons of David (1 Chronicles 3:1–8) no Jerimoth is found. If this name be not another form of יִתְרָעַם, 1 Chronicles 3:3, Jerimoth must have been a son of one of David's concubines. Before the name אַבְיָחַיִל, must have been dropped out, and is to be supplied; so that Mahalath's father and mother are both named: the daughter of Jerimoth the son of David, and Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse, i.e., David's eldest brother (1 Chronicles 2:13; 1 Sam. 17:13). For Abihail cannot be held to be a second wife of Rehoboam, because v. 19, "and she bore," and v. 20, "and after her," show that in v. 18 only one wife is named. She bare him three sons, whose names occur only here (v. 19).

2 Chronicles 11:20. Maachah the daughter, i.e., the granddaughter, of Absalom; for she cannot have been Absalom's daughter, because Absalom, according to 2 Sam. 14:27, had only one daughter, Tamar by name, who must have been fifty years old at Solomon's death. According to 2 Sam. 18:18, Absalom left no son; Maachah therefore can only be a daughter of Tamar, who, according to 2 Chronicles 13:2, was married to Uriel of Gibeah: see on 1 Kings 15:2. Abijah, the oldest son of Maachah, whom his father nominated his successor (v. 22 and 12:16), is called in the book of Kings constantly Abijam, the original form of the name, which was afterwards weakened into Abijah.

2 Chronicles 11:21f. Only these wives with their children are mentioned by name, though besides these Rehoboam had a number of wives, 18 wives and 60 (according to Josephus, 30) concubines, who bore him twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters. Rehoboam trod in his father's footsteps in this not quite praiseworthy point. The eldest son of Maachah he

made head (לְרֹאשׁ), i.e., prince, among his brethren; כִּי לְהַמְלִיכוֹ, for to make him king, *scil.* was his intention. The infin. with לְ is here used in the swiftness of speech in loose connection to state with what further purpose he had appointed him נָגִיד; cf. Ew. § 351, c, at the end.

2 Chronicles 11:23. And he did wisely, and dispersed of all his sons in all the countries of Judah and Benjamin, i.e., dispersed all his sons so, that they were placed in all parts of Judah and Benjamin in the fenced cities, and he gave them victual in abundance, and he sought (for them) a multitude of wives. שָׁאַל, to ask for, for the father brought about the marriage of his sons. He therefore took care that his sons, by being thus scattered in the fenced cities of the country as their governors, were separated from each other, but also that they received the necessary means for living in a way befitting their princely rank, in the shape of an abundant maintenance and a considerable number of wives. They were thus kept in a state of contentment, so that they might not make any attempt to gain the crown, which he had reserved for Abijah; and in this lay the wisdom of his conduct.

2 Chronicles 12

2 Chronicles 12. *Rehoboam's defection from the Lord, and his humiliation by the Egyptian king Shishak.*—V. 1. The infinitive בְּהִקְבִּין, “at the time of the establishing,” with an indefinite subject, may be expressed in English by the passive: when Rehoboam’s royal power was established. The words refer back to 11:17. בְּהִזְקָתוֹ, “when he had become strong” (הִזְקָה is a *nomen verbale*: the becoming strong; cf. 26:16, Dan. 11:2), he forsook the Lord, and all Israel with him. The inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah are here called Israel, to hint at the contrast between the actual conduct of the people in their defection from the Lord, and the destiny of Israel, the people of God. The forsaking of the law of Jahve is in substance the fall into

idolatry, as we find it stated more definitely in 1 Kings 14:22ff.

2 Chronicles 12:2. In punishment of this defection (כִּי מָעִלוּ בִי, because they had acted faithlessly to Jahve), Shishak, the king of Egypt, marched with a great host against Jerusalem. This hostile invasion is also briefly narrated in 1 Kings 14:25–28. Shishak (Sisak) is, as we have remarked on 1 Kings 14, Sesonchis or Sechonchosis, the first king of the 22nd dynasty, who has celebrated his victory in a relief at Karnak. In this sculpture the names of the cities captured are recorded on shields, and a considerable number have been deciphered with some certainty, and by them our account is completely confirmed. According to v. 3, Shishak’s host consisted of 1200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen—numbers which, of course, are founded only upon a rough estimate—and an innumerable multitude of footmen, among whom were לִיבְיִים, Libyans, probably the Libyaegyptii of the ancients (see on Gen. 10:13); סְכִיִּים, according to the LXX and Vulg. Troglodytes, probably the Ethiopian Troglodytes, who dwelt in the mountains on the west coast of the Arabian Gulf; and Cushites, i.e., Ethiopians. The Libyans and Cushites are mentioned in Nahum 3:9 also as auxiliaries of the Egyptians.

2 Chronicles 12:4. After the capture of the fenced cities of Judah, he marched against Jerusalem.—V. 5. Then the prophet Shemaiah announced to the king and the princes, who had retired to Jerusalem before Shishak, that the Lord had given them into the power of Shishak because they had forsaken Him. עָזַב בְּיָד, forsaken and given over into the hand of Shishak. When the king and the priests immediately humbled themselves before God, acknowledging the righteousness of the Lord, the prophet announced to them further that the Lord would not destroy them since they had humbled themselves, but would give them deliverance in a little space. בְּקִמְעַט, according to a little, i.e., in a short time. פְּלִיטָה is accusative

after וַיִּתְהַיֵּי. My anger shall not pour itself out upon Jerusalem. The pouring out of anger is the designation of an exterminating judgment; cf. 34:25.

2 Chronicles 12:8. But (כי after a negative clause) they shall be his servants, sc. for a short time (see v. 7), “that they may know my service, and the service of the kingdoms of the countries” (cf. 1 Chronicles 29:30); i.e., that they may learn to know by experience the difference between the rule of God and that of the heathen kings, and that God’s rule was not so oppressive as that of the rulers of the world.

2 Chronicles 12:9. With v. 9 the account of the war is taken up again and continued by the repetition of the words, “Then marched Shishak ... against Jerusalem” (v. 4). Shishak plundered the treasures of the temple and the palace; he had consequently captured Jerusalem. The golden shields also which had been placed in the house of the forest of Lebanon, i.e., the palace built by Solomon in Jerusalem, which Solomon had caused to be made (cf. 9:16), Shishak took away, and in their place Rehoboam caused brazen shields to be prepared; see on 1 Kings 14:26–28.—In v. 12 the author of the Chronicle concludes the account of this event with the didactic remark, “Because he (Rehoboam) humbled himself, the anger of Jahve was turned away from him.” וְלֹא לְהַשְׁחִיתָ, and it was not to extermination utterly (לְכַלְהָ, properly to destruction, i.e., completely; cf. Ezek. 13:13). And also in Judah were good things. This is the other motive which caused the Lord to turn away His wrath. Good things are proofs of piety and fear of God, cf. 19:3.

2 Chronicles 12:13f. The length of Rehoboam’s reign, his mother, and the judgment about him. Cf. 1 Kings 14:21 and 22a. וַיִּתְחַזַּק here, as in 13:21, can, in its connection with what precedes, be only understood to mean that Rehoboam, after his humiliation at the hands of Shishak, by which his kingdom was utterly weakened and almost destroyed, again gained strength and power. Cf. also 1:1, where וַיִּתְחַזַּק is

used of Solomon in the beginning of his reign, after he overcame Adonijah, the pretender to the crown, and his party.—As to the age of Rehoboam, etc., see on 1 Kings 14:21. וַיַּעַשׂ הָרָע, v. 14, is defined by the addition, “for he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.” For the expression cf. 19:3; 30:19, Ezra 7:10.

2 Chronicles 12:15, 16. Close of his reign. On the authorities, see the Introduction, p. 34; and in reference to the other statements, the commentary on 1 Kings 14:29–31. מִלְחָמוֹת, wars, i.e., a state of hostility, was between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all days, can only be understood of the hostile attitude of the two rulers to each other, like מִלְחָמָה in Kings; for we have no narrative of wars between them after Rehoboam had abandoned, at the instance of the prophet, his proposed war with the Israelites at the commencement of his reign.

2 Chronicles 13

The Reign of Abijah. (Cf. 1 Kings 15:1–8.)

2 Chronicles 13. In the book of Kings it is merely remarked in general, that the hostile relationship between Jeroboam and Rehoboam continued during his whole life, and that between Abijah and Jeroboam there was war (vv. 6 and 7); but not one of his enterprises is recounted, and only his attitude towards the Lord is exactly characterized. In our chapter, on the contrary, we have a vivid and circumstantial narrative of the commencement, course, and results of a great war against Jeroboam, in which Abijah, with the help of the Lord, inflicted a crushing defeat on the great army of the Israelites, and conquered several cities.

2 Chronicles 13:1, 2. The commencement and duration of the reign, as in 1 Kings 15:1, 2. Abijah’s mother is here (v. 2) called Michaiah instead of Maachah, as in 11:20 and 1 Kings 15:2, but it can hardly be a second name which Maachah had received for some unknown reason; probably מִיכַיָּהוּ is a mere orthographical error for מַעֲכָה. She is here

called, not the daughter = granddaughter of Abishalom, but after her father, the daughter of Uriel of Gibeah; see on 11:20.⁶

2 Chronicles 13:2–21. *The War between Abijah and Jeroboam.*—מִלְחָמָה הִיָּתְהָה, war arose, broke out.

2 Chronicles 13:3. Abijah began the war with an army of 400,000 valiant warriors. אִישׁ בְּחֹרֶר, chosen men. אָסַר אֶת ס, to bind on war, i.e., to open the war. Jeroboam prepared for the war with 800,000 warriors. The number of Jeroboam's warriors is exactly that which Joab returned as the result, as to Israel, of the numbering of the people commanded by David, while that of Abijah's army is less by 100,000 men than Joab numbered in Judah (2 Sam. 24:9).

2 Chronicles 13:4ff. When the two armies lay over against each other, ready for the combat, Abijah addressed the enemy, King Jeroboam and all Israel, in a speech from Mount Zemaraim. The mountain צְמַרַיִם is met with only here; but a city of this name is mentioned in Josh. 18:22, whence we would incline to the conclusion that the mountain near or upon which this city lay was intended. But if this city was situated to the east, not only of Bethel, but also of Jerusalem, on the road to Jericho (see on Josh. 18:22), as we may conclude from its enumeration between Beth-Arabah and Bethel in Josh. *loc. cit.*, it will not suit our passage, at least if Zemaraim be really represented by the ruin el Sumra to the east of Khan Hadur on the way from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robinson (*Phys. Geog.* S. 38) conjectures Mount Zemaraim to the east of Bethel, near the border of the two kingdoms, to which Mount Ephraim also extends. Abijah represented first of all (vv. 5–7) to Jeroboam and the Israelites that their kingdom was the result of a revolt against Jahve, who had given the kingship over Israel to David and his sons for ever.

2 Chronicles 13:5. "Is it not to you to know?" i.e., can it be unknown to you? בְּרִית מָלַח, accus. of nearer definition: after the fashion of a

covenant of salt, i.e., of an irrevocable covenant; cf. on Lev. 2:13 and Num. 18:19. "And Jeroboam, the servant of Solomon the son of David (cf. 1 Kings 11:11), rebelled against his lord," with the help of frivolous, worthless men (מִרְקִים as in Judg. 9:4; 11:3; בְּנֵי בְלִיעַל as in 1 Kings 21:10, 13, —not recurring elsewhere in the Chronicle), who gathered around him, and rose against Rehoboam with power. הִתְאַמֵּץ עַל, to show oneself powerful, to show power against any one. Against this rising Rehoboam showed himself not strong enough, because he was an inexperienced man and soft of heart. נֶעַר denotes not "a boy," for Rehoboam was forty-one years old when he entered upon his reign, but "an inexperienced young man," as in 1 Chronicles 29:1. רַךְ לֵבָב, soft of heart, i.e., faint-hearted, inclined to give way, without energy to make a stand against those rising insolently against him. וְלֹא הִתְחַזַּק לָהֶם, and showed himself not strong before them, proved to be too weak in opposition to them. This representation does not conform to the state of the case as narrated in 2 Chronicles 10. Rehoboam did not appear soft-hearted and compliant in the negotiation with the rebellious tribes at Sichern; on the contrary, he was hard and defiant, and showed himself youthfully inconsiderate only in throwing to the winds the wise advice of the older men, and in pursuance of the rash counsel of the young men who had grown up with him, brought about the rupture by his domineering manner. But Abijah wishes to justify his father as much as possible in his speech, and shifts all the guilt of the rebellion of the ten tribes from the house of David on to Jeroboam and his worthless following.

2 Chronicles 13:8, 9. Abijah then points out to his opponents the vanity of their trust in the great multitude of their warriors and their gods, while yet they had driven out the priests of Jahve. "And now ye say," *scil.* in your heart, i.e., you think to show yourself strong before the kingdom of Jahve in the hands of the sons of David, i.e., against the kingdom of Jahve ruled over by the sons of David, by raising a great

army in order to make war upon and to destroy this kingdom. וְאַתֶּם הֶמּוֹן רַב, and truly ye are a great multitude, and with you are the golden calves, which Jeroboam hath made to you for gods; but trust not unto them, for Jahve, the true God, have ye not for you as a helper.

2 Chronicles 13:9. “Yea, ye have cast out the priests of Jahve, the sons of Aaron, and made you priests after the manner of the nations of the lands. Every one who has come, to fill his hand with a young bullock and ... he has become a priest to the no-god.” מִלֵּא יָדוֹ, to fill his hand, denotes, in the language of the law, to invest one with the priesthood, and connected with לִיהוָה it signifies to provide oneself with that which is to be offered to Jahve. To fill his hand with a young bullock, etc., therefore denotes to come with sacrificial beasts, to cause oneself to be consecrated priest. The animals mentioned also, a young bullock and seven rams, point to the consecration to the priesthood. In Ex. 29 a young bullock as a sin-offering, a ram as a burnt-offering, and a ram as a consecratory-offering, are prescribed for this purpose. These sacrifices were to be repeated during seven days, so that in all seven rams were required for consecratory-sacrifices. Abijah mentions only one young bullock along with these, because it was not of any importance for him to enumerate perfectly the sacrifices which were necessary. But by offering these sacrifices no one becomes a priest of Jahve, and consequently the priests of Jeroboam also are only priests for Not-Elohim, i.e., only for the golden calves made Elohim by Jeroboam, to whom the attributes of the Godhead did not belong.

2 Chronicles 13:10, 11. While, therefore, the Israelites have no-gods in their golden calves, Judah has Jahve for its God, whom it worships in His temple in the manner prescribed by Moses. “But in Jahve is our God, and we have not forsaken Him,” in so far, viz., as they observed the legal Jahve-worship. So Abijah himself explains his words, “as priests serve Him the sons of Aaron (who were chosen by

Jahve), and the Levites are בְּמִלְאָכָה, in service,” i.e., performing the service prescribed to them. As essential parts of that service of God, the offering of the daily burnt-offering and the daily incense-offering (Ex. 29:38ff., 30:7), the laying out of the shew-bread (Ex. 25:30; Lev. 24:5ff.), the lighting of the lamps of the golden candlesticks (Ex. 25:37; 27:20f.), are mentioned. In this respect they keep the מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה (cf. Lev. 8:35).

2 Chronicles 13:12. Abijah draws from all this the conclusion: “Behold, with us at our head are (not the two calves of gold, but) God (הָאֱלֹהִים with the article, the true God) and His priests, and the alarm-trumpets to sound against you.” He mentions the trumpets as being the divinely appointed pledges that God would remember them in war, and would deliver them from their enemies, Num. 10:9. Then he closes with a warning to the Israelites not to strive with Jahve, the God of their fathers.

2 Chronicles 13:13–17. The war; Judah’s victory, and the defeat of Jeroboam and the Israelites.—V. 13. Jeroboam caused the ambush (the troops appointed to be an ambush) to go round about, so as to come upon their rear (i.e., of the men of Judah); and so they (the main division of Jeroboam’s troops) were before Judah, and the ambush in their rear (i.e., of the men of Judah); and the men of Judah, when they turned themselves (*scil.* to attack), saw war before and behind them, i.e., perceived that they were attacked in front and rear. In this dangerous position the men of Judah cried to the Lord, and the priests blew the trumpets (v. 15); and as they raised this war-cry, God smote their enemies so that they took to flight. In וַיִּרְעוּ and בְּהִרְיֵעַ the loud shout of the warriors and the clangour of the trumpets in the hands of the priests are comprehended; and הִרְיֵעַ is neither to be taken to refer only to the war-cry raised by the warriors in making the attack, nor, with Bertheau, to be referred only to the blowing of the trumpets.

2 Chronicles 13:16f. So Abijah and his people inflicted a great blow (defeat) on the Israelites, so that 500,000 of them, i.e., more than the half of Jeroboam's whole army, fell.

2 Chronicles 13:18f. The results of this victory. The Israelites were bowed down, their power weakened; the men of Judah became strong, mighty, because they relied upon Jahve their God. Following up his victory, Abijah took from Jeroboam several cities with their surrounding domains: Bethel, the present Beitin, see on Josh. 7:2; Jeshanah, occurring only here, and the position of which has not yet been ascertained; and Ephron (עֶפְרוֹן, Keth.; the Keri, on the contrary, עֶפְרָיִם). This city cannot well be identified with Mount Ephron, Josh. 15:9; for that mountain was situated on the southern frontier of Benjamin, not far from Jerusalem, while the city Ephron is to be sought much farther north, in the neighbourhood of Bethel. C. v. Raumer and others identify Ephron or Ephraim both with Ophrah of Benjamin, which, it is conjectured, was situated near or in Tayibeh, to the east of Bethel, and with the Ἐφραῖμ, John 11:54, whither Jesus withdrew into the wilderness, which, according to Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9. 9, lay in the neighbourhood of Bethel. See on Josh. 18:23.⁷

2 Chronicles 13:20. Jeroboam could not afterwards gain power (עָצַר כּוֹחַ, as in 1 Chronicles 29:14): "And Jahve smote him, and he died." The meaning of this remark is not clear, since we know nothing further of the end of Jeroboam's life than that he died two years after Abijah. וַיָּגְפָרוּ can hardly refer to the unfortunate result of the war (v. 15ff.), for Jeroboam outlived the war by several years. We would be more inclined to understand it of the blow mentioned in 1 Kings 14:1-8, when God announced to him by Ahijah the extermination of his house, and took away his son Abijah, who was mourned by all Israel.

2 Chronicles 13:21-23. *Wives and children of Abijah. His death.*—V. 21. While Jeroboam was not able to recover from the defeat he had suffered, Abijah established himself in his

kingdom (יְהוּדָה, cf. 12:13), and took to himself fourteen wives. The taking of these wives is not to be regarded as later in time than his establishment of his rule after the victory over Jeroboam. Since Abijah reigned only three years, he must have already had the greater number of his wives and children when he ascended the throne, as we may gather also from 2 Chronicles 11:21-23. The ו consec. with אֲשֶׁר serves only to connect logically the information as to his wives and children with the preceding, as the great increase of his family was a sign of Abijah's increase in strength, while Jeroboam's dynasty was soon extirpated.

2 Chronicles 13:22. As to the מְדַבֵּר of the prophet Iddo, see the Introduction, p. 391.

2 Chronicles 13:23. This is remarked here, because this rest was also a result of Abijah's great victory over Jeroboam.

2 Chronicles 14

Ch. 14-16.—Asa's Reign.

2 Chronicles 14-16. In 1 Kings 15:9-24 it is merely recorded of Asa, that he reigned forty-one years, did that which was right as David did, removed from the land all the idols which his fathers had made, and, although the high places were not removed, was devoted to the Lord during his whole life, and laid up in the temple treasury all that had been consecrated by his father and himself. Then it is related that when Baasha marched against him, and began to fortify Ramah, he induced the Syrian king Benhadad, by sending to him the treasures of the temple and of his palace, to break faith with Baasha, and to make an inroad upon and smite the northern portion of the land; that Baasha was thereby compelled to abandon the building of Ramah, and to fall back to Tirzah, and that thereupon Asa caused the fortifications of Ramah to be pulled down, and the cities Geba and Benjamin and Mizpah to be fortified with the materials; and, finally, it is recorded that Asa in his old age became diseased in his feet,

and died. The Chronicle also characterizes Asa as a pious king, who did that which was right, and removed the high places and sun-pillars in the land; but gives, as to other matters, a much more detailed account of his reign of forty-one years. It states that in the first years, as the land had rest, he built fortified cities in Judah, and had an army fit for war (2 Chronicles 14:1-7); that thereupon he marched against the Cushite Zerah, who was then advancing upon Judah with an innumerable host, prayed for help to the Lord, who then smote the Cushites, so that they fled; and that Asa pursued them to Gerar, and returned with great booty (vv. 8-14). Then we learn that the prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, came to meet him, who, pointing to the victory which the Lord had granted them, called upon the king and the people to remain steadfast in their fidelity to the Lord; that Asa thereupon took courage, extirpated all the still remaining idolatrous abominations from the land, and in the fifteenth year of his reign held with the people a great sacrificial feast in Jerusalem, renewed the covenant with the Lord, crushed out all the remains of former idolatry, although the high places were not destroyed, and also deposited in the temple treasury all that had been consecrated by his father and himself (2 Chronicles 15). Thereafter Baasha's inroad upon Judah and the alliance with Ben-hadad of Syria are narrated (2 Chronicles 16:1-6), as in the book of Kings; but it is also added that the prophet Hanani censured his seeking help from the king of Syria, and was thereupon put into the prison-house by Asa (vv. 7-10); and then we have an account of the end of his reign, in which several additions to the account in 1 Kings are communicated (vv. 11-14).

2 Chronicles 14:1-7. *Asa's efforts for the abolition of idolatry and the establishment of the kingdom.*—Vv. 1-4. The good and right in God's eyes which Asa did is further defined in vv. 2-4. He abolished all the objects of the idolatrous worship. The "altars of the strangers" are altars consecrated to foreign gods; from them the *בָּמֹת*, high places, are distinguished,—these latter being illegal places of sacrifice connected

with the worship of Jahve (see on 1 Kings 15:14). The *מַצֵּבֹת* are the statues or monumental columns consecrated to Baal, and *אֲשֵׁרִים* the wooden idols, tree-trunks, or trees, which were consecrated to Astarte (see on 1 Kings 14:23 and Deut. 16:21). Asa at the same time commanded the people to worship Jahve, the God of the fathers, and to follow the law.

2 Chronicles 14:4. He removed from all the cities of Judah the altars of the high places, and the *הַמְּנִיָּם*, sun-pillars, pillars or statues consecrated to Baal as sun-god, which were erected near or upon the altars of Baal (2 Chronicles 34:4; see on Lev. 26:30). In consequence of this the kingdom had rest *לְפָנָיו*, before him, i.e., under his oversight (cf. Num. 8:22). This ten-years' quiet (2 Chronicles 13:23) which God granted him, Asa employed in building fortresses in Judah (v. 5). "We will build these cities, and surround them with walls and towers, gates and bolts." It is not said what the cities were, but they were at any rate others than Geba and Mizpah, which he caused to be built after the war with Baasha (2 Chronicles 16:6). "The land is still before us," i.e., open, free from enemies, so that we may freely move about, and build therein according to our pleasure. For the phraseology, cf. Gen. 13:9. The repetition of *דְּרָשְׁנוּ*, v. 6, is impassioned speech. "They built and had success;" they built with effect, without meeting with any hindrances.

2 Chronicles 14:7. Asa had also a well-equipped, well-armed army. The men of Judah were armed with a large shield and lance (cf. 1 Chronicles 12:24), the Benjamites with a small shield and bow (cf. 1 Chronicles 8:40). The numbers are great; of Judah 300,000, of Benjamin 280,000 men. Since in these numbers the whole population capable of bearing arms is included, 300,000 men does not appear too large for Judah, but 280,000 is a very large number for Benjamin, and is founded probably on an overestimate.

2 Chronicles 14:8-14. *The victory over the Cushite Zerah.*—V. 8. "And there went forth

against them Zerah.” אֲלֵיהֶם for עֲלֵיהֶם refers to Asa’s warriors mentioned in v. 7. The number of the men in Judah capable of bearing arms is mentioned only to show that Asa set his hope of victory over the innumerable host of the Cushites not on the strength of his army, but on the all-powerful help of the Lord (v. 10). The Cushite זְרָח is usually identified with the second king of the 22nd (Bubastitic) dynasty, Osorchon I; while Brugsch, *hist. de l’Eg.* i. p. 298, on the contrary, has raised objections, and holds Zerah to be an Ethiopian and not an Egyptian prince, who in the reign of Takeloth I, about 944 B.C., probably marched through Egypt as a conqueror (cf. G. Rösch in Herz.’s *Realenc.* xviii. S. 460). The statement as to Zerah’s army, that it numbered 1,000,000 warriors and 300 war-chariots, rests upon a rough estimate, in which 1000 times 1000 expresses the idea of the greatest possible number. The Cushites pressed forward to Mareshah, i.e., Marissa, between Hebron and Ashdod (see on 11:8).

2 Chronicles 14:9. Thither Asa marched to meet them, and drew up his army in battle array in the valley Zephathah, near Mareshah. The valley Zephathah is not, as Robins., *Pal. sub voce*, thinks, to be identified with Tel es Safieh, but must lie nearer Mareshah, to the west or north-west of *Marâsch*.

2 Chronicles 14:10. Then he called upon the Lord his God for help. אֵין עִמָּךְ וגו’ we translate, with Berth., “None is with Thee (on עִמָּךְ, cf. 20:6, Ps. 73:25) to help between a mighty one and a weak,” i.e., no other than Thou can help in an unequal battle, i.e., help the weaker side; while the Vulg., on the contrary, after the analogy of 1 Sam. 14:6, translates, “*non est apud te ulla distantia, utrum in paucis auxiliis an in pluribus;*” and the older commentators (Schmidt, Ramb.) give the meaning thus: “*perinde est tibi potentiori vel imbecilliori opem ferre.*” But in 1 Sam. 14:16 the wording is different, so that that passage cannot be a standard for us here. “In Thy name (i.e., trusting in Thy help) are we come against this multitude” (not “have we fallen upon this

multitude”). אֵל יַעֲזֶר וגו’, “Let not a mortal retain strength with Thee” (עֲזָרָה = עֲזָרָה, 13:20, 1 Chron 29:14), i.e., let not weak men accomplish anything with Thee, show Thy power or omnipotence over weak men.

2 Chronicles 14:11. God heard this prayer. Jahve drove the Cushites into flight before Asa, *scil.* by His mighty help.

2 Chronicles 14:12. Asa, with his people, pursued to Gerar, the old ancient Philistine city, whose ruins Rowlands has discovered in the Khirbet el Gerar, in the Wady Jorf el Gerar (the torrent of Gerar), three leagues south-south-east of Gaza (see on Gen. 20:1). “And there fell of the Cushites, so that to them was not revival,” i.e., so many that they could not make a stand and again collect themselves, *ut eis vivificatio i. e. copias restaurandi ratio non esset*, as older commentators, in *Annot. uberior. ad h. l.*, have already rightly interpreted it. The words are expressions for complete defeat. Berth. translates incorrectly: “until to them was nothing living;” for לֹאֵין does not stand for עַד לֹאֵין, but לֹא serves to subordinate the clause, “so that no one,” where in the older language אֵין alone would have been sufficient, as in 20:25, 1 Chronicles 22:4, cf. Ew. § 315, c; and מְחַיֶּה denotes, not “a living thing,” but only “preservation of life, vivification, revival, maintenance.” For they were broken before Jahve and before His host. מְחַנְּהוּ, i.e., Asa’s army is called Jahve’s, because Jahve fought in and with it against the enemy. There is no reason to suppose, with some older commentators, that there is any reference to an angelic host or heavenly camp (Gen. 32:2f.). And they (Asa and his people) brought back very much booty.

2 Chronicles 14:13. “They smote all the cities round about Gerar,” which, as we must conclude from this, had made common cause with the Cushites, being inhabited by Philistines; for the fear of Jahve had fallen upon them. פָּחַד יְהוָה here, and in 17:10; 20:29, as in 1 Sam. 11:7, the fear of the omnipotence displayed by Jahve in the annihilation of the

innumerable hostile army. In these cities Judah found much booty.

2 Chronicles 14:14. They also smote the tents of the herds of the wandering tribes of that district, and carried away many sheep and camels as booty.

2 Chronicles 15

2 Chronicles 15. *The prophet Azariah's exhortation to faithful cleaving to the Lord, and the solemn renewal of the covenant.*—Vv. 1–7.

The prophet's speech. The prophet Azariah, the son of Oded, is mentioned only here. The conjecture of some of the older theologians, that עֲדָיָה was the same person as עֲדָיָה (2 Chronicles 12:15; 9:29), has no tenable foundation. Azariah went to meet the king and people returning from the war (יָצֵא לְפָנָיו, he went forth in the presence of Asa, i.e., coming before him; cf. 28:9, 1 Chronicles 12:17; 14:8). "Jahve was with you (has given you the victory), because ye were with Him (held to Him)." Hence the general lesson is drawn: If ye seek Him, He will be found of you (cf. Jer. 29:13); and if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you (cf. 24:20; 12:5). To impress the people deeply with this truth, Azariah draws a powerful picture of the times when a people is forsaken by God, when peace and security in social intercourse disappear, and the terrors of civil war prevail. Opinions as to the reference intended in this portrayal of the dreadful results of defection from God have been from antiquity very much divided. Tremell. and Grot., following the Targ., take the words to refer to the condition of the kingdom of the ten tribes at that time; others think they refer to the past, either to the immediately preceding period of the kingdom of Judah, to the times of the defection under Rehoboam and Abijah, before Asa had suppressed idolatry (Syr., Arab., Raschi), or to the more distant past, the anarchic period of the judges, from Joshua's death, and that of the high priest Phinehas, until Eli and Samuel's reformation (so especially Vitringa, *de synag. vet.* p. 335ff.). Finally, still others (Luther, Clericus, Budd., etc.) interpret the words as

prophetic, as descriptive of the future, and make them refer either to the unquiet times under the later idolatrous kings, to the times of the Assyrian or Chaldean exile (Kimchi), or to the condition of the Jews since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans up till the present day. Of these three views, the first, that which takes the reference to be to the present, i.e., the state of the kingdom of the ten tribes at that time, is decidedly erroneous; for during the first thirty years of the existence of that kingdom no such anarchic state of things existed as is portrayed in vv. 5 and 6, and still less could a return of the ten tribes to the Lord at that time be spoken of (v. 4). It is more difficult to decide between the two other main views. The grounds which Vitringa, Rambam, Bertholomaeus adduce in support of the reference to the times of the judges are not convincing; for the contents and form (v. 4) do not prove that here something is asserted which has been confirmed by history, and still less is it manifest (v. 5) that past times are pointed to. Whether the statement about the return to Jahve in the times of trouble (v. 4) refers to the past or to the future, depends upon whether the past or future is spoken of in v. 3. But the unquiet condition of things portrayed in v. 5 corresponds partly to various times in the period of the judges; and if, with Vitringa, we compare the general characteristics of the religious condition of the times of the judges (Judg. 2:10ff.), we might certainly say that Israel in those times was without אֱלֹהֵי אֲמָתָי, as it again and again forsook Jahve and served the Baals. And moreover, several examples of the oppression of Israel portrayed in vv. 5 and 6 may be adduced from the time of the judges. Yet the words in v. 6, even when their rhetorical character is taken into account, are too strong for the anarchic state of things during the period of the judges, and the internal struggles of that time (Judg. 12:1–6 and 2 Chronicles 20f.). And consequently, although Vitringa and Rambam think that a reference to experiences already past, and oppressions already lived through, would have made a much deeper impression than pointing forward to future periods of oppression, yet Rambam himself

remarks, *nihilominus tamen in saeculis Asae imperium antegressis vix ullum tempus post ingressum in terram Canaan et constitutam rempubl. Israel. posse ostendi, cui omnia criteria hujus orationis propheticae omni ex parte et secundum omnia pondera verbis insita convenient.* But, without doubt, the omission of any definite statement of the time in v. 3 is decisive against the exclusive reference of this speech to the past, and to the period of the judges. The verse contains no verb, so that the words may just as well refer to the past as to the future. The prophet has not stated the time definitely, because he was giving utterance to truths which have force at all times,⁸ and which Israel had had experience of already in the time of the judges, but would have much deeper experience of in the future.

We must take the words in this general sense, and supply neither a preterite nor a future in v. 3, neither *fuertant* nor *erunt*, but must express the first clause by the present in English: "Many days are for Israel (i.e., Israel lives many days) without the true God, and without teaching priests, and without law." יָמִים רַבִּים is not accus. of time (Berth.), but the subject of the sentence; and לֹא אֱלֹהִים is not subject—"during many days there was to the people Israel no true God" (Berth.)—but predicate, while לְ expresses the condition into which anything comes, and לֹא forms part of the following noun: Days for Israel for having not a true God. לֹא differs from בְּלֹא, "without," just as לְ differs from בְּ; the latter expressing the being in a condition, the former the coming into it. On אֱלֹהֵי אֲמָתָה, cf. Jer. 10:10. כֹּהֵן מוֹרֶה is not to be limited to the high priest, for it refers to the priests in general, whose office it was to teach the people law and justice (Lev. 10:10; Deut. 33:10). The accent is upon the predicates אֲמָתָה and מוֹרֶה. Israel had indeed Elohim, but not the true God, and also priests, but not priests who attended to their office, who watched over the fulfilment of the law; and

so they had no תוֹרָה, notwithstanding the book of the law composed by Moses.

2 Chronicles 15:5. "And in these times is no peace to those going out or to those coming in." Free peaceful intercommunication is interfered with (cf. Judg. 5:6; 6:2), but great terrors upon all inhabitants of the lands (הָאֲרָצוֹת) are, according to the usage of the chronicler, the various districts of the land of Israel).

2 Chronicles 15:6. "And one people is dashed in pieces by the other, and one city by the other; for God confounds them by all manner of adversity." הִמָּם denotes confusion, which God brings about in order to destroy His enemies (Ex. 14:24; Josh. 10:10; Judg. 4:15). Days when they were without the true God, without teaching prophets, and without law, Israel had already experienced in the times of defection after Joshua (cf. Judg. 2:11ff.), but will experience them in the future still oftener and more enduringly under the idolatrous kings in the Assyrian and Babylonian exile, and still even now in its dispersion among all nations. That this saying refers to the future is also suggested by the fact that Hosea (Hos. 3 and 4) utters, with a manifest reference to v. 3 of our speech, a threat that the ten tribes will be brought into a similar condition (cf. Hos. 9:3, 4); and even Moses proclaimed to the people that the punishment of defection from the Lord would be dispersion among the heathen, where Israel would be compelled to serve idols of wood and stone (Deut. 4:27ff., 28:36, 64), i.e., would be without the true God. That Israel would, in such oppression, turn to its God, would seek Him, and that the Lord would be found of them, is a thought also expressed by Moses, the truth of which Israel had not only had repeated experience of during the time of the judges, but also would again often experience in the future (cf. Hos. 3:5; Jer. 31:1; Ezek. 36:24ff.; Rom. 11:25ff.). בְּצַר-לוֹ refers back to Deut. 4:30; the expression in v. 4b is founded upon Deut. 4:29 (cf. Isa. 55:6).—Of the oppression in the times of defection portrayed in v. 5f., Israel had also had in the time of the

judges repeated experience (cf. Judg. 5:6), most of all under the Midianite yoke (Judg. 6:2); but such times often returned, as the employment of the very words of the first hemistich of v. 5 in Zech. 8:10, in reference to the events of the post-exilic time, shows; and not only the prophet Amos (Amos 3:9) sees *מהומות רבות*, great confusions, where all is in an indistinguishable whirl in the Samaria of his time, but they repeated themselves at all times when the defection prevailed, and godlessness degenerated into revolution and civil war. Azariah portrays the terrors of such times in strong colours (v. 6): "Dashed to pieces is people by people, and city by city." The war of the tribes of Israel against Benjamin (Judg. 20:f.), and the struggle of the Gileadites under Jephthah with Ephraim (Judg. 12:4ff.), were civil wars; but they were only mild preludes of the *bellum omnium contra omnes* depicted by Azariah, which only commenced with the dissolution of both kingdoms, and was announced by the later prophets as the beginning of the judgment upon rebellious Israel (e.g., Isa. 9:17–20), and upon all peoples and kingdoms hostile to God (Zech. 14:13; Matt. 24:7). With *מהומות ימי רבה* cf. *כי אלהים הממם* Zech. 14:13. To this portrayal of the dread results of defection from the Lord, Azariah adds (v. 7) the exhortation, "Be ye strong (vigorous), and show yourselves not slack, languid" (cf. Zeph. 3:16; Neh. 6:9); i.e., in this connection, proceed courageously and vigorously to keep yourselves true to the Lord, to exterminate all idolatry; then you shall obtain a great reward: cf. on these words, Jer. 31:16.

2 Chronicles 15:8–18. *Completion of the reform in worship, and the renewal of the covenant.*—V. 8. The speech and prophecy of the prophet strengthened the king to carry out the work he had begun, viz., the extirpation of idolatry from the whole land. In v. 8 the words *עַד הַנְּבִיא* are surprising, not only because the prophet is called in v. 1, not Oded, but Azariah the son of Oded, but also on account of the preceding *הַנְּבִיא* in the absolute state, which

cannot stand, without more ado, for the *stat. constr.* *נְבוֹאָת* (cf. 9:29). The view of Cler. and Ew., that by an orthographical error *בְּנִי* has been dropped out, does not remove the difficulty, for it leaves the *stat. absol.* *הַנְּבִיא* unexplained. This is also the case with the attempt to explain the name Oded in v. 8 by transposing the words Azariah ben Oded, v. 1, so as to obtain Oded ben Azariah (Movers); and there seems to be no other solution of the difficulty than to strike out the words Oded the prophet from the text as a gloss which has crept into it (Berth.), or to suppose that there is a considerable hiatus in the text caused by the dropping out of the words *אֲשֶׁר דָּבַר עֲזַרְיָהוּ בֶן*.⁹ *הַתְּחִיב* corresponds to *תְּחִיב*. Asa complied with the exhortation, and removed (*וַיַּעֲבֵר*, as in 1 Kings 15:12) all abominations (idols) from the whole land, and from the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim: these are the cities which Asa's father Abijah had conquered, 13:19. "And he renewed the altar before the porch," i.e., the altar of burnt-offering, which might stand in need of repairs sixty years after the building of the temple. The Vulg. is incorrect in translating *dedicavit*, and Berth. in supposing that the renovation refers only to a purification of it from defilement by idolatry. *וַיְהִי* is everywhere to renew, repair, *restaurare*; cf. 24:4.—But in order to give internal stability to the reform he had begun, Asa prepared a great sacrificial festival, to which he invited the people out of all the kingdom, and induced them to renew the covenant with the Lord. V. 9. He gathered together the whole of Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers out of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon, who dwelt among them. Strangers, i.e., Israelites from the ten tribes, had come over as early as Rehoboam's reign to the kingdom of Judah (2 Chronicles 11:16); these immigrations increased under Asa when it was seen that Jahve was with him, and had given him a great victory over the Cushites. It is surprising that Simeon should be mentioned among the tribes from which Israelites went over to the kingdom of Judah, since Simeon had

received his heritage in the southern district of the tribal domain of Judah, so that at the division of the kingdom it would not well separate itself from Judah, and join with the tribes who had revolted from the house of David. The grouping together of Simeon, Ephraim, and Manasseh, both in our verse and in 34:6, can consequently scarcely be otherwise explained than by the supposition, either from the cities assigned to them under Joshua into districts in the northern kingdom (Berth.), or that the Simeonites, though politically united with Judah, yet in religious matters were not so, but abstained from taking part in the Jahve-worship in Jerusalem, and had set up in Beersheba a worship of their own similar to that in Bethel and Dan. In such a case, the more earnest and thoughtful people from Simeon, as well as from Ephraim and Manasseh, may have gone to Jerusalem to the sacrificial festival prepared by Asa. In favour of this last supposition we may adduce the fact that the prophet Amos, Amos 5:5; 4:4; 8:14, mentions Beersheba, along with Bethel and Gilgal, as a place to which pilgrimages were made by the idolatrous Israelites.

2 Chronicles 15:10f. At this festival, which was held on the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign, they offered of the booty, i.e., of the cattle captured in the war against the Cushites (2 Chronicles 14:14), 700 oxen and 7000 sheep. מִן־הַשָּׁלַל הַבִּיאָו defines the וַיִּזְבְּחוּ more closely: they sacrificed, viz., from the booty they offered. From this it seems to follow that the sacrificial festival was held soon after the return from the war against the Cushites. The attack of the Cushite Zerah upon Judah can only have occurred in the eleventh year of Asa, according to 13:23; but it is not stated how long the war lasted, nor when Asa returned to Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 14:14) after conquering the enemy and plundering the towns of the south land. But Asa may quite well have remained longer in the south after the Cushites had been driven back, in order again firmly to establish his rule there; and on his return to Jerusalem, in consequence of the

exhortation of the prophet Azariah, may have straightway determined to hold a sacrificial festival at which the whole people should renew the covenant with the Lord, and have set apart and reserved a portion of the captured cattle for this purpose.

2 Chronicles 15:12. And they entered into the covenant, i.e., they renewed the covenant, bound themselves by a promise on oath (שָׁבוּעָה, v. 14) to hold the covenant, viz., to worship Jahve the God of the fathers with their whole heart and soul; cf. Deut. 4:29. With בְּבְרִיתָ בּוֹא, cf. Jer. 34:10.

2 Chronicles 15:13f. To attest the sincerity of their return to the Lord, they determined at the same time to punish defection from Jahve on the part of any one, without respect to age or sex, with death, according to the command in Deut. 17:2–6. לֹא דָרַשׁ לַיהוָה, not to worship Jahve, is substantially the same as to serve other gods, Deut. 17:3. This they swore aloud and solemnly, בְּתִרְוָעָה, with joyful shouting and the sound of trumpets and horns.

2 Chronicles 15:15. This return to the Lord brought joy to all Judah, i.e., to the whole kingdom, because they had sworn with all their heart, and sought the Lord בְּכָל־רִצּוֹנָם, with perfect willingness and alacrity. Therefore Jahve was found of them, and gave them rest round about.—In vv. 16–18, in conclusion, everything which still remained to be said of Asa's efforts to promote the Jahve-worship is gathered up. Even the queen-mother Maachah was deposed by him from the dignity of ruler because she had made herself an image of Asherah; yet he did not succeed in wholly removing the altars on the high places from the land, etc. These statements are also to be found in 1 Kings 15:13–16, and are commented upon at that place. Only in the Chronicle we have אֲמָ instead of אִמּוֹ (Kings), because there Maachah had just been named (v. 10); and to the statement as to the abolition of idolatry, נִדְּקָ, crushed, is added, and in v. 17 מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל; while, on

the other hand, after עַם יְהוָה, שְׁלֵם is omitted, as not being necessary to the expression of the meaning.

2 Chronicles 15:19. V. 19 is different from 1 Kings 15:16. In the latter passage it is said: war was between Asa and Baasha the king of Israel כָּל־יְמֵיהֶם, i.e., so long as both reigned contemporaneously; while in the Chronicle it is said: war was not until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign. This discrepancy is partly got rid of by taking מִלְחָמָה in the book of Kings to denote the latent hostility or inimical attitude of the two kingdoms towards each other, and in the Chronicle to denote a war openly declared. The date, until the thirty-fifth year, causes a greater difficulty; but this has been explained in 2 Chronicles 16:1 by the supposition that in the thirty-sixth year of Asa's reign war broke out between Asa and Baasha, when the meaning of our 16th verse would be: It did not come to war with Baasha until the thirty-sixth year of Asa's rule. For further remarks on this, see on 16:1.

2 Chronicles 16

2 Chronicles 16. *War with Baasha, and the weakness of Asa's faith. The end of his reign.*—Vv. 1–6. Baasha's invasion of Judah, and Asa's prayer for help to the king of Syria. The statement, "In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, Baasha the king of Israel came up against Judah," is inaccurate, or rather cannot possibly be correct; for, according to 1 Kings 16:8, 10, Baasha died in the twenty-sixth year of Asa's reign, and his successor Elah was murdered by Zimri in the second year of his reign, i.e., in the twenty-seventh year of Asa. The older commentators, for the most part, accepted the conjecture that the thirty-fifth year (in 15:19) is to be reckoned from the commencement of the kingdom of Judah; and consequently, since Asa became king in the twentieth year of the kingdom of Judah, that Baasha's invasion occurred in the sixteenth year of his reign, and that the land had enjoyed peace till his fifteenth year; cf. Ramb. *ad h. l.*; des Vignoles, *Chronol.* i. p. 299. This is in substance correct; but the statement, "in the

thirty-sixth year of Asa's kingship," cannot be reconciled with it. For even if we suppose that the author of the Chronicle derived his information from an authority which reckoned from the rise of the kingdom of Judah, yet it could not have been said on that authority, לְמַלְכוּת אָסָא. This only the author of the Chronicle can have written; but then he cannot also have taken over the statement, "in the thirty-sixth year," unaltered from his authority into his book. There remains therefore no alternative but to regard the text as erroneous,—the letters ל (30) and י (10), which are somewhat similar in the ancient Hebrew characters, having been interchanged by a copyist; and hence the numbers 35 and 36 have arisen out of the original 15 and 16. By this alteration all difficulties are removed, and all the statements of the Chronicle as to Asa's reign are harmonized. During the first ten years there was peace (2 Chronicles 13:23); thereafter, in the eleventh year, the inroad of the Cushites; and after the victory over them there was the continuation of the Cultus reform, and rest until the fifteenth year, in which the renewal of the covenant took place (2 Chronicles 15:19, cf. with v. 10); and in the sixteenth year the war with Baasha arose.¹⁰ The account of this war in vv. 1–6 agrees with that in 1 Kings 15:17–22 almost literally, and has been commented upon in the remarks on 1 Kings 15. In v. 2 the author of the Chronicle has mentioned only the main things. Abel-Maim, i.e., Abel in the Water (v. 4), is only another name for Abel-Beth-Maachah (Kings); see on 2 Sam. 20:14. In the same verse וְאֵת כָּל־מִסְכְּנוֹת עָרֵי נַפְתָּלִי is surprising, "and all magazines (or stores) of the cities of Naphtali," instead of אֵת כָּל־בְּנֵי־רוֹת עַל כָּל־אֶרֶץ נַפְתָּלִי, "all Kinneroth, together with all the land of Naphtali" (Kings). Then. and Berth. think מִסְכְּנוֹת עָרֵי has arisen out of אֶרֶץ and כְּנָרוֹת by a misconception of the reading; while Gesen., Dietr. in *Lex. sub voce* בְּנֵי־רוֹת, conjecture that in 1 Kings 15:20 מִסְכְּנוֹת should be read instead of בְּנֵי־רוֹת. Should the difference actually be the

result only of a misconception, then the latter conjecture would have much more in its favour than the first. But it is a more probable solution of the difficulty that the text of the Chronicle is a translation of the unusual and, especially on account of the *על כל-אֶרֶץ הַ*, scarcely intelligible *קָל-בְּנָרוֹת*. *בְּנָרוֹת* is the designation of the very fertile district on the west side of the Sea of Kinnereth, i.e., Gennesaret, after which a city also was called *בְּנָרֶת* (see on Josh. 19:35), and which, on account of its fertility, might be called the granary of the tribal domain of Naphtali. But the smiting of a district can only be a devastation of it,—a plundering and destruction of its produce, both in stores and elsewhere. With this idea the author of the Chronicle, instead of the district Kinnereth, the name of which had perhaps become obsolete in his time, speaks of the *מִסְכְּנוֹת*, the magazines or stores, of the cities of Naphtali. In v. 5, too, we cannot hold the addition *וַיִּשְׁבֵּת אֶת-מְלֶאכֶתּוֹ*, “he caused his work to rest,” as Berth. does, for an interpretation of the original reading, *וַיִּשָּׁב בְּתַרְצָה* (Kings), it having become illegible: it is rather a free rendering of the thought that Baasha abandoned his attempt upon Judah.

2 Chronicles 16:6. In regard to the building of Mizpah, it is casually remarked in Jer. 41:9 that Asa had there built a cistern.

2 Chronicles 16:7–10. *The rebuke of the prophet Hanani, and Asa’s crime.*—V. 7. The prophet Hanani is met with only here. Jehu, the son of Hanani, who announced to Baasha the ruin of his house (1 Kings 16:1), and who reappears under Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 19:2), was without doubt his son. Hanani said to King Asa, “Because thou hast relied on the king of Aram, and not upon Jahve thy God, therefore is the host of the king of Aram escaped out of thy hand.” Berth. has correctly given the meaning thus: “that Asa, if he had relied upon God, would have conquered not only the host of Baasha, but also the host of the king of Damascus, if he had, as was to be feared, in accordance with his league with Baasha (v.

3), in common with Israel, made an attack upon the kingdom of Judah.” To confirm this statement, the prophet points to the victory over the great army of the Cushites, which Asa had won by his trust in God the Lord. With the Cushites Hanani names also *לִיבָיִם*, Libyans (cf. 12:3), and besides *רָכָב*, the war-chariots, also *פָּרָשִׁים*, horsemen, in order to portray the enemy rhetorically, while in the historical narrative only the immense number of warriors and the multitude of the chariots is spoken of.

2 Chronicles 16:9. “For Jahve, His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong with those whose heart is devoted to Him;” i.e., for Jahve, who looks forth over all the earth, uses every opportunity wonderfully to succour those who are piously devoted to Him. *הִתְחַזַּק עִם*, to help mightily, as in 1 Chronicles 11:10. *עִם-לִבְבָם שָׁלַם אֱלֹהֵי* is a relative sentence without the relative *אֲשֶׁר* with *עִם*; cf. 1 Chronicles 15:12. “Thou hast done foolishly, therefore,” *scil.* because thou hast set thy trust upon men instead of upon Jahve, “for from henceforth there shall be wars to thee” (thou shalt have war). In these words the prophet does not announce to Asa definite wars, but only expresses the general idea that Asa by his godless policy would bring only wars (*מִלְחָמוֹת* in indefinite universality), not peace, to the kingdom. History confirms the truth of this announcement, although we have no record of any other wars which broke out under Asa.

2 Chronicles 16:10. This sharp speech so angered the king, that he caused the seer to be set in the stock-house. *בֵּית הַמֶּהֻפְכֵּת*, properly, house of stocks. *מֶהֻפְכֵּת*, twisting, is an instrument of torture, a stock, by which the body was forced into an unnatural twisted position, the victim perhaps being bent double, with the hands and feet fastened together: cf. Jer. 20:2; 29:26; and Acts 16:24, *ἔβαλεν εἰς τὴν φυλακὴν καὶ τοὺς πόδας ἠσφαλίσατο αὐτῶν εἰς τὸ ξύλον*. “For in wrath against him (*scil.* he did it) because of this thing, and Asa crushed some of

the people at this time." Clearly Hanani's speech, and still more Asa's harsh treatment of the seer, caused great discontent among the people, at least in the upper classes, so that the king felt himself compelled to use force against them. *רָצַץ*, to break or crush, is frequently used along with *עָשָׂק* (Deut. 28:33; 1 Sam. 12:3, etc.), and signifies to suppress with violence. Asa had indeed well deserved the censure, Thou hast dealt foolishly. His folly consisted in this, that in order to get help against Baasha's attack, he had had recourse to a means which must become dangerous to him and to his kingdom; for it was not difficult to foresee that the Syrian king Benhadad would turn the superiority to Israel which he had gained against Judah itself. But in order to estimate rightly Asa's conduct, we must consider that it was perhaps an easier thing, in human estimation, to conquer the innumerable multitudes of the Ethiopian hordes than the united forces of the kings of Israel and Syria; and that, notwithstanding the victory over the Ethiopians, yet Asa's army may have been very considerably weakened by that war. But these circumstances are not sufficient to justify Asa. Since he had so manifestly had the help of the Lord in the war against the Cushites, it was at bottom mainly weakness of faith, or want of full trust in the omnipotence of the Lord, which caused him to seek the help of the enemy of God's people, the king of Syria, instead of that of the Almighty God, and to make flesh his arm; and for this he was justly censured by the prophet.

2 Chronicles 16:11–14. *The end of Asa's reign;* cf. 1 Kings 15:23, 24.—On v. 11, cf. the Introduction.

2 Chronicles 16:12. In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became diseased in his feet, and that in a high degree. The words *עַד־לְמַעַלְהָ חָלִי* are a circumstantial clause: to a high degree was his sickness. "And also in his sickness (as in the war against Baasha) he sought not Jahve, but turned to the physicians." *דָּרַשׁ* is primarily construed with the accus., as usually in connection with *יְהוָה* or *אֱלֹהִים*, to seek God, to

come before Him with prayer and supplication; then with *אָ*, as usually of an oracle, or seeking help of idols (cf. 1 Sam. 28:7; 2 Kings 1:2ff.; 1 Chronicles 10:14), and so here of superstitious trust in the physicians. Consequently it is not the mere inquiring of the physicians which is here censured, but only the godless manner in which Asa trusted in the physicians.

2 Chronicles 16:14. The Chronicle gives a more exact account of Asa's burial than 1 Kings 15:24. He was buried in the city of David; not in the general tomb of the kings, however, but in a tomb which he had caused to be prepared for himself in that place. And they laid him upon the bed, which had been filled with spices (*בְּשָׂמִים*, see Ex. 30:23), and those of various kinds, mixed for an anointing mixture, prepared. *וְזָנִים* from *זָן*, kind, species; *וְזָנִים*, *et varia quidem*. *מִרְקָח* in Piel only here, properly spiced, from *רָקַח*, to spice, usually to compound an unguent of various spices. *מִרְקָחַת*, the compounding of ointment; so also 1 Chronicles 9:30, where it is usually translated by unguent. *מַעֲשֵׂה*, work, manufacture, is a shortened *terminus technicus* for *מַעֲשֵׂה רוֹקָח*, manufacture of the ointment-compounder (cf. Ex. 30:25, 35), and the conjecture that *רוֹקָחַת* has been dropped out of the text by mistake is unnecessary. "And they kindled for him a great, very great burning," cf. 21:19 and Jer. 34:5, whence we gather that the kindling of a burning, i.e., the burning of odorous spices, was customary at the burials of kings. Here it is only remarked that at Asa's funeral an extraordinary quantity of spices was burnt. A burning of the corpse, or of the bed or clothes of the dead, is not to be thought of here: the Israelites were in the habit of burying their dead, not of burning them. That occurred only in extraordinary circumstances,—as, for example, in the case of the bodies of Saul and his sons; see on 1 Sam. 31:12. The kindling and burning of spices at the solemn funerals of persons of princely rank, on the other hand, occurred also among other

nations, e.g., among the Romans; cf. Plinii *hist. nat.* xii. 18, and M. Geier, *de luctu Hebr.* c. 6.

2 Chronicles 17

Ch. 17–20.—Jehoshaphat's Reign.

2 Chronicles 17–20. Jehoshaphat laboured to strengthen the kingdom both within and without. Not only did he place soldiers in the fenced cities, and removed the high places and the Astartes, but sought also to diffuse the knowledge of the law among the people, and by building castles and the possession of a well-equipped army, firmly to establish his power (2 Chronicles 17). In the course of years he married into the family of Ahab king of Israel, and, while on a visit in Samaria, allowed himself to be persuaded by Ahab to enter upon a joint war against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead, in which he all but lost his life, while King Ahab was mortally wounded in the battle (2 Chronicles 18). Censured on his return to Jerusalem by the prophet Jehu for this alliance with the godless Ahab, he sought still more earnestly to lead back his people to Jahve, the God of their fathers, bestirring himself to bring the administration of justice into a form in accordance with the law of God, and establishing a supreme tribunal in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 19). Thereafter, when the Moabites and Ammonites, with the Edomites and other desert tribes, made an inroad into Judah, the Lord gave him a wonderful victory over these enemies. At a later time he yet again allied himself with the Israelitish king Ahaziah for the restoration of the commerce with Ophir; but the ships built for this purpose were broken in the harbour, so that the voyage was abandoned (2 Chronicles 20). Of all these enterprises of Jehoshaphat, none are mentioned in the book of Kings except the campaign entered upon with Ahab against Ramoth in Gilead, which is found in the history of Ahab, 1 Kings 22:2–35. Jehoshaphat's reign itself is only characterized generally, but in such a way as to agree with the account in the Chronicle; and, in conclusion, the alliance with Ahaz for the purpose of making the voyage to Ophir is shortly narrated in 1

Kings 22:41–57, but in a form which differs considerably from that in which it is communicated in the Chronicle.

2 Chronicles 17. *Jehoshaphat's efforts to strengthen the kingdom, internally and externally.*—v. 1, or rather the first half of this verse, belongs properly to the preceding chapter, since, when the son immediately follows the father on the throne, the successor is mentioned immediately: cf. 9:31; 12:16; 24:27; 27:9, etc. Here, however, the account of the accession to the throne is combined with a general remark on the reign of the successor, and therefore it is placed at the commencement of the account of the reign; while in the case of Asa (2 Chronicles 13:23) both come in immediately at the conclusion of the reign of his predecessor. Asa had shown himself weak against Israel, as he had sought help against Baasha's attack from the Syrians (2 Chronicles 16:1ff.), but it was otherwise with Jehoshaphat. He indeed put the fenced cities of his kingdom in a thoroughly good condition for defence, to protect his kingdom against hostile attacks from without (v. 20: but he walked at the same time in the ways of the Lord, so that the Lord made his kingdom strong and mighty (vv. 3–5). This general characterization of his reign is in v. 6 illustrated by facts: first by the communication of what Jehoshaphat did for the inner spiritual strengthening of the kingdom, by raising the standard of religion and morals among the people (vv. 6–11), and then by what he did for the external increase of his power (vv. 12–19).

2 Chronicles 17:2–5. He placed forces (חיל) in all the fenced cities of Judah, and garrisons (נְצִיבִים, military posts; cf. 1 Chronicles 11:16) in the land of Judah, and in the cities of Ephraim, which is father Asa had taken; cf. 15:8. God blessed these undertakings. Jahve was with him, because he walked in the ways of David his ancestor, the former ways, and sought not the Baals. The *former* ways of David are his ways in the earlier years of his reign, in contrast to the later years, in which his adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam. 11ff.) and the sin of

numbering the people (1 Chronicles 21) fall. **הַבְּעָלִים** are all false gods, in contrast to Jahve, the one God of Israel; and here the word designates not only the Baal-worship properly so called, but also the worship of Jahve by means of images, by which Jahve is brought down to the level of the Baals; cf. Judg. 2:11. The **לְ** before **הַבְּעָלִים** stands, according to the later usage, as a sign of the accusative. In the last clause of v. 4, “and not after the doings of Israel” (of the ten tribes), **הִלְךְ**, “he walked,” is to be repeated. The doing of Israel is the worship of Jahve through the images of the golden calves, which the author of the Chronicle includes in the **הַבְּעָלִים**.

2 Chronicles 17:5. Therefore Jahve established the kingdom in his hand, i.e., under his rule; cf. 2 Kings 14:5. All Judah brought him presents. **מִנְחָה**, often used of tribute of subject peoples, e.g., in v. 11 of the Philistines, cannot here have that signification; nor can it denote the regular imposts of subjects, for these are not called **מִנְחָה**; but must denote voluntary gifts which his subjects brought him as a token of their reverence and love. The last clause, “and there was to him (he attained) riches and honour in abundance,” which is repeated 18:1, recalls 1 Chronicles 29:28, 2 Chronicles 1:12, and signifies that Jehoshaphat, like his ancestors David and Solomon, was blessed for walking in the pious ways of these his forefathers.

2 Chronicles 17:6-9. This blessing encouraged Jehoshaphat to extirpate from the land all idolatrous worship, and to teach the people the law of the Lord. **גִּבְהַ לֵב**, usually *sensu malo*, to be haughty, proud, cf. e.g., 26:16; 32:25; here *sensu bono*, of rising courage to advance in ways pleasing to God: and he removed the high places also, etc. **עוֹד** points back to v. 3: not only did he himself keep far from the Baals, but he removed, besides, all memorials of the Baal-worship from Judah. On **בְּמוֹת** and **אֲשֵׁרִים**, see on 14:2.

2 Chronicles 17:7ff. In the third year of his reign he sent five princes, i.e., laymen of high position, with nine Levites and two priests, into the cities of Judah, with the book of the law, to teach the law everywhere to the people. **בְּנֵי-חַיִל** is *nom. prop.*, like **בְּנֵי-חֶסֶד**, 1 Kings 4:10, **בְּנֵי-דָקָר**, 1 Kings 4:9, and is not to be translated as an adjective, as in LXX and Syr., partly on account of the **לְ** *praef.*, and still more on account of the singular, for the plural **בְּנֵי חַיִל** must be used when it is in apposition to **לְשָׂרֵי**. Nothing further is known of the men named; the designation of them as **אֲשֵׁרִים** suggests the idea that they were heads of families or fathers'-houses. **טוֹב אֲדוֹנָיָה**, too (v. 8), is one name. The “book of the law of Jahve” is the Pentateuch, not merely a collection of Mosaic laws, since in Jehoshaphat’s time the Mosaic book of the law (the Pentateuch) had been long in existence. **בָּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה** signifies to go through the cities of Judah in different directions; **לְמַד בָּעָם**, to teach among the people (not the people). The mission of these men is called by the older theologians a solemn *ecclesiarum visitatio, quam Josaphat laudabili exemplo per universum regnum suum instituit*, and they differ in opinion only as to the part played by the princes in it. Vitringa, *de synagoga vet.* p. 389, in agreement with Rashi, thinks that only the Levites and priests were deputed *ut docerent*; the princes, *ut auctoritate imperioque suo populum erudiendum in officio continerent eumque de seria regis voluntate certiores facerent*; while others, e.g., Buddaeus, refer to v. 9, *ubi principes pariter ac Levitae populum docuisse dicuntur*, or believe with Grotius, *docere et explicare legem non tantum sacerdotum erat et Levitarum, sed omnium eruditorum*. Both views contain elements of truth, and do not mutually exclude each other, but may be harmonized. We can hardly confine **לְמַד** to religious teaching. The Mosaic law contains a number of merely civil precepts, as to which laymen learned in the law might impart instruction; and consequently the teaching probably consisted not merely in

making the people acquainted with the contents of the law, but at the same time of direction and guidance in keeping the law, and generally in restoring and confirming the authority of the law among the people. In connection with this there were many abuses and illegalities which had to be broken down and removed; so that in this respect the task of the commission sent round the country by Jehoshaphat may be compared to a church inspection, if only we understand thereby not an inspection of churches in the Christian sense of the words, but an inspection of the religious and moral life of the communities of Israel under the old covenant.

2 Chronicles 17:10, 11. This attempt of Jehoshaphat brought him this blessing, that the terror of Jahve fell upon all the surrounding kingdoms; and not only did none of the neighbouring peoples venture to make war upon him, but also various tribes did homage to him by presents. Ramb. has already so understood the connection of these verses (*erat hoc praemium pietatis Josaphati, quod vicini satisque potentes hostes non auderent adversus ipsum hincere*); while Berth. fails to apprehend it, saying that Jehoshaphat had time to care for the instruction of his people, because at that time the neighbouring peoples did not venture to undertake war against Judah. The words "terror of Jahve," cf. 14:13; 20:29, and "all the kingdoms of the lands," cf. 12:8, 1 Chronicles 29:30, are expressions peculiar to the author of the Chronicle, which show that by these remarks he is preparing the way for a transition to a more detailed portrayal of Jehoshaphat's political power. מן־פְּלִשְׁתִּים is subject, מן־partitive: some of the Philistines brought him presents (for מְנַחָה see on v. 5), "and silver a burden," i.e., in great quantity. מִשָּׂא does not signify tribute, *vectigal argento* (Vulg.), for the word has not that signification, but denotes burden, that which can be carried, as in לְאֵן מִשָּׂא, 20:25.—עַרְבֵי־אִים or עַרְבֵי־אִים, 26:7, and more usually עַרְבֵי־אִים, 21:16; 22:1, are Arabian nomadic tribes (*Bedâwin*), perhaps those whom Asa,

after his victory over the Cushite Zerah, had brought under the kingdom of Judah, 14:14. These paid their tribute in small cattle, rams, and he-goats. (תְּיָשִׁים, Gen. 30:35; 32:15, Prov. 30:31.)

2 Chronicles 17:12–19. *Description of Jehoshaphat's power.*—V. 12. And Jehoshaphat became ever greater, sc. in power. The partic. הוֹלֵךְ expresses the continuous advance in greatness, cf. Ew. § 280, *b*, as the *infin. absol.* does elsewhere, e.g., Gen. 8:3. עַד לְמַעְלָה as in 16:12.—He built castles in Judah. בְּיַרְנִיּוֹת, only here and in 27:4, from בְּיַרְנִיּוֹת, derivative formed from בְּיָרָה by the Syriac termination יַנִּיּוֹת, *fem.* of יָרָה: castle, fortress. On עָרֵי מְסֻבּוֹת cf. 8:4.

2 Chronicles 17:13. וְגַם רַבָּה וְגַם מְלֵאכָה is rightly translated by Luther, "und hatte viel Vorraths" (and had much store). מְלֵאכָה denotes here, as in Ex. 22:7–10, property, that which has been gained by work or business. The signification, much work, *opera magna* (Vulg., Cler., etc.), as also Bertheau's translation, "the works for equipping and provisioning the fortresses," correspond neither to the context nor to the parallel (synonymous) second member of the verse. The work and trouble necessary to equip the cities of Judah does not correspond to "the valiant warriors in Jerusalem;" the only parallel is the goods and property which were in these cities, the provision of victuals and war material there stored up.

2 Chronicles 17:14–19. The men fit for war passed in review according to their fathers'-houses. The male population of Judah fell into three divisions, that of Benjamin into two. The prince Adnah held the first place among the generals, with 300,000 men of Judah. עַל יָדוֹ, at his hand, i.e., with and under him, Jehohanan had the command of 280,000 men, and Amasiah over 200,000. הַשָּׂר is a contraction for שָׂר אֶלְפִים. For what special reason it is so honourably recorded of Amasiah that he had

willingly offered himself to the Lord (cf. for **הִתְנַחֵם**, Judg. 5:9) has not been communicated.

2 Chronicles 17:17f. The Benjamites fell into two detachments: archers with shields (cf. 1 Chronicles 8:40) 200,000 men, under the chief command of Eliada, and “equipped of the army,” i.e., not heavy armed (Berth.), but provided with the usual weapons, sword, spear, and shield (cf. 1 Chronicles 12:24), 180,000 under the command of Jehozabad. According to this statement, Judah had 780,000 warriors capable of bearing arms. These numbers are clearly too large, and bear no proportion to the result of the numbering of the people capable of bearing arms under David, when there were in Judah only 500,000 or 470,000 men (cf. 1 Chronicles 21:5 with 2 Sam. 24:5); yet the sums of the single divisions appear duly proportioned,—a fact which renders it more difficult to believe that these exaggerated numbers are the result of orthographical errors.

2 Chronicles 17:19. These were serving the king. **אֶלֶּה** refers not to the above-mentioned men capable of bearing arms, for **שָׂרָה** is not used of service in war, but to the commanders whom he had placed in the fortified cities of all Judah, “in which probably bodies of the above-mentioned troops lay as garrisons” (Berth.).

2 Chronicles 18

2 Chronicles 18. *Jehoshaphat's marriage alliance with Ahab, and his campaign with Ahab against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead.*—V. 1. Jehoshaphat came into connection by marriage with Ahab through his son Joram taking Athaliah, a daughter of Ahab, to wife (2 Chronicles 21:6); an event which did not take place on the visit made by Jehoshaphat to Ahab in his palace at Samaria, and recorded in v. 2, but which had preceded that by about nine years. That visit falls in the beginning of the year in which Ahab was mortally wounded at Ramoth, and died, i.e., the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat's reign. But at that time Ahaziah, the son of Joram and Athaliah, was already from eight to nine years old, since thirteen years

later he became king at the age of twenty-two; 2 Kings 8:26, cf. with the chronol. table to 1 Kings 12. The marriage connection is mentioned in order to account for Jehoshaphat's visit to Samaria (v. 2), and his alliance with Ahab in the war against the Syrians; but it is also introduced by a reference to Jehoshaphat's riches and his royal splendour, repeated from 2 Chronicles 17:5. In the opinion of many commentators, this is stated to account for Ahab's willingness to connect his family by marriage with that of Jehoshaphat. This opinion might be tenable were it Ahab's entering upon a marriage connection with Jehoshaphat which is spoken of; but for Jehoshaphat, of whom it is related that he entered into a marriage connection with Ahab, his own great wealth could not be a motive for his action in that matter. If we consider, first, that this marriage connection was very hurtful to the kingdom of Judah and the royal house of David, since Athaliah not only introduced the Phoenician idolatry into the kingdom, but also at the death of Ahaziah extirpated all the royal seed of the house of David, only the infant Joash of all the royal children being saved by the princess, a sister of Ahaziah, who was married to the high priest Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 22:10–12); and, second, that Jehoshaphat was sharply censured by the prophet for his alliance with the criminal Ahab (2 Chronicles 19:2ff.), and had, moreover, all but forfeited his life in the war (2 Chronicles 18:34f.),—we see that the author of the Chronicle can only have regarded the marriage connection between Jehoshaphat and Ahab as a mistake. By introducing this account of it by a second reference to Jehoshaphat's riches and power, he must therefore have intended to hint that Jehoshaphat had no need to enter into this relationship with the idolatrous house of Ahab, but had acted very inconsiderately in doing so. Schmidt has correctly stated the contents of the verse thus: *Josaphatus cetera dives et gloriosus infelicem adfinitatem cum Achabo, rege Israelis, contrahit.* With which side the proposals for thus connecting the two royal houses originated we are not anywhere informed. Even if the conjecture of Ramb., that Ahab proposed

it to Jehoshaphat, be not well founded, yet so much is beyond doubt, namely, that Ahab not only desired the alliance, but also promoted it by every means in his power, since it must have been of great importance to him to gain in Jehoshaphat a strong ally against the hostile pressure of the Syrians. Jehoshaphat probably entered upon the alliance *bono animo et spe firmandae inter duo regna pacis* (Ramb.), without much thought of the dangers which a connection of this sort with the idolatrous Ahab and with Jezebel might bring upon his kingdom.

2 Chronicles 18:2–34. *The campaign undertaken along with Ahab against the Syrians at Ramoth in Gilead, with its origin, course, and results for Ahab, is narrated in 1 Kings 22 (in the history of Ahab) in agreement with our narrative, only the introduction to the war being different here. In 1 Kings 22:1–3 it is remarked, in connection with the preceding wars of Ahab with the Syrians, that after there had been no war for three years between Aram and Israel, in the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah came up to the king of Israel; and the latter, when he and his servants had determined to snatch away from the Syrians the city Ramoth in Gilead, which belonged to Israel, called upon Jehoshaphat to march with him to the war against Ramoth. In the Chronicle the more exact statement, “in the third year,” which is intelligible only in connection with the earlier history of Ahab, is exchanged for the indefinite שָׁנִים, “at the end of years;” and mention is made of the festal entertainment which Ahab bestowed upon his guest and his train (הָעֵם אֲשֶׁר עִמּוֹ), to show the pains which Ahab took to induce King Jehoshaphat to take part in the proposed campaign. He killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, וַיִּסְיֵתֵהוּ, and enticed, seduced him to go up with him to Ramoth. הִסִּיתָ, to incite, entice to anything (Judg. 1:14), frequently to evil; cf. Deut. 13:7, etc. עָלָה, to advance upon a land or a city in a warlike sense. The account which follows of the preparations for the campaign by inquiring of prophets, and of the war itself, vv. 4–34, is in*

almost verbal agreement with 1 Kings 22:5–35. Referring to 1 Kings 22 for the commentary on the substance of the narrative, we will here only group together briefly the divergences. Instead of 400 men who were prophets, v. 5, in 1 Kings 22:5 we have about 400 men. It is a statement in round numbers, founded not upon exact enumeration, but upon an approximate estimate. Instead of הַגִּלְדִּי ... אִם אֶחָדָל, v. 5, in Kings, v. 6, we have הָאֵלֶּיךָ ... אִם אֶחָדָל, both verbs being in the same number; and so too in v. 14, where in Kings, v. 15, both verbs stand in the plural, notwithstanding that the answer which follows, עָלָה וְהָצִלָּח, is addressed to Ahab alone, not to both the kings, while in the Chronicle the answer is given in the plural to both the kings, וְעָלוּ וְהָצִלְחוּ. In v. 7a, “he prophesies me nothing good, but all his days (i.e., so long as he has been a prophet) evil,” the meaning is intensified by the כָּל-יָמָיו, which is not found in 1 Kings v. 8. In v. 9, the וַיּוֹשְׁבֵים, which is introduced before the בְּגֵרָן, “and sitting upon the threshing-floor,” is due to difference of style, for it is quite superfluous for the signification. In v. 15, the ambiguous words of Micah, “and Jahve will give into the hand of the king” (Kings, v. 15), are given in a more definite form: “and they (the enemy) shall be given into your hand.” In v. 19, in the first זָה אָמַר כָּכָה, the אָמַר after the preceding וַיֹּאמֶר is not only superfluous, but improper, and has probably come into the text by a copyist’s error. We should therefore read only זָה בָּכָה, corresponding to the זָה כָּכָה of Kings, v. 20: “Then spake one after this manner, and the other spake after another manner.” In v. 23, the indefinite אֵי-זָה of Kings, v. 24, is elucidated by אֵי זָה הַדְּרִיךְ, “is that the manner” (cf. 1 Kings 13:12; 2 Kings 3:8), and the *verb*. עָבַר follows without the relative pronoun, as in the passages cited. In v. 30, only שְׂרֵי הַרְכָּב of the king are mentioned, without any statement of the number, which is given in Kings, v. 31, with a backward reference to the former war (1

Kings 20:24). In v. 31, after the words, “and Jehoshaphat cried out,” the higher cause of Jehoshaphat’s rescue is pointed out in the words, “and Jahve helped him, and God drove them from him,” which are not found in Kings, v. 32; but by this religious reflection the actual course of the event is in no way altered. Bertheau’s remark, therefore, that “the words disturb the clear connection of the events,” is quite unwarrantable. Finally, in v. 34, הָיָה מֵעַמִּיד, he was holding his position, i.e., he held himself standing upright, the Hiph. is more expressive than the Hoph. מִן־מֵעַמִּיד (Kings v. 35), since it expresses more definitely the fact that he held himself upright by his own strength. With Ahab’s death, which took place in the evening at the time of the going down of the sun, the author of the Chronicle concludes his account of this war, and proceeds in 2 Chronicles 19 to narrate the further course of Jehoshaphat’s reign. In 1 Kings 22:36–39, the return of the defeated army, and the details as to Ahab’s death and burial, are recorded; but these did not fit into the plan of the Chronicle.

2 Chronicles 19

2 Chronicles 19. *The prophet Jehu’s declaration as to Jehoshaphat’s alliance with Ahab, and Jehoshaphat’s further efforts to promote the fear of God and the administration of justice in Judah.*—Vv. 1–3. Jehu’s declaration.

Jehoshaphat returned from the war in which Ahab had lost his life, בְּשָׁלוֹם, i.e., safe, uninjured, to his house in Jerusalem; so that the promise of Micah in 18:16b was fulfilled also as regards him. But on his return, the seer Jehu, the son of Hanani, who had been thrown into the stocks by Asa (2 Chronicles 16:7ff.), met him with the reproving word, “Should one help the wicked, and lovest thou the haters of Jahve!” (the inf. with לְ, as in 1 Chronicles 5:1; 9:25, etc.). Of these sins Jehoshaphat had been guilty. “And therefore is anger from Jahve upon thee” (קִצְפָה לְךָ as in 1 Chronicles 27:24). Jehoshaphat had already had experience of this wrath, when in the battle of Ramoth the enemy pressed upon

him (2 Chronicles 18:31), and was at a later time to have still further experience of it, partly during his own life, when the enemy invaded his land (2 Chronicles 20), and when he attempted to re-establish the sea trade with Ophir (2 Chronicles 20:35ff.), partly after his death in his family (2 Chronicles 21 and 22). “But,” continues Jehu, to console him, “yet there are good things found in thee (cf. 12:12), for thou hast destroyed the Asheroth ...” אֲשֵׁרוֹת = אֲשֵׁרִים, 17:6. On these last words, comp. 12:14 and 17:4.

2 Chronicles 19:4–11. *Jehoshaphat’s further arrangements for the revival of the Jahve-worship, and the establishment of a proper administration of justice.*—The first two clauses in v. 4 are logically connected thus: When Jehoshaphat (after his return from the war) sat (dwelt) in Jerusalem, he again went forth (וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיֵּצֵא are to be taken together) among the people, from Beersheba, the southern frontier (see 1 Chronicles 21:2), to Mount Ephraim, the northern frontier of the kingdom of Judah, and brought them back to Jahve, the God of the fathers. The “again” (וַיֵּשֶׁב) can refer only to the former provision for the instruction of the people, recorded in 2 Chronicles 17:7ff.; all that was effected by the commission which Jehoshaphat had sent throughout the land being regarded as his work. The instruction of the people in the law was intended to lead them back to the Lord. Jehoshaphat now again took up his work of reformation, in order to complete the work he had begun, by ordering and improving the administration of justice.

2 Chronicles 19:5ff. He set judges in the land, in all the fenced cities of Judah; they, as larger cities, being centres of communication for their respective neighbourhoods, and so best suited to be the seats of judges. לְעִיר וָעִיר, in reference to every city, as the law (Deut. 16:18) prescribed. He laid it upon the consciences of these judges to administer justice conscientiously. “Not for men are ye to judge, but for Jahve;” i.e., not on the appointment and

according to the will of men, but in the name and according to the will of the Lord (cf. Prov. 16:11). In the last clause of v. 6, Jahve is to be supplied from the preceding context: "and Jahve is with you in judgment," i.e., in giving your decisions (cf. the conclusion of v. 11); whence this clause, of course, only serves to strengthen the foregoing, only contains the thoughts already expressed in the law, that judgment belongs to God (cf. Deut. 1:17 with Ex. 21:6; 22:7f.). Therefore the fear of the Lord should keep the judges from unrighteousness, so that they should neither allow themselves to be influenced by respect of persons, nor to be bribed by gifts, against which Deut. 16:19 and 1:17 also warns. שָׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ is rightly paraphrased by the Vulgate, *cum diligentia cuncta facite*. The clause, "With God there is no respect of persons," etc., recalls Deut. 10:17.

2 Chronicles 19:8-11. Besides this, Jehoshaphat established at Jerusalem a supreme tribunal for the decision of difficult cases, which the judges of the individual cities could not decide. V. 8. "Moreover, in Jerusalem did Jehoshaphat set certain of the Levites, and of the priests, and of the chiefs of the fathers'-houses of Israel, for the judgment of the Lord, and for controversies (לְרִיב)." From this clause Berth. correctly draws the conclusion, that as in Jerusalem, so also in the fenced cities (v. 5), it was Levites, priests, and heads of the fathers'-houses who were made judges. This conclusion is not inconsistent with the fact that David appointed 6000 of the Levites to be shoterim and judges; for it does not follow from that that none but Levites were appointed judges, but only that the Levites were to perform an essential part in the administration of the law. The foundation of the judicial body in Israel was the appointment of judges chosen from the elders of the people (Ex. 18:21ff.; Deut. 1:15ff.) by Moses, at Jethro's instigation, and under the divine sanction, David had no intention, by his appointment of some thousands of Levites to be officials (writers) and judges, to set aside the Mosaic arrangement; on the contrary, he thereby gave it the expansion which the

advanced development of the kingdom required. For the simple relationships of the Mosaic time, the appointment of elders to be judges might have been sufficient; but when in the course of time, especially after the introduction of the kingship, the social and political relations became more complicated, it is probable that the need of appointing men with special skill in law, to co-operate with the judges chosen from among the elders, in order that justice might be administered in a right way, and in a manner corresponding to the law, made itself increasingly felt; that consequently David had felt himself called upon to appoint a greater number of Levites to this office, and that from that time forward the courts in the larger cities were composed of Levites and elders. The supreme court which Jehoshaphat set up in Jerusalem was established on a similar basis. For לְמִשְׁפַּט יְהוָה we have in v. 11 לְכָל דְּבַר-יְהוָה, i.e., for all matters connected with religion and the worship and instead of קְרִיב we have לְכָל דְּבַר הַמֶּלֶךְ, for every matter of the king, i.e., for all civil causes. The last clause, v. 8, וַיָּשְׁבוּ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם, cannot signify that the men called to this supreme tribunal went to Jerusalem to dwell there thenceforth (Ramb., etc.), or that the suitors went thither; for שׁוֹב does not denote to betake oneself to a place, but to return, which cannot be said of the persons above named, since it is not said that they had left Jerusalem. With Kimchi and others, we must refer the words to the previous statement in v. 4, וַיֵּצֵא בָּעָם וְגו', and understand them as a supplementary statement, that Jehoshaphat and those who had gone forth with him among the people returned to Jerusalem, which would have come in more fittingly at the close of v. 7, and is to be rendered: "when they had returned to Jerusalem." The bringing in of this remark at so late a stage of the narrative, only after the establishment of the supreme tribunal has been mentioned, is explained by supposing that the historian was induced by the essential connection between the institution of the

supreme court and the arrangement of the judicatories in the provincial cities, to leave out of consideration the order of time in describing the arrangements made by Jehoshaphat.

2 Chronicles 19:9f. To the members of the superior tribunal also, Jehoshaphat gave orders to exercise their office in the fear of the Lord, with fidelity and with upright heart (בְּלֵבָב שְׁלֵם, *corde s. animo integro*, cf. 15:17; 16:9). כֹּה תַעֲשׂוּן, thus shall ye do; what they are to do being stated only in v. 10. The ו before כְּלִירֵיב is explicative, namely, and is omitted by the LXX and Vulg. as superfluous. "Every cause which comes to you from your brethren who dwell in their cities" (and bring causes before the superior court in the following cases): between blood and blood (בֵּין with לְ following, as in Gen. 1:6, etc.), i.e., in criminal cases of murder and manslaughter, and between law and between command, statutes, and judgments, i.e., in cases where the matter concerns the interpretation and application of the law, and its individual commands, statutes, and judgments, to particular crimes; wherever, in short, there is any doubt by what particular provision of the law the case in hand should be decided. With וְהִזְהַרְתֶּם the apodosis commences, but it is an anacolouthon. Instead of "ye shall give them instruction therein," we have, "ye shall teach them (those who bring the cause before you), that they incur not guilt, and an anger (i.e., God's anger and punishment) come upon you and your brethren" (cf. v. 2). הִזְהִיר, properly to illuminate, metaphorically to teach, with the additional idea of exhortation or warning. The word is taken from Ex. 18:20, and there is construed *c. accus. pers. et rei*. This construction is here also the underlying one, since the object which precedes in the absolute is to be taken as *accus.*: thus, and as regards every cause, ye shall teach them concerning it. After the enumeration of the matters falling within the jurisdiction of this court, כֹּה תַעֲשׂוּן is repeated, and this precept is then pressed home upon the judges by the words, "that ye incur not guilt."

Thereafter (in v. 11) Jehoshaphat nominates the spiritual and civil presidents of this tribunal: for spiritual causes the high priest Amariah, who is not the same as the Amariah mentioned after Zadok as the fifth high priest (1 Chronicles 5:37) (see p. 446 and 449); in civil causes Zebadiah the son of Ishmael, the prince of the house of Judah, i.e., tribal prince of Judah. These shall be עֲלֵיכֶם over you, i.e., presidents of the judges; and שֹׁטְרֵימ, writers, shall the Levites be לְפָנֶיכֶם, before you, i.e., as your assistants and servants. Jehoshaphat concludes the nomination of the judicial staff with the encouraging words, "Be strong (courageous) and do," i.e., go to work with good heart, "and the Lord be with the good," i.e., with him who discharges the duties of his office well.

The establishment of this superior court was in form, indeed, the commencement of a new institution; but in reality it was only the expansion or firmer organization of a court of final appeal already provided by Moses, the duties of which had been until then performed partly by the high priest, partly by the existing civil heads of the people (the judges and kings). When Moses, at Horeb, set judges over the people, he commanded them to bring to him the matters which were too difficult for them to decide, that he might settle them according to decisions obtained of God (Ex. 18:26 and 19). At a later time he ordained (Deut. 17:8ff.) that for the future the judges in the various districts and cities should bring the more difficult cases to the Levitic priests and the judge at the place where the central sanctuary was, and let them be decided by them. In thus arranging, he presupposes that Israel would have at all times not only a high priest who might ascertain the will of God by means of the Urim and Thummim, but also a supreme director of its civil affairs at the place of the central sanctuary, who, in common with the priests, i.e., the high priest, would give decisions in cases of final appeal (see the commentary on Deut. 17:8-13). On the basis of these Mosaic arrangements, Jehoshaphat set up a supreme court in Jerusalem, with the high priest and a lay

president at its head, for the decision of causes which up till that time the king, either alone with the cooperation of the high priest, had decided. For further information as to this supreme court, see in my *bibl. Archäol.* ii. S. 250f.

2 Chronicles 20. *Jehoshaphat's victory over the Moabites, Ammonites, and other nations; and the remaining items of information as to his reign.*—Vv. 1–30. The victory over the hostile peoples who invaded Judah. In the succeeding time, the Moabites and Ammonites, in alliance with other tribes of Mount Seir, invaded Judah with the purpose of driving the people of God out of their country, and extirpating them (v. 1). On being informed of this invasion, Jehoshaphat sought help of the Lord, while he proclaimed a fast in the land, and in the temple before the assembled people prayed God for His help (vv. 2–12); and received by the mouth of the prophet Jahaziel the promise that God would fight for Judah, and that king and people would next day behold the help the Lord would give (vv. 13–18). And so it happened. On the following day, when the Judaeen army, with the Levitic singers and players at their head, came into the wilderness Jeruel, their enemies had by the dispensation of God mutually destroyed each other (vv. 19–24), so that Jehoshaphat and his people found the proposed battle-field full of corpses, and gathered spoil for three days, and then on the fourth day, in the Valley of Blessing, they praised the Lord for the wonderful deliverance; thereafter returning to Jerusalem with joy, again to thank the Lord in the house of God for His help (vv. 25–30).

2 Chronicles 20

2 Chronicles 20:1f. By אַחֲרֵי־כֵן, *postea*, the war which follows is made to fall in the latter part of Jehoshaphat's reign, but certainly not in the last year in which he reigned alone, two years before his death, but only somewhat later than the events in 2 Chronicles 18 and 19, which occurred six or seven years before his death. Along with the Moabites and Ammonites there marched against Jehoshaphat also מְהַעֲמוֹנִים.

This statement is obscure. Since מֵן has unquestionably a partitive or local signification, we might take the word to signify, enemies who dwelt aside from the Ammonites (מֵן as in 1 Sam. 20:22, 37), which might possibly be the designation of tribes in the Syro-Arabic desert bordering upon the country of the Ammonites on the north and east; and מְאַרְם in v. 2 would seem to favour this idea. But vv. 10 and 22f. are scarcely reconcilable with this interpretation, since there, besides or along with the sons of Ammon and Moab, inhabitants of Mount Seir are named as enemies who had invaded Judah. Now the Edomites dwelt on Mount Seir; but had the Edomites only been allies of the Ammonites and Moabites, we should expect simply בְּנֵי אֲדָם or אֲדוּמִים, or בְּנֵי שְׁעִיר (cf. 25:11, 14). Nor can it be denied that the interpretation which makes מְהַעֲמוֹנִים to denote peoples dwelling beyond the Ammonites is somewhat artificial and far-fetched. Under these circumstances, the alteration proposed by Hiller in *Onomast.* p. 285 commends itself, viz., the change of מְהַעֲמוֹנִים into מְהַמְעוֹנִים, Maunites or Maonites,—a tribe whose headquarters were the city Maan in the neighbourhood of Petra, to the east of the Wady Musa; see on 1 Chronicles 4:41. Maan lay upon Mount Seir, i.e., in the mountainous district to the west of the Arabah, which stretches upwards from the head of the Dead Sea to the Elanitic Gulf, now called *Jebâl* (Gabalene) in its northern part, and es-Sherah in the south. The Maunites were consequently inhabitants of Mount Seir, and are here mentioned instead of the Edomites, as being a people dwelling on the southern side of the mountain, and probably of non-Edomitic origin, in order to express the idea that not merely the Edomites took part in the campaign of the Ammonites and Moabites, but also tribes from all parts of Mount Seir. In 2 Chronicles 26:7 the מְעוֹנִים are mentioned along with Arabs and Philistines as enemies of Israel, who had been conquered by Uzziah. These circumstances favour the proposed alteration; while, on the contrary, the fact that the LXX

have here ἐκ τῶν Μιναιῶν for מְהַעֲמוֹנִים proves little, since these translators have rendered מְהַעֲמוֹנִים in 26:8 also by οἱ Μιναιῶι, there erroneously making the Ammonites Minaiites.

2 Chronicles 20:2. Then they came and announced to Jehoshaphat, sc. messengers or fugitives; the subject is indefinite, and is to be supplied from the context. "Against thee there cometh a great multitude from beyond the (Dead) sea." מֵאַרְם also has no suitable sense here, since in the whole narrative nothing is said of enemies coming out of Syria; we should read מֵאֲדָם with Calmet and others. As the enemy made their attack from the south end of the Dead Sea, the messengers announce that they were come from Edom. "Behold, they are in Hazazon-Tamar," i.e., Engedi, the present Ain Jidy, midway along the west coast of the Dead Sea (see on Josh. 15:62 and Gen. 14:7), about fifteen hours from Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 20:3–13. This report filled Jehoshaphat with fear, and he resolved to seek help of the Lord. שׁוֹם פ' = נָתַן פָּנָיו, cf. 2 Kings 12:18, Jer. 42:15, to direct the face to anything, i.e., to purpose something, come to a determination. He proclaimed a fast in all Judah, that the people might bow themselves before God, and supplicate His help, as was wont to be done in great misfortunes; cf. Judg. 20:26, 1 Sam. 7:6, Isa. 2:15. In consequence of the royal appeal, Judah came together to seek of the Lord, i.e., to pray for help, by fasting and prayer in the temple; and it was not only the inhabitants of Jerusalem who thus assembled, for they came out of all the cities of the kingdom. בִּקֵּשׁ מִיהוָה, to seek of the Lord, sc. help, is expressed in the last clause by בִּקֵּשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה to seek the Lord.

2 Chronicles 20:5. When the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem had assembled themselves in the house of God, Jehoshaphat came forth before the new court and made supplication in fervent prayer to the Lord. The new court is the outer or great court of the temple, which Solomon had built (2 Chronicles 4:9). It is here

called the *new* court, probably because it had been restored or extended under Jehoshaphat or Asa. This court was the place where the congregation assembled before God in the sanctuary. Jehoshaphat placed himself before it, i.e., at the entrance into the court of the priests, so that the congregation stood opposite to him.

2 Chronicles 20:6ff. The prayer which Jehoshaphat directed to Jahve the God of the fathers, as the almighty Ruler over all kingdoms, consists of a short representation of the circumstances of the case. Jahve had given the land to His people Israel for an everlasting possession, and Israel had built a sanctuary to His name therein (vv. 7 and 8); but they had in no way provoked the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites to fall upon them, and to drive them out of their land (vv. 10 and 11). On these two facts Jehoshaphat founds his prayer for help, in a twofold manner: in respect to the first, calling to mind the divine promise to hear the prayers offered up to God in the temple (v. 9); and in reference to the second, laying emphasis upon the inability of Israel to fight against so numerous an enemy (v. 12). In his manner of addressing Jahve, "God of our fathers," there is contained a reason why God should protect His people in their present distress. Upon Him, who had given the land to the fathers for a possession, it was incumbent to maintain the children in the enjoyment of it, if they had not forfeited it by their sins. Now Jahve as a covenant God was bound to do this, and also as God and ruler of heaven and earth He had the requisite power and might; cf. Ps. 115:3. אֵין עִמָּךְ לְהַתִּיצֵב, there is none with Thee who could set himself, i.e., could withstand Thee: cf. the similar phrase, 14:10; and for the thought, see 1 Chronicles 29:12.—On v. 7a, cf. Josh. 23:9; 24:12, Ex. 23:20ff., etc.; on 7b, cf. Gen. 13:15f., 15:18, etc.; on אֶהְבֶּךָ, Isa. 41:8.

2 Chronicles 20:8. In this land they dwelt, and built Thee therein a sanctuary for Thy name; cf. 6:5, 8. לְאֵמֹר, saying, i.e., at the consecration of this house, having expressed the confident hope contained in the following words (v. 9). In this

verse, the cases enumerated in Solomon's dedicatory prayer, in which supplication is made that God would hear in the temple, are briefly summed up. By referring to that prayer, Jehoshaphat presupposes that Jahve had promised that He would answer prayer offered there, since He had filled the temple with His glory; see 7:1–3. The name שְׁפוּט, which occurs only here, between דְּבַר and הָרַב, denotes in this connection a punitive judgment.

2 Chronicles 20:10. וְעַתָּה, *and now*, the contrary of this has occurred. Peoples into whose midst (לְבוֹא בָהֶם ... אֲשֶׁר) Thou didst not allow Israel to come, i.e., into whose land Thou didst not allow Israel to enter when they came out of the land of Egypt, for they (the Israelites under Moses) turned from them and destroyed them not (cf. as to the fact, Num. 20:14ff.; Deut. 2:4; 9:19); behold, these peoples recompense us by coming to cast us out of our possession which Thou hast given us (הוֹרִישׁ, to give as a possession, as in Judg. 11:24). There follows hereupon in v. 12 the prayer: "Our God, wilt Thou not judge," i.e., do right upon them, for we have not strength before (to withstand) this multitude? We know not what to do, sc. against so many enemies; but our eyes are turned to Thee, i.e., to Thee we look for help; cf. Ps. 123:2; 141:8.

2 Chronicles 20:13. Thus all Judah, with their king, stood praying before the Lord. They had, moreover, brought with them their little ones, their wives, and their sons, to pray for deliverance for them from the enemy; cf. Judith 4:9.

2 Chronicles 20:14–19. The Lord's answer by the prophet Jahaziel.—V. 14. In the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, and promised miraculous assistance to king and people. Jahaziel's descent is traced back for five generations to the Levite Mattaniah of the sons of Asaph. This Mattaniah is not the same person as the Mattaniah in 1 Chronicles 25:4, 16, who lived in David's time, for he belonged to the sons of Heman; but perhaps (as Movers

conjectures, S. 112) he is identical with the Asaphite Nethaniah, 1 Chronicles 25:2, 12, since ם and ן might easily be confounded.

2 Chronicles 20:15. Jehaziel announced to the king and people that they need not fear before the great multitude of their foes; "for the war is not yours, but Jahve's," i.e., you have not to make war upon them, for the Lord will do it; cf. 1 Sam. 17:47.

2 Chronicles 20:16. "To-morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the height Hazziz; and ye will find them at the end of the valley, before the desert Jeruel." The wilderness Jeruel was, without doubt, the name of a part of the great stretch of flat country, bounded on the south by the Wady el *Ghâr*, and extending from the Dead Sea to the neighbourhood of Tekoa, which is now called el Hasasah, after a wady on its northern side. The whole country along the west side of the Dead Sea, "where it does not consist of mountain ridges or deep valley, is a high table-land, sloping gradually towards the east, wholly waste, merely covered here and there with a few bushes, and without the slightest trace of having ever been cultivated" (Robinson's *Pal. sub voce*). The name מַעְלֵה הַצִּי, ascent or height of Hazziz, has perhaps remained attached to the Wady el Hasasah. LXX have rendered הַצִּי by Ἀσσεις; Josephus (*Antt.* ix. 1. 2) has ἀναβάσεως λεγομένης ἐξοχῆς, in accordance with which Robinson (*loc. cit.*) takes the way "upwards from Ziz" to be the pass which at present leads from Ain Jidy to the table-land. Yet it is described by him as a "fearful pass,"¹¹ and it can hardly be thought of here, even if the enemy, like the Bedouins now when on their forays, may be supposed to have marched along the shore of the sea, and ascended to the table-land only at Engedi; for the Israelites did not meet the enemy in this ascent, but above upon the table-land. Josephus' translation of הַצִּי by ἐξοχή is also very questionable, for it is not necessary that the ה should be the article (*Ew. Gesch.* iii. S. 475, der 2 Aufl.).

2 Chronicles 20:17. Ye have not to fight therein (בְּזֹאת); only come hither, stand and see the help of the Lord (who is) with you. You need do nothing more, and therefore need not fear.

2 Chronicles 20:18. For this comforting assurance the king and people thanked the Lord, falling down in worship before Him, whereupon the Levites stood up to praise God with a loud voice. Levites “of the sons of Kohath, yea, of the Korahites,” for they were descended from Kohath (1 Chronicles 6:22).

2 Chronicles 20:20–30. The fulfilment of the divine promise.—V. 20. On the next morning the assembled men of Judah marched, in accordance with the words of the prophet, to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they marched forth, Jehoshaphat stood, probably in the gate of Jerusalem, where those about to march forth were assembled, and called upon them to trust firmly in the Lord and His prophets (הָאֲמִינִי and תִּאֲמָנִי, as in Isa. 7:9). After he had thus counselled the people (יְוַעֵץ אֵל, shown himself a counsellor; cf. 2 Kings 6:8), he ordered them to march, not for battle, but to assure themselves of the wonderful help of the Lord. He placed singers of the Lord (לְ before יהוה as a periphrasis for the genitive), singing praise in holy ornaments, in the marching forth before the army, and saying; i.e., he commanded the Levitic singers to march out before the army, singing and playing in holy ornaments (לְהַדְרִיתֶם, clad in holy ornaments, = בְּהַדְרִיתֶם in 1 Chronicles 16:29; cf. Ew. § 217, a), to praise the Lord for the help He had vouchsafed.

2 Chronicles 20:22. And at the time when they (having come into the neighbourhood of the hostile camp) began with singing and praising, Jahve directed liers in wait against the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were come against Judah, and they were smitten. מְאָרְבִּים denotes liers in wait, men hidden in ambush and lying in wait (Judg. 9:25). Who are here meant cannot be ascertained with certainty. Some of the older commentators, Ew. and

Berth., think it refers to powers, angels sent by God, who are called *insidiatores*, because of the work they had to do in the army of the hostile peoples. But the passages where the interposition of heavenly powers is spoken of are different (cf. 2 Kings 6:17; 19:35), and it is not probable that heavenly powers would be called מְאָרְבִּים. Most probably earthly liers in wait are meant, who unexpectedly rushed forth from their ambush upon the hostile army, and raised a panic terror among them; so that, as is narrated in v. 23f., the Ammonites and Moabites first turned their weapons against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and after they had exterminated them, began to exterminate each other. But the ambush cannot have been composed of men of Judah, because they were, according to vv. 15 and 17, not to fight, but only to behold the deliverance wrought by the Lord. Probably it was liers in wait of the Seirites, greedy of spoil, who from an ambush made an attack upon the Ammonites and Moabites, and by the divine leading put the attacked in such fear and confusion, that they turned furiously upon the inhabitants of Mount Seir, who marched with them, and then fell to fighting with each other; just as, in Judg. 7:22f., the Midianites were, under divine influence, so terrified by the unexpected attack of the small band led by Gideon, that they turned their swords against and mutually destroyed each other. וּבְכַלּוֹתָם בְּיוֹשְׁבֵי שׁ, and when they had come to an end (were finished) among the inhabitants of Seir, when they had massacred these, they helped the one against the other to destruction (מִשְׁחִיתָ is a substantive, as 22:4, Ezek. 5:16, etc.).

2 Chronicles 20:24. Now, when Judah came to the height in the wilderness (מִצְפָּה, *specula*, watch-tower, here a height in the wilderness of Tekoa, whence one might look out over the wilderness Jeruel, v. 16), and turned, or was about to turn, against the multitude of the enemy (הִהָמוֹן referring back to v. 12), behold, they saw “corpses lying upon the earth, and none had escaped,” i.e., they saw corpses in

such multitude lying there, that to all appearance none had escaped.

2 Chronicles 20:25. So Jehoshaphat, with his people, came (as Jahaziel had announced, not to fight, but only to make booty) and found among them (בָּהֶם, among or by the fallen) in abundance both wealth and corpses and precious vessels. The mention of פְּגָרִים as part of the booty, between רְכוּשׁ and the precious vessels, is somewhat surprising. Some Codd. (4 Kennic. and 3 e Rossi) and various ancient editions (Complut., the Brixenian used by Luther, the Bomberg. of date 1518 and 21, and the Münster) have, instead of it, בְּגָדִים; but it is very questionable if the LXX and Vulg. have it (cf. de Rossi *variae lectt. ad h. l.*). בְּגָדִים, garments, along with רְכוּשׁ, moveable property (cattle, tents, etc.), seems to suit better, and is therefore held by Dathe and Berth. to be the correct and original reading. Yet the proofs of this are not decisive, for פְּגָרִים is much better attested, and we need not necessarily take רְכוּשׁ to mean living and dead cattle; but just as רְכוּשׁ denotes property of any kind, which, among nomadic tribes, consists principally in cattle, we may also take פְּגָרִים in the signification of slain men and beasts—the clothes of the men and the accoutrements and ornaments of the beasts (cf. Judg. 8:26) being a by no means worthless booty. Garments as such are not elsewhere met with in enumerations of things taken as booty, in Judg. 8:26 only the purple robes of the Midianite princes being spoken of; and to the remark that the before-mentioned פְּגָרִים has given rise to the changing of בְּגָדִים into פְּגָרִים, we may oppose the equally well-supported conjecture, that the apparently unsuitable meaning of the word פְּגָרִים may have given rise to the alteration of it into בְּגָדִים. כְּלֵי חַמְדוֹת are probably in the main gold and silver ornaments, such as are enumerated in Judg. 8:25f. And they spoiled for themselves לֹאִין מִשָּׂא, “there was not carrying,” i.e., in such abundance that it could

not be carried away, removed, and plundered in three days, because the booty was so great. The unusually large quantity of booty is accounted for by the fact that these peoples had gone forth with all their property to drive the Israelites out of their inheritance, and to take possession of their land for themselves; so that this invasion of Judah was a kind of migration of the peoples, such as those which, at a later time, have been repeated on a gigantic scale, and have poured forth from Central Asia over the whole of Europe. In this, the purpose of the hostile hordes, we must seek the reason for their destruction by a miracle wrought of God. Because they intended to drive the people of Israel out of the land given them by God, and to destroy them, the Lord was compelled to come to the help of His people, and to destroy their enemies.

2 Chronicles 20:26. On the fourth day the men of Judah gathered themselves together, to give thanks to God the Lord for this blessing, in a valley which thence received the name עֲמֻק בְּרָכָה (valley of blessing), and which cannot have been far from the battle-field. Thence they joyfully returned, with Jehoshaphat at their head, to Jerusalem, and went up, the Levites and priests performing solemn music, to the house of God, to render further thanks to the Lord for His wondrous help (v. 27f.). The ancient name בְּרָכָה still exists in the Wady Bereikut, to the west of Tekoa, near the road which leads from Hebron to Jerusalem. “A wide, open valley, and upon its west side, on a small rising ground, are the ruins of Bereikut, which cover from three to four acres” (Robinson’s *New Biblical Researches*, and *Phys. Geogr. S.* 106; cf. v. de Velde, *Memoir*, p. 292). Jerome makes mention of the place in *Vita Paulae*, where he narrates that Paula, standing in *supercilio Caphar baruca*, looked out thence upon the wide desert, and the former land of Sodom and Gomorrah (cf. Reland, *Pal. illustr.* pp. 356 and 685). There is no ground, on the other hand, for the identification of the valley of blessing with the upper part of the valley of Kidron, which, according to Joel 4:2, 12, received the name of

Valley of Jehoshaphat (see on Joel 4:2).—On v. 27*b*, cf. Ezra 6:22, Neh. 12:43.

2 Chronicles 20:29. The fame of this victory of the Lord over the enemies of Israel caused the terror of God to be spread abroad over all the kingdoms of the surrounding lands, in consequence of which the kingdom of Judah had rest (cf. 17:10). On the last clause of v. 30, cf. 15:15. This wonderful acts of the Lord is made the subject of praise to God in the Korahite Psalms, 46, 47, and 48, and perhaps also in Ps. 83, composed by an Asaphite, perhaps Jahaziel (see Del. Introduction to these Psalms).

2 Chronicles 20:31–37. Concluding notes on Jehoshaphat's reign, which are found also in 1 Kings 22:41–51, where they, supplemented by some notes (vv. 45, 48, and 49) which are wanting in the Chronicle, form the whole account of his reign. In the statements as to Jehoshaphat's age at his accession, and the length and character of his reign, both accounts agree, except that the author of the Chronicle has, instead of the stereotyped formula, "and the people still sacrificed and offered incense upon the high places," a remark more significant of the state of affairs: "and the people had not yet determinedly turned their heart to the God of their fathers" (v. 33). The notice that Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel (Kings. v. 45) is not found in the Chronicle, because that would, as a matter of course, follow from Jehoshaphat's having joined affinity with the royal house of Ahab, and had been already sufficiently attested by the narrative in 2 Chronicles 18, and is so still further by the undertaking spoken of in v. 35ff. For the same reason, the clause introduced in 1 Kings 22:46 about the valiant acts and the wars of Jehoshaphat is omitted in the Chronicle, as these acts have been specially narrated here. As to Jehu's speeches, which were put into the book of Kings, see the Introduction, p. 391. Further, the remark on the driving out of the remaining Sodomites (קִדְּשׁ) from the land, 1 Kings 22:47, which refers back to 1 Kings 15:12, is wanting here, because this speciality is

not mentioned in the case of Asa. Finally, the remark that Edom had no king, but only a viceroy or deputy, serves in 1 Kings 22:48 only as an introduction to the succeeding account of Jehoshaphat's attempt to open up anew the sea traffic with Ophir. But on that subject the author of the Chronicle only recounts in vv. 35–37 that Jehoshaphat allied himself with the godless Ahaziah the king of Israel to build in Ezion-gaber ships to go to Tarshish, was censured for it by the prophet Eliezer, who announced to him that Jahve would destroy his work, and that thereupon the ships were broken, doubtless by a storm, and so could not go upon the voyage. אֶתְחַבֵּר does not definitely fix the time (cf. 20:1), but only states that the alliance with Ahaziah took place after the victory over the Ammonites and Moabites. Ahaziah ascended the throne in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat, and reigned scarcely two years, and the enterprise under discussion falls in that period. אֶתְחַבֵּר is an Aramaic form for הִתְחַבֵּר. The last clause of v. 38, "he did wickedly," Bertheau refers to Jehoshaphat: he did wrong; because the context shows that these words are intended to contain a censure on Jehoshaphat for his connection with the king of the northern kingdom. But this remark, though substantially correct, by no means proves that הוּא refers to Jehoshaphat. The words contain a censure on Jehoshaphat on account of his alliance with Ahaziah, even if they describe Ahaziah's conduct. We must, with the older commentators, take the words to refer to Ahaziah, for הִרְשִׁיעַ is much too strong a word for Jehoshaphat's fault in the matter. The author of the Chronicle does indeed use the word הִרְשִׁיעַ of Jehoshaphat's grandson Ahaziah, 22:3, in the clause, "his mother, a daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was for הִרְשִׁיעַ his counsellor," but only that he may characterize the acts of the Ahabic house. Jehoshaphat allied himself with the wicked Ahaziah to build ships לָלֶכֶת תְּרַשִּׁישׁ, to go to Tarshish; and they built ships at Ezion-gaber, i.e., on the Red Sea. Instead of this, we

have in 1 Kings 22:49: Jehoshaphat built Tarshish ships to go to Ophir for gold. Hence it is manifest that in both passages the same undertaking is spoken of, and the expression “Tarshish ships” is paraphrased in the Chronicle by “ships to go to Tarshish.” This periphrasis is, however, a mistake; for Tarshish ships are merely ships which, like those going to Tarshish, were built for long sea voyages, for Jehoshaphat merely desired to renew the voyages to Ophir. With the exception of this erroneous interpretation of the words, Tarshish ships, the two narratives agree, if we only keep in mind the fact that both are incomplete extracts from a more detailed account of this enterprise. The Chronicle supplies us with an explanatory commentary on the short account in 1 Kings 22:49, both in the statement that Jehoshaphat allied himself with Ahaziah of Israel for the preparation of the ships, and also in communicating the word of the prophet Eliezer as to the enterprise, which makes clear to us the reason for the destruction of the ships; while in 1 Kings 22:49 merely the fact of their destruction is recorded. Of the prophet Eliezer nothing further is known than the saying here communicated. His father’s name, Dodavahu, is analogous in form to Hodavya, Joshavya (see on 1 Chronicles 3:24), so that there is no good ground to alter it into דוד־יָהוּ, friend of Jahve, after the Δωδία of the LXX. As to Mareshah, see on 11:8. The perfect פָּרַץ is prophetic: Jahve will rend thy work asunder. The words which follow record the fulfilment. עָצַר as in 13:20; 14:10. With this the chronicler’s account of this enterprise concludes; while in 1 Kings 22:50 it is further stated that, after the destruction of the ships first built, Ahaziah called upon Jehoshaphat still to undertake the Ophir voyage in common with him, and to build new ships for the purpose, but Jehoshaphat would not. The ground of his refusal may easily be gathered from v. 37 of the Chronicle.

2 Chronicles 21

Jehoshaphat’s Death, and the Reign of His Son Joram.

2 Chronicles 21. The account of the death and burial of Jehoshaphat is carried over to 2 Chronicles 21, because Joram’s first act after Jehoshaphat’s death, v. 2ff., stands in essential connection with that event, since Joram began his reign with the murder of all his brothers, the sons of Jehoshaphat (vv. 2–4). The further account of Joram (vv. 5–10) agrees almost verbally with the account in 2 Kings 8:17–22; then in vv. 12–19 there follows further information as to the divine chastisements inflicted upon Joram for his crime, which is not found in 2 Kings; and in v. 20 we have remarks on his end, which correspond to the statements in 2 Kings 8:24.

2 Chronicles 21:1–4. *Jehoshaphat’s death, and the slaughter of his sons by Joram.*—Vv. 2, 3.

Joram had six brothers, whom their father had plentifully supplied with means of subsistence—presents in silver, gold, and precious things—“in the fenced cities of Judah;” i.e., he had made them, as Rehoboam also had made his sons, commandants of fortresses, with ample revenues; but the kingdom he gave to Joram as the first-born. Among the six names two Azariah’s occur,—the one written Azarjah, the other Azarjahu. Jehoshaphat is called king of Israel instead of king of Judah, because he as king walked in the footsteps of Israel, Jacob the wrestler with God, and was a true king of God’s people.

2 Chronicles 21:4. Now when Joram ascended (raised himself to) the throne of his father, and attained to power (יָתַחַק as in 1:1), he slew all his brethren with the sword, and also some of the princes of Israel, i.e., the tribal princes of his kingdom. It could hardly be from avarice that he slew his brothers, merely to get possession of their property; probably it was because they did not sympathize with the political course which he was entering upon, and disapproved of the idolatrous conduct of Joram and his wife Athaliah. This may be gathered from the fact

that in v. 13 they are called better than Joram. The princes probably drew down upon themselves the wrath of Joram, or of his heathen consort, by disapproving of the slaughter of the royal princes, or by giving other signs of discontent with the spirit of their reign.

2 Chronicles 21:5–10. *Duration and spirit of Joram's reign.*—These verses agree with 2 Kings 8:17–22, with the exception of some immaterial divergences, and have been commented upon in the remarks on that passage.—In v. 7 the thought is somewhat otherwise expressed than in v. 19 (Kings): “Jahve would not destroy the house of David, because of the covenant that He had made with David;” instead of, “He would not destroy Judah because of David His servant, as He had said.” Instead of לֹא נִיר לְבָנָיו we have in the Chronicle לֹא נִיר וּלְבָנָיו, to give him a lamp, and that in respect of his sons, ו being inserted before לְבָנָיו to bring the idea more prominently forward. In regard to שָׁרְיוֹ, v. 9, instead of אָעִירָה, Kings v. 21, see on 2 Kings *loc. cit.* At the end of v. 9 the words, “and the people fled to their tents” (v. 21, Kings), whereby the notice of Joram's attempt to bring Edom again under his sway, which is in itself obscure enough, becomes yet more obscure.

2 Chronicles 21:10f. The chronicler concludes the account of the revolt of Edom and of the city of Libnah against Judah's dominion with the reflection: “For he (Joram) had forsaken Jahve the God of the fathers,” and consequently had brought this revolt upon himself, the Lord punishing him thereby for his sin. “Yea, even high places did he make.” The גַּם placed at the beginning may be connected with בְּמִזְבֵּחַ (cf. Isa. 30:33), while the subject is emphasized by הוֹזֵא: The same who had forsaken the God of the fathers, made also high places, which Asa and Jehoshaphat had removed, 14:2, 4; 17:6. “And he caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit fornication,” i.e., seduced them into the idolatrous worship of Baal. That the Hiph. וַיִּזְנֶה is

to be understood of the spiritual whoredom of Baal-worship we learn from v. 13: “as the house of Ahab caused to commit fornication.” וַיִּזְנֶה, “and misled Judah,” i.e., drew them away by violence from the right way. וַיִּזְנֶה is to be interpreted in accordance with Deut. 13:6, 11.

2 Chronicles 21:12–19. The prophet Elijah's letter against Joram, and the infliction of the punishments as announced.—V. 12. There came to him a writing from the prophet Elijah to this effect: “Thus saith Jahve, the God of thy father David, Because thou hast not walked in the ways of Jehoshaphat, ... but hast walked in the way of the kings of Israel, ... and also hast slain thy brethren, the house of thy father, who were better than thyself; behold, Jahve will send a great plague upon thy people, and upon thy sons, and thy wives, and upon all thy goods; and thou shalt have great sickness, by disease of thy bowels, until thy bowels fall out by reason of the sickness day by day.” מִכְתָּב, writing, is a written prophetic threatening, in which his sins are pointed out to Joram, and the divine punishment for them announced. In regard to this statement, we need not be surprised that nothing is elsewhere told us of any written prophecies of Elijah; for we have no circumstantial accounts of his prophetic activity, by which we might estimate the circumstances which may have induced him in this particular instance to commit his prophecy to writing. But, on the other hand, it is very questionable if Elijah was still alive in the reign of Joram of Judah. His translation to heaven is narrated in 2 Kings 2, between the reign of Ahaziah and Joram of Israel, but the year of the event is nowhere stated in Scripture. In the Jewish Chronicle *Seder olam*, 2 Chronicles 17:45, it is indeed placed in the second year of Ahaziah of Israel; but this statement is not founded upon historical tradition, but is a mere deduction from the fact that his translation is narrated in 2 Kings 2 immediately after Ahaziah's death; and the last act of Elijah of which we have any record (2 Kings 1) falls in the second year of that king. Lightfoot, indeed (*Opp. i. p. 85*), Ramb., and Dereser have

concluded from 2 Kings 3:11 that Elijah was taken away from the earth in the reign of Jehoshaphat, because according to that passage, in the campaign against the Moabites, undertaken in company with Joram of Israel, Jehoshaphat inquired for a prophet, and received the answer that Elisha was there, who had poured water upon the hands of Elijah. But the only conclusion to be drawn from that is, that in the camp, or near it, was Elisha, Elijah's servant, not that Elijah was no longer upon earth. The perfect *אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵק* seems indeed to imply this; but it is questionable if we may so press the perfect, i.e., whether the speaker made use of it, or whether it was employed only by the later historian. The words are merely a periphrasis to express the relationship of master and servant in which Elijah stood to Elisha, and tell us only that the latter was Elijah's attendant. But Elisha had entered upon this relationship to Elijah long before Elijah's departure from the earth (1 Kings 19:19ff.). Elijah may therefore have still been alive under Joram of Judah; and Berth. accordingly thinks it "antecedently probable that he spoke of Joram's sins, and threatened him with punishment. But the letter," so he further says, "is couched in quite general terms, and gives, moreover, merely a prophetic explanation of the misfortunes with which Joram was visited;" whence we may conclude that in its present form it is the work of a historian living at a later time, who describes the relation of Elijah to Joram in few words, and according to his conception of it as a whole. This judgment rests on dogmatic grounds, and flows from a principle which refuses to recognise any supernatural prediction in the prophetic utterances. The contents of the letter can be regarded as a prophetic exposition of the misfortunes which broke in, as it were, upon Joram, only by those who deny *à priori* that there is any special prediction in the speeches of the prophets, and hold all prophecies which contain such to be *vaticinia post eventum*. Somewhat more weighty is the objection raised against the view that Elijah was still upon earth, to the effect that the divine threatenings would

make a much deeper impression upon Joram by the very fact that the letter came from a prophet who was no longer in life, and would thus more easily bring him to the knowledge that the Lord is the living God, who had in His hand his breath and all his ways, and who knew all his acts. Thus the writing would smite the conscience of Joram like a voice from the other world (Dächsel). But this whole remark is founded only upon subjective conjectures and presumptions, for which actual analogies are wanting.

For the same reason we cannot regard the remark of Menken as very much to the point, when he says: "If a man like Elias were to speak again upon earth, after he had been taken from it, he must do it from the clouds: this would harmonize with the whole splendour of his course in life; and, in my opinion, that is what actually occurred." For although we do not venture "to mark the limits to which the power and sphere of activity of the perfected saints is extended," yet we are not only justified, but also bound in duty, to judge of those facts of revelation which are susceptible of different interpretations, according to the analogy of the whole Scripture. But the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments know nothing of any communications by writings between the perfected saints in heaven and men; indeed, they rather teach the contrary in the parable of the rich man¹² (Luke 16:31). There are consequently no sufficient grounds for believing that the glorified Elijah either sent a letter to Joram from heaven by an angel, or commissioned any living person to write the letter. The statement of the narrative, "there came to him a writing from Elijah the prophet," cannot well be understood to mean anything else than that Elijah wrote the threatening prophecy which follows; but we have no certain proof that Elijah was then no longer alive, but had been already received into heaven. The time of his translation cannot be exactly fixed. He was still alive in the second year of Ahaziah of Israel; for he announced to this king upon his sick-bed that he would die of his fall (2 Kings 1). Most probably he was still alive also at the

commencement of the reign of Joram of Israel, who ascended the throne twenty-three years after Ahab. Jehoshaphat died six or seven years later; and after his death, his successor Joram slew his brothers, the other sons of Jehoshaphat. Elijah may have lived to see the perpetration of this crime, and may consequently also have sent the threatening prophecy which is under discussion to Joram. As he first appeared under Ahab, on the above supposition, he would have filled the office of prophet for about thirty years; while his servant Elisha, whom he chose to be his successor as early as in the reign of Ahab (1 Kings 19:16), died only under Joash of Israel (2 Kings 13:14f.), who became king fifty-seven years after Ahab's death, and must consequently have discharged the prophetic functions for at least sixty years. But even if we suppose that Elijah had been taken away from the earth before Jehoshaphat's death, we may, with Buddaeus, Ramb., and other commentators, accept this explanation: that the Lord had revealed to him Joram's wickedness before his translation, and had commissioned him to announce to Joram in writing the divine punishment which would follow, and to send this writing to him at the proper time. This would entirely harmonize with the mode of action of this great man of God. To him God had revealed the elevation of Jehu to the throne of Israel, and the extirpation of the house of Ahab by him, together with the accession of Hazael, and the great oppressions which he would inflict upon Israel,—all events which took place only after the death of Joram of Judah. Him, too, God had commissioned even under Ahab to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel (1 Kings 19:16), which Elisha caused to be accomplished by a prophetic scholar fourteen years later (2 Kings 9:1ff.); and to him the Lord may also have revealed the iniquity of Joram, Jehoshaphat's successor, even as early as the second year of Ahaziah of Israel, when he announced to this king his death seven years before Jehoshaphat's death, and may have then commissioned him to announce the divine punishment of his sin. But if Elijah committed the anointing of both Hazael

and Jehu to his servant Elisha, why may he not also have committed to him the delivery of this threatening prophecy which he had drawn up in writing? Without bringing forward in support of this such hypotheses as that the contents of the letter would have all the greater effect, since it would seem as if the man of God were speaking to him from beyond the grave (O. v. Gerlach), we have yet a perfect right to suppose that a written word from the terrible man whom the Lord had accredited as His prophet by fire from heaven, in his struggle against Baal-worship under Ahab and Ahaziah, would be much better fitted to make an impression upon Joram and his consort Athaliah, who was walking in the footsteps of her mother Jezebel, than a word of Elisha, or any other prophet who was not endowed with the spirit and power of Elijah.

Elijah's writing pointed out to Joram two great transgressions: (1) his forsaking the Lord for the idolatrous worship of the house of Ahab, and also his seducing the people into this sin; and (2) the murder of his brothers. For the punishment of the first transgression he announced to him a great smiting which God would inflict upon his people, his family, and his property; for the second crime he foretold heavy bodily chastisements, by a dreadful disease which would terminate fatally. יָמִים עַל יָמִים, v. 15, is *accus.* of duration: days on days, i.e., continuing for days added to days; cf. קָפוּ שָׁנָה עַל שָׁנָה, Isa. 29:1. יָמִים Berth. takes to mean a period of a year, so that by this statement of time a period of two years is fixed for the duration of the disease before death. But the words in themselves cannot have this signification; it can only be a deduction from v. 18. These two threats of punishment were fulfilled. The fulfilment of the first is recorded in v. 16f. God stirred up the spirit of the Philistines and the Arabians (הָעִיר אֶת רוּחַ), as in 1 Chronicles 5:26), so that they came up against Judah, and broke it, i.e., violently pressed into the land as conquerors (בָּקַעַ, so split, then to conquer cities by breaking through their walls;

cf. 2 Kings 25:4, etc.), and carried away all the goods that were found in the king's house, with the wives and sons of Joram, except Jehoahaz the youngest (2 Chronicles 22:1). Movers (*Chronicles* S. 122), Credner, Hitz., and others on Joel 4:5, Berth., etc., conclude from this that these enemies captured Jerusalem and plundered it. But this can hardly be the case; for although Jerusalem belonged to Judah, and might be included in בִּיהוּדָה, yet as a rule Jerusalem is specially named along with Judah as being the chief city; and neither the conquest of Judah, nor the carrying away of the goods from the king's house, and of the king's elder sons, with certainty involves the capture of the capital. The opinion that by the "substance which was found in the king's house" we are to understand the treasures of the royal palace, is certainly incorrect. רְכוּשׁ denotes property of any sort; and what the property of the king or of the king's house might include, we may gather from the catalogue of the אוֹצְרוֹת of David, in the country, in the cities, villages, and castles, 1 Chronicles 27:25ff., where they consist in vineyards, forests, and herds of cattle, and together with the אֲצֵרוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ formed the property (הַרְכוּשׁ) of King David. All this property the conquering Philistines and Arabians who had pressed into Judah might carry away without having captured Jerusalem. But בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ denotes here, not the royal palace, but the king's family; for הַנְּמֻצָא לְבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ does not denote what was found in the palace, but what of the possessions of the king's house they found. נְמֻצָא with לְ is not synonymous with נִמְצָא בְּ, but denotes to be attained, possessed by; cf. Josh. 17:16 and Deut. 21:17. Had Jerusalem been plundered, the treasures of the palace and of the temple would also have been mentioned: 2 Chronicles 25:24; 12:9; 2 Kings 14:13f. and 1 Kings 14:26; cf. Kuhlmeier, *alttestl. Studien in der Luther. Ztschr.* 1844, iii. S. 82ff. Nor does the carrying away of the wives and children of King Joram presuppose the capture of Jerusalem, as

we learn from the more exact account of the matter in 22:1.

2 Chronicles 21:18f. The second punishment fell upon the body and life of the king. The Lord smote him in his bowels to (with) disease, for which there was no healing. לֹאִין מְרַפָּא is in apposition to לֹחֵלִי, literally, "to not being healing."

2 Chronicles 21:19. And it came to pass in days after days (i.e., when a number of days had passed), and that at the time (וּבְקֵעָת) of the expiration of the end in two days, then his bowels went out during his sickness, and he died in sore pains (תַּחֲלָאִים), phenomena of disease, i.e., pains). The words וּבְקֵעָת צֵאת הַקֶּץ are generally translated as if לְיָמִים שְׁנַיִם were a mere periphrasis of the *stat. constr.* Vatabl. and Cler., for example, translate: *et secundum tempus egrediendi finis annorum duorum*, i.e., *postquam adventit finis a. d.*, or *cum exacti essent duo anni*; similarly Berth.: "at the time of the approach of the end of two times." But against this we have not only the circumstance that no satisfactory reason for the use of this periphrasis for the genitive can be perceived, and that no analogies can be found for the expression לְיָמִים שְׁנַיִם, the end of two years, instead of קֶץ הַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם; but also the more decisive linguistic reason that צֵאת הַקֶּץ cannot denote the approach of the end, but only the expiry, the running out of the end; and finally, that the supposition that יָמִים here and in v. 15 denotes a year is without foundation. Schmidt and Rabm. have already given a better explanation: *quumque esset tempus, quo exiit finis s. quum exiret ac completeretur terminus ille, in epistola Eliae v. 15 praefixus*; but in this case also we should expect קֶץ הַיָּמִים שְׁנַיִם, since לְיָמִים שְׁנַיִם should point back to יָמִים עַל יָמִים, and contain a more exact definition of the terms employed in v. 15, which are not definite enough. We therefore take צֵאת הַקֶּץ by itself, and translate: At the time of the end, i.e., when the end, sc. of

life or of the disease, had come about two days, i.e., about two days before the issue of the end of the disease, then the bowels went out of the body—they flowed out from the body as devoured by the disease. עַם הָלִי, in, during the sickness, consequently before the decease (cf. for עַם in this signification, Ps. 72:5, Dan. 3:33). Trusen (*Sitten, Gebr. und Krankh. der alten Hebräer*, S. 212f.) holds this disease to have been a violent dysentery (diarrhoea), “being an inflammation of the nervous tissue (*Nervenhaut*) of the whole great intestine, which causes the overlying mucous membrane to decay and peel off, which then falls out often in tube-shape, so that the intestines appear to fall from the body.” His people did not make a burning for him like the burning of his fathers, cf. 16:14; that is, denied him the honours usual at burial, because of their discontent with his evil reign.

2 Chronicles 21:20. The repetition of his age and the length of his reign (cf. v. 6) is accounted for by the fact that the last section of this chapter is derived from a special source, wherein these notes likewise were contained. The peculiarity of the language and the want of the current expressions of our historian also favour the idea that some special authority has been used here. “And he departed, mourned by none.” Luther erroneously translates, “and walked in a way which was not right” (*und wandelt das nicht fein war*), after the “*ambulavit non recte*” of the Vulg.; for הִמָּדָה denotes, not a good walk, but *desiderium*, בָּלֵא הִמָּדָה, *sine desiderio*, i.e., *a nemine desideratus*. הָלַךְ, to depart, i.e., die, as Gen. 15:2. Moreover, though he was buried in the city of David, yet he was not laid in the graves of the kings, by which act also a judgment was pronounced upon his reign; cf. 24:25 and 26:23.

2 Chronicles 22

The Reigns of Ahaziah and the Impious Athaliah.

2 Chronicles 22:1–9. *Ahaziah's reign of a year, and his death.*—The account of Ahaziah in 2

Kings 8:26–29 agrees with our narrative, except that there the reflections of the chronicler on the spirit of his government are wanting; but, on the contrary, the account of his death is very brief in the Chronicle (vv. 6–9), while in 2 Kings 9 and 10 the extirpation of the Ahabic house by Jehu, in the course of which Ahaziah was slain with his relatives, is narrated at length.

2 Chronicles 22:1. Instead of the short stereotyped notice, “and Ahaziah his son was king in his stead,” with which 2 Kings 8:24 concludes the history of Joram, the Chronicle gives more exact information as to Ahaziah's accession: “The inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son (who is called in 21:17 Jehoahaz), king in his stead; for all the elder (sons), the band which had come among the Arabs to the camp had slain.” In יַמְלִיכוּ we have a hint that Ahaziah's succession was disputed or doubtful; for where the son follows the father on the throne without opposition, it is simply said in the Chronicle also, “and his son was king in his stead.” But the only person who could contest the throne with Ahaziah, since all the other sons of Joram who would have had claims upon it were not then alive, was his mother Athaliah, who usurped the throne after his death. All the elder sons (הַרְאֲשֻׁנִים, the earlier born) were slain by the troop which had come among (with) the Arabians (see 21:16f.) into the camp,—not of the Philistines (Cler.), but of the men of Judah; that is, they were slain by a reconnoitring party, which, in the invasion of Judah by the Philistines and Arabs, surprised the camp of the men of Judah, and slew the elder sons of Joram, who had marched to the war. Probably they did not cut them down on the spot, but (according to 21:17) took them prisoners and slew them afterwards.

2 Chronicles 22:2. The number 42 is an orthographical error for 22 (ב having been changed into כ), 2 Kings 8:26. As Joram was thirty-two years of age at his accession, and reigned eight years (2 Chronicles 21:20 and 5), at his death his youngest son could not be older than twenty-one or twenty-two years of age,

and even then Joram must have begotten him in his eighteenth or nineteenth year. It is quite consistent with this that Joram had yet older sons; for in the East marriages are entered upon at a very early age, and the royal princes were wont to have several wives, or, besides their proper wives, concubines also. Certainly, had Ahaziah had forty-two older brothers, as Berth. and other critics conclude from 2 Kings 10:13f., then he could not possibly have been begotten, or been born, in his father's eighteenth year. But that idea rests merely upon an erroneous interpretation of the passage quoted; see on v. 8. Ahaziah's mother Athaliah is called the daughter, i.e., granddaughter, of Omri, as in 2 Kings 8:26, because he was the founder of the idolatrous dynasty of the kingdom of the ten tribes.

2 Chronicles 22:3. He also (like his father Joram, 21:6) walked in the ways of the house of Ahab. This statement is accounted for by the clause: for his mother (a daughter of Ahab and the godless Jezebel) was his counsellor to do evil, i.e., led him to give himself up to the idolatry of the house of Ahab.

2 Chronicles 22:4. The further remark also, "he did that which was displeasing in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab," is similarly explained; for they (the members of the house of Ahab related to him through his mother) were counsellors to him after the death of his father to his destruction, cf. 20:23; while in 2 Kings 8:27, the relationship alone is spoken of as the reason of his evil-doing. How far this counsel led to his destruction is narrated in v. 5 and onwards, and the narrative is introduced by the words, "He walked also in their counsel;" whence it is clear beyond all doubt, that Ahaziah entered along with Joram, Ahab's son, upon the war which was to bring about the destruction of Ahab's house, and to cost him his life, on the advice of Ahab's relations. There is no doubt that Joram, Ahab's son, had called upon Ahaziah to take part in the war against the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead (see on 18:28), and that Athaliah with her party supported his proposal, so that Ahaziah complied. In the war

the Aramaeans (Syrians) smote Joram; i.e., according to v. 6, they wounded him (הָרַמִּים is a contraction for הָאֲרָמִים, 2 Kings 8:28). In consequence of this Joram returned to Jezreel, the summer residence of the Ahabic royal house (1 Kings 18:45), the present Zerin; see on Josh. 19:18. בִּי הַמַּבִּים has no meaning, and is merely an error for מִן הַמַּבִּים, 2 Kings 8:29, which indeed is the reading of several Codd.: to let himself be cured of his strokes (wounds). וַעֲזָרְיָהּ, too, is an orthographical error for וַאֲחִיָּזָה: and Ahaziah went down to visit the wounded Joram, his brother-in-law. Whether he went from Jerusalem or from the loftily-situated Ramah cannot be with certainty determined, for we have no special account of the course of the war, and from 2 Kings 9:14f. we only learn that the Israelite army remained in Ramoth after the return of the wounded Joram. It is therefore probable that Ahaziah went direct from Ramoth to visit Joram, but it is not ascertained; for there is nothing opposed to the supposition that, after Joram had been wounded in the battle, and while the Israelite host remained to hold the city against the Syrian king Hazael, Ahaziah had returned to his capital, and thence went after some time to visit the wounded Joram in Jezreel.

2 Chronicles 22:7-9. Without touching upon the conspiracy against Joram, narrated in 2 Kings 9, at the head of which was Jehu, the captain of the host, whom God caused to be anointed king over Israel by a scholar of the prophets deputed by Elisha, and whom he called upon to extirpate the idolatrous family of Ahab, since it did not belong to the plan of the Chronicle to narrate the history of Israel, our historian only briefly records the slaughter of Ahaziah and his brother's sons by Jehu as being the result of a divine dispensation.

2 Chronicles 22:7. "And of God was (came) the destruction (תְּבוֹסָה, a being trodden down, a formation which occurs here only) of Ahaziah, that he went to Joram;" i.e., under divine leading had Ahaziah come to Joram, there to

find his death. וּבָבֶלְאֵוּ וְגו', and when he was come, he went out with Joram against Jehu (instead of אֶל-יְהוּא, we have in 2 Kings 9:21 the more distinct לְקִרְיַת יְהוּא, towards Jehu) the son of Nimshi, whom God had anointed to extirpate the house of Ahab (2 Kings 9:1–10).

2 Chronicles 22:8. When Jehu was executing judgment upon the house of Ahab (נִשְׁפָּט usually construed with אָת, to be at law with any one, to administer justice; cf. Isa. 46:16, Ezek. 38:22), he found the princes of Judah, and the sons of the brothers of Ahaziah, serving Ahaziah, and slew them. מְשֻׁרְתִּים, i.e., in the train of King Ahaziah as his servants. As to when and where Jehu met the brothers' sons of Ahaziah and slew them, we have no further statement, as the author of the Chronicle mentions that fact only as a proof of the divinely directed extirpation of all the members of the idolatrous royal house. In 2 Kings 10:12–14 we read that Jehu, after he had extirpated the whole Israelite royal house—Joram and Jezebel, and the seventy sons of Ahab—went to Samaria, there to eradicate the Baal-worship, and upon his way thither met the brothers of Ahaziah the king of Judah, and caused them to be taken alive, and then slain, to the number of forty-two. These אַחֲרֵי אַחֲזִיָּהוּ, forty-two men, cannot have been actual brothers of Ahaziah, since all Ahaziah's brethren had, according to v. 1 and 21:17, been slain in the reign of Joram, in the invasion of the Philistines and Arabians. They must be brothers only in the wider sense, i.e., cousins and nephews of Ahaziah, as Movers (S. 258) and Ewald recognise, along with the older commentators. The Chronicle, therefore, is quite correct in saying, "sons of the brethren of Ahaziah," and along with these princes of Judah, who, according to the context, can only be princes who held offices at court, especially such as were entrusted with the education and guardianship of the royal princes. Perhaps these are included in the number forty-two (Kings). But even if this be not the case, we need not suppose that there were forty-two

brothers' sons, or nephews of Ahaziah, since אַחֲרֵי includes cousins also, and in the text of the Chronicle no number is stated, although forty-two nephews would not be an unheard-of number; and we do not know how many elder brothers Ahaziah had. Certainly the nephews or brothers' sons of Ahaziah cannot have been very old, since Ahaziah's father Joram died at the age of forty, and Ahaziah, who became king in his twenty-second year, reigned only one year. But from the early development of posterity in southern lands, and the polygamy practised by the royal princes, Joram might easily have had in his fortieth year a considerable number of grandsons from five to eight years old, and boys of from six to nine years might quite well make a journey with their tutors to Jezreel to visit their relations. In this way the divergent statements as to the slaughter of the brothers and brothers' sons of Ahaziah, contained in 2 Kings 9 and in our 8th verse, may be reconciled, without our being compelled, as Berth. thinks we are, to suppose that there were two different traditions on this subject.

2 Chronicles 22:9. And he (Jehu) sought Ahaziah, and they (Jehu's body-guard or his warriors) caught him while he was hiding in Samaria, and brought him to Jehu, and slew him. Then they (his servants, 2 Kings 9:27) buried him, for they said: He is a son of Jehoshaphat, who sought Jahve with all his heart. We find more exact information as to Ahaziah's death in 2 Kings 9:27f., according to which Ahaziah, overtaken by Jehu near Jibleam in his flight before him, and smitten, i.e., wounded, fled to Megiddo, and there died, and was brought by his servants to Jerusalem, and buried with his fathers in the city of David. For the reconciliation of these statements, see on 2 Kings 9:27f. The circumstance that in our account first the slaughter of the brothers' sons, then that of Ahaziah is mentioned, while according to 2 Kings 9 and 10 the slaughter of Ahaziah would seem to have preceded, does not make any essential difference; for the short account in the Chronicle is not arranged

chronologically, but according to the subject, and the death of Ahaziah is mentioned last only in order that it might be connected with the further events which occurred in Judah. The last clause of v. 9, "and there was not to the house of Ahab one who would have possessed power for the kingdom," i.e., there was no successor on the throne to whom the government might straightway be transferred, forms a transition to the succeeding account of Athaliah's usurpation.

2 Chronicles 22:10–12. *The six years' tyranny of Athaliah.*—In regard to her, all that is stated is, that after Ahaziah's death she ascended the throne, and caused all the royal seed of the house of Judah, i.e., all the male members of the royal house, to be murdered. From this slaughter only Joash the son of Ahaziah, an infant a year old, was rescued, together with his nurse, by the princess Jehoshabeath, who was married to the high priest Jehoiada. He was hidden for six years, and during that time Athaliah reigned. The same narrative, for the most part in the same words, is found in 2 Kings 11:1–3, and has been already commented upon there.

2 Chronicles 23

Ch. 23 and 24.—The Fall of Athaliah, and the Coronation and Reign of Joash.

2 Chronicles 23–24. After Joash had been kept in hiding for six years, the high priest Jehoiada came to the resolution to make an end of the tyranny of Athaliah, and to raise the young prince to the throne. The carrying out of this resolution is narrated in 2 Chronicles 23, and thereafter in 2 Chronicles 24. All that is important as to the reign of Joash is communicated.

2 Chronicles 23. *Joash raised to the throne, and Athaliah slain.*—In 2 Kings 11:4–20 we have another account of these events, in which the matter is in several points more briefly narrated, and apparently differently represented. According to both narratives, the thing was undertaken and carried out by the high priest Jehoiada; but according to 2 Kings

11, the high priest would appear to have mainly availed himself of the co-operation of the royal body-guard in the execution of his plan, while according to the Chronicle it is the Levites and the heads of the fathers'-houses who are made use of. Thereupon De Wette, Movers, Thenius, and Bertheau consequently maintain that the author of the Chronicle, proceeding on the view that the high priest, the chief of so many priests and Levites, would not have recourse to the assistance of the royal body-guard, has altered the statements in the second book of Kings accordingly, and wishes to represent the matter in a different way. But this assertion can be made with an appearance of truth only on the presupposition, already repeatedly shown to be erroneous, that the author of the Chronicle has made the account in 2 Kings 11 the basis of his narrative, and designedly altered it, and can scarcely be upheld even by the incorrect interpretation of various words. That 2 Kings 11 is not the source from which our account has been derived, nor the basis on which it is founded, is manifest from the very first verses of the chronicler's narrative, where the names of the five princes over hundreds, with whose co-operation Jehoiada elaborated his plan and carried it into execution, are individually enumerated; while in 2 Kings 11, where the preparations for the accomplishment of the work are very briefly treated of, they will be sought for in vain. But if, on the contrary, the two accounts be recognised to be extracts confining themselves to the main points, excerpted from a more detailed narrative of the event from different points of view, the discrepancies may be at once reconciled. Instead of the short statement, 2 Kings 11:4, that the high priest Jehoiada ordered the centurions of the royal body-guard to come to him in the temple (וַיִּבְרָא ... יְקָהּ), made a covenant with them, caused them to swear, and showed them the king's son, we read in the Chronicle (vv. 1–3), that the high priest Jehoiada took five centurions, whose names are stated with historical exactitude, into covenant with him, i.e., sent for them and made a covenant with them, and that these men then went throughout

Judah, and summoned the Levites from all the cities of Judah, and the heads of the fathers'-houses of Israel, to Jerusalem; whereupon Jehoiada with the whole assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God, and Jehoiada said to the people, "The king's son shall be king, as Jahve hath said of the sons of David." That this more expanded narrative can without difficulty be reconciled with the summary statement in 2 Kings 11:4, is perfectly manifest. By various devices, however, Bertheau tries to bring out some discrepancies. In the first place, in the words, "Jehoiada sent and brought the princes of hundreds" (Kings, v. 4), he presses the שָׁלַח, which is not found in the Chronicle, translates it by "he sent out," and interprets it with v. 2 of the Chronicle; in the second, he takes כָּל־הַקְהָל in v. 3 of the Chronicle to mean "the whole congregation," whereas it denotes only the assembly of the men named in vv. 1 and 2; and, thirdly, he opposes the expression, "they made a covenant with the king" (v. 3, Chron.), to the statement (v. 2, Kings) that Jehoiada made a covenant to the princes, by making this latter statement mean that Jehoiada made a covenant *with* the princes, but not with the king, as if this covenant concerning the coronation of Joash as king might not be called, by a shorter mode of expression, a covenant with the king, especially when the declaration, "the son of the king shall reign," follows immediately.

2 Chronicles 23:4-7. The case is similar with the contradictions in the account of the carrying out of the arrangements agreed upon. In Bertheau's view, this is the state of the case: According to 2 Kings 11:5-8, the one part of the body-guard, which on Sabbath mounted guard in the royal palace, were to divide themselves into three bands: one third was to keep the guard of the royal house, which was certainly in the neighbourhood of the main entrance; the second third was to stand at the gate Sur, probably a side-gate of the palace; the third was to stand behind the door of the runners. The other part of the body-guard, on the other hand—all those who were relieved on the

Sabbath—were to occupy the temple, so as to defend the young king. But according to the representation of the Chronicle, (1) the priests and the Levites were to divide themselves into three parts: the first third, those of the priests and Levites, who entered upon their duties on the Sabbath, were to be watchers of the thresholds (cf. on 1 Chronicles 9:19f.), i.e., were to mount guard in the temple as usual; the second third was to be in the house of the king (i.e., where the first third was to keep watch, according to 2 Kings); the third was to be at the gate Jesod. Then (2) the whole people were to stand in the courts of the temple, and, according to v. 6, were to observe the ordinance of Jahve (2 Chronicles 13:11), by which they were forbidden to enter the temple. From this Bertheau then concludes: "The guarding of the house of Jahve for the protection of the king (2 Kings 11:7) has here become a משמרת יהוה." But in opposition to this, we have to remark that in 2 Kings 11:5-8 is it not said that the royal body-guard was to be posted as guards in the royal palace and in the temple; that is only a conclusion from the fact that Jehoiada conferred on the matter with the שָׂרֵי הַמְּאוֹת of the executioners and runners, i.e., of the royal satellites, and instructed these centurions, that those entering upon the service on Sabbath were to keep watch in three divisions, and those retiring from the service in two divisions, in the following places, which are then more accurately designated. The one division of those entering upon the service were to stand, according to 2 Kings, by the gate Sur; according to the Chronicle, by the gate Jesod. The second, according to 2 Kings, was to keep the guard of the king's house; according to the Chronicle, it was to be in or by the king's house. The third was, according to 2 Kings, to be by (in) the gate behind the runners, and to keep the guard of the house Massach; according to the Chronicle, they were to serve as watchers of the thresholds. If, as is acknowledged by all, the gate סוּר is identical with the gate הַיְסוּד,—although it can neither be ascertained whether the difference in name has resulted merely

from an orthographical error, or rests upon a double designation of one gate; nor yet can it be pointed out what the position of this gate, which is nowhere else mentioned, was,—then the Chronicle and 2 Kings agree as to the posts which were to occupy this door. The position also of the third part, בְּבֵית הַמִּלֵּךְ (Chron.), will not be different from that of the third part, to which was committed the guarding of the king's house (Kings). The place where this third part took up its position is not exactly pointed out in either narrative, yet the statement, "to keep the watch of the house (temple) for warding off" (Kings), agrees with the appointment "to be guards of the thresholds" (Chron.), since the guarding of the thresholds has no other aim than to prevent unauthorized persons from entering. Now, since the young king, not merely according to the Chron., but also according to 2 Kings 11:4, —where we are told that Jehoiada showed the son of the king to the chief men whom he had summoned to the house of Jahve,—was in the temple, and only after his coronation and Athaliah's death was led solemnly into the royal palace, we might take the king's house, the guard of which the one third of those entering upon the service were to keep (Kings, v. 7), to be the temple building in which the young king was, and interpret בְּבֵית הַמִּלֵּךְ in accordance with that idea. In that case, there would be no reference to the settling of guards in the palace; and that view would seem to be favoured by the circumstance that the other third part of those entering upon their service on the Sabbath were to post themselves at the gate, behind the runners, and keep the guard of the house מִסָּח. That מִסָּח is not a *nom. propr.*, but *appellat.*, from נָסַח, to ward off, signifying warding off, is unanimously acknowledged by modern commentators; only Thenius would alter מִסָּח into וְנָסַח, "and shall ward off." Gesenius, on the contrary, in his *Thesaurus*, takes the word to be a substantive, *cum* מִשְׁמָרָה *per appositionem conjunctum*, in the signification, the guard for warding off, and translates, *et vos agetis custodiam templi ad*

depellendum sc. populum (to ward off). If this interpretation be correct, then these words also do not treat of a palace guard; and to take הַבֵּיתָה to signify the temple is so evidently suggested by the context, according to which the high priest conducted the whole transaction in the temple, that we must have better grounds for referring the words to the royal palace than the mere presumption that, because the high priest discussed the plan with the captains of the royal body-guard, it must be the occupation of the royal palace which is spoken of.

But quite apart from the Chronicle, even the further account of the matter in 2 Kings 11 is unfavourable to the placing of guards in the royal palace. According to v. 9, the captains did exactly as Jehoiada commanded. They took each of them their men—those coming on the Sabbath, and those departing—and went to the priest Jehoiada, who gave them David's weapons out of the house of God (v. 10), and the satellites stationed themselves in the court of the temple, and there the king was crowned. The unambiguous statement, v. 9, that the captains, each with his men—i.e., those coming on Sabbath (entering upon the service), and those departing—came to the high priest in the temple, and there took up their position in the court, decisively excludes the idea that "those coming on the Sabbath" had occupied the guard-posts in the royal palace, and demands that the divisions mentioned in vv. 5 and 6 should be posted at different parts and gates of the temple. That one third part had assigned to it a place behind the gate of the runners is not at all inconsistent with the above idea; for even if the gate behind the runners be identical with the gate of the runners (Kings, v. 19), it by no means follows from that that it was a gate of the palace, and not of the outer court of the temple. In accordance with this view, then, vv. 5 and 6 (Kings) do not treat of an occupation of the royal palace, but of a provision for the security of the temple by the posting of guards. It is, moreover, against the supposition that the entrances to the palace were occupied by guards, that Athaliah, when she heard from her

palace the noise of the people in the temple, came immediately into the temple, and was dragged forth and slain by the captains there in command. For what purpose can they have placed guards by the palace gates, if they did not desire to put any hindrance in the way of the queen's going forth into the temple? The hypotheses of Thenius, that it was done to keep away those who were devoted to Athaliah, to make themselves masters of the palace, and to hinder Athaliah from taking any measures in opposition to them, and to guard the place of the throne, are nothing but expedients resulting from embarrassment. If there was no intention to put any hindrance in the way of the queen leaving the palace, there could have been none to prevent her taking opposing measures. For the rest, the result obtained by careful consideration of the account in 2 Kings 11, that in vv. 5 and 6 an occupation by guards, not of the royal palace, but of the temple, is spoken of, does not stand or fall with the supposition that **בית המלך** was the dwelling of the young king in the temple building, and not the palace. The expression **שָׁמַר מִשְׁמֶרֶת בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ**, to guard the guard of the king's house, i.e., to have regard to whatever is to be regarded in reference to the king's house, is so indefinite and elastic, that it may have been used of a post which watched from the outer court of the temple what was going on in the palace, which was over against the temple. With this also the corresponding **בְּבֵית הַמֶּלֶךְ**, in the short account of the distribution of the guards given by the chronicler (v. 5), may be reconciled, if we translate it "at the house of the king," and call to mind that, according to 2 Kings 16:18 and 1 Kings 10:5, there was a special approach from the palace to the temple for the king, which this division may have had to guard. But notwithstanding the guarding of this way, Athaliah could come from the palace into the court of the temple by another way, or perhaps the guards were less watchful at their posts during the solemnity of the young king's coronation.

And not less groundless is the assertion that the priest Jehoiada availed himself in the execution of his plan, according to 2 Kings 11, mainly of the co-operation of the royal body-guard, according to the Chronicle mainly of that of the Levites; or that the chronicler, as Thenius expresses it, "has made the body-guards of 2 Kings into Levites, in order to divert to the priesthood the honour which belonged to the Praetorians." The **שָׂרֵי הַמְּאוֹזוֹת**, mentioned by name in the Chronicle, with whom Jehoiada discussed his plan, and who had command of the guards when it was carried out, are not called Levites, and may consequently have been captains of the executioners and runners, i.e., of the royal body-guard, as they are designated in 2 Kings 11:4. But the men who occupied the various posts are called in both texts **בְּאֵי הַשְּׂבָת** (Kings, v. 5; Chronicles v. 4): in 2 Kings, vv. 7 and 9, the corresponding **יֹצְאֵי הַשְּׂבָת** is added; while in the Chronicle the **בְּאֵי הַשְּׂבָת** are expressly called Levites, the words **וְלֵוִיִּים** being added. But we know from Luke 1:5, compared with 1 Chronicles 24 (see above, p. 549), that the priests and Levites performed the service in the temple in courses from one Sabbath to another, while we have no record of any such arrangement as to the service of the Praetorians; so that we must understand the words "coming on the Sabbath" (entering upon the service), and "going on the Sabbath" (those relieved from it), of the Levites in the first place. Had it been intended that by these words in 2 Kings 11 we should understand Praetorians, it must necessarily have been clearly said. From the words spoken to the centurions of the body-guard, "the third part of you," etc., it does not follow at all as a matter of course that they were so, any more than from the fact that in Kings, v. 11, the posts set are called **הַרְצִיִּים**, the runners = satellites. If we suppose that in this extraordinary case the Levitic temple servants were placed under the command of centurions of the royal body-guard, who were in league with the high priest, the designation of the men they commanded by the name **רְצִיִּים**, satellites, is

fully explained; the men having been previously more accurately described as those who were entering upon and being relieved from service on the Sabbath. In this way I have explained the matter in my *apologet. Versuch über die Chronicles* S. 362ff., but this explanation of it has neither been regarded nor confuted by Thenius and Bertheau. Even the mention of כָּרִי and רָצִים along with the captains and the whole people, in Kings, v. 19, is not inconsistent with it; for we may without difficulty suppose, as has been said in my commentary on that verse, that the royal body-guard, immediately after the slaughter of Athaliah, went over to the young king just crowned, in order that they, along with the remainder of the people who were assembled in the court, might lead him thence to the royal palace. There is only one statement in the two texts which can scarcely be reconciled with this conjecture,—namely, the mention of the רָצִים and of the people in the temple before Athaliah was slain (v. 12 Chronicles and v. 13 Kings), since it follows from that that runners or satellites belonging to the body-guard were either posted, or had assembled with the others, in the court of the temple. To meet this statement, we must suppose that the centurions of the body-guard employed not merely the Levitic temple guard, but also some of the royal satellites, upon whose fidelity they could rely, to occupy the posts mentioned in vv. 5–7 (Kings) and vv. 4 and 5 (Chron.); so that the company under the command of the centurions who occupied the various posts in the temple consisted partly of Levitic temple guards, and partly of royal body-guards. But even on this view, the suspicion that the chronicler has mentioned the Levites instead of the body-guard is shown to be groundless and unjust, since the רָצִים also are mentioned in the Chronicle.

According to this exposition, the true relation between the account in the Chronicle and that in the book of Kings would seem to be something like this: Both accounts mention merely the main points of the proceedings,—

the author of the book of Kings emphasizing the part played in the affair by the royal body-guard; the author of the Chronicle, on the other hand, emphasizing that played by the Levites: so that both accounts mutually supplement each other, and only when taken together give a full view of the circumstances. We have still to make the following remarks on the narrative of the Chronicle in detail. The statement (Kings, v. 5) that all those relieved on the Sabbath were to keep guard of the house of Jahve, in reference to the king, in two divisions, is in Chronicles, v. 5, thus generalized: “all the people were in the courts of the house of Jahve.” כָּל־הָעָם is all the people except the before-mentioned bodies of men with their captains, and comprehends not only the remainder of the people mentioned in 2 Kings 11:13 and 19, who came to the temple without any special invitation, but also the body of guards who were relieved from service on Sabbath. This is clear from v. 8 of the Chronicle, where we have the supplementary remark, that those departing on the Sabbath also, as well as those coming, did what Jehoiada commanded. In addition to this, in v. 6 this further command of Jehoiada is communicated: Let no one enter the house of Jahve (בַּיִת יְהוָה is the temple building, i.e., the holy place and the most holy, as distinguished from the courts), save the priests, and they that minister of the Levites, i.e., of those Levites who perform the service, who are consecrated thereto; but all the people shall keep the watch of the Lord, i.e., keep what is to be observed in reference to Jahve, i.e., here, to keep without the limits appointed in the law to the people in drawing near to the sanctuaries. The whole verse, therefore, contains only an elucidation of the command that all the people were to remain in the courts, and not to press farther into the sanctuary.

2 Chronicles 23:7. “And the Levites shall compass the king round about, each with his weapons in his hand.” The Levites are the bodies of guards mentioned in vv. 4, 5. If we keep that in view, then the following words, “every one who cometh into the house shall be put to death,” say the same as the words, “every

one who cometh within the ranks" (Kings, v. 8). A contradiction arises only if we misinterpret **הַקִּיפּוֹ**, and understand it of the forming of a circle around the king; whereas **הַקִּיפּוֹ**, like **הַקִּפְתָּם** (Kings), is to be understood, according to the context, of the setting of the guards both at the temple gate and in the courts, so that whoever entered the court of the temple came within the ranks of the guards thus placed.

2 Chronicles 23:8–10. The account of the occupation of the temple thus arranged agrees with vv. 9–11, Kings. Instead of **שְׂרֵי הַמְּאוֹת** (Kings), in v. 8 are very fittingly named "the Levites (as in v. 5) and all Judah," viz., in its chiefs, since the high priest had assured himself of the support of the heads of the fathers'-houses of Israel (v. 2). Further, to the statement that those who were departing from the service also took part in the affair, it is added, "for Jehoiada had not dismissed the courses." **הַמְּחֻלְקוֹת** are the divisions which, according to the arrangement made by David (1 Chronicles 24–26), had charge of the temple service at that time. To the captains Jehoiada gave the spears and shields which had been presented to the temple by David as offerings, because they had come into the temple without weapons; see on 2 Kings 11:10. **וַיַּעֲמֵד**, "and he caused the whole people to take position," is connected formally with **וַיִּתֵּן**, v. 9; while in Kings, v. 11, we have simply **וַיַּעֲמֵדוּ**.

2 Chronicles 23:11. The coronation of Joash, as in v. 12 (Kings). The subject of **וַיּוֹצִיאֵהוּ** and **וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ** is those present, while in **וַיּוֹצִיאֵהוּ** and **וַיִּתֵּן** (Kings), Jehoiada as leader of the whole is referred to. In the Chronicle, Jehoiada and his sons, i.e., the high priest with the priests assisting him, are expressly named as subject to **וַיִּמְלִיכֵהוּ** and **וַיִּמְשְׁקֵהוּ**, where in Kings also the plural is used; while, on the contrary, "the clapping of the hands" as a sign of joyful acclamation (Kings) is omitted, as being unimportant.

2 Chronicles 23:12–15. Slaughter of Athaliah, as in 2 Kings 11:13–16. In v. 13 of the Chronicle, the statement that the assembled people played on instruments is expanded by the addition, "and singing with instruments of song, and proclaiming aloud to praise," i.e., and praising. **וַיִּזְצַא**, v. 14, is an orthographical error for **וַיִּצְוָה** (Kings).

2 Chronicles 23:16–21. *The renewal of the covenant, extirpation of Baal-worship, and the solemn entry of the king into his palace*, as in 2 Kings 11:17–20, and already commented on in that place. The remark as to the renewal of the covenant is in v. 16 (Chron.) somewhat more brief than in Kings, v. 17; and **בֵּינֵנוּ**, between himself, the same as between himself, the high priest, as representative of Jehovah. In Kings, v. 17, the matter is more clearly expressed. In v. 18f., the statement, "the priest set overseers over the house of Jahve" (Kings), is expanded by the addition of the words, "by means of the Levitic priests whom David had distributed for the house of Jahve to offer sacrifices; ... and he placed doorkeepers at the doors of the house of Jahve," etc. The meaning is: Jehoiada again introduced the old arrangement of the public worship in the temple as David had settled it, it having either fallen into decay or wholly ceased under the rule of the idolatrous Athaliah. As to the remainder, see on 2 Kings 11:19 and 30.

2 Chronicles 24

2 Chronicles 24. *The reign of Joash*; cf. 2 Kings 12.—In both accounts only two main events in Joash's reign of forty years are narrated at any length,—the repair of the temple, and the campaign of the Syrian king Hazael against Jerusalem. Besides this, at the beginning, we have a statement as to the duration and spirit of his reign; and in conclusion, the murder of Joash in consequence of a conspiracy is mentioned. Both accounts agree in all essential points, but are shown to be extracts containing the most important part of a more complete history of Joash, by the fact that, on the one hand, in 2 Kings 12 single circumstances are communicated in a more detailed and more

exact form than that in which the Chronicle states them; while, on the other hand, the account of the Chronicle supplements the account in 2 Kings 12 in many respects. To these latter belong the account of the marriage of Joash, and his many children, the account of the death of Jehoiada at the age of 130 years, and his honourable burial with the kings, etc.; see on v. 15.

2 Chronicles 24:4–14. As to the *repair of the temple*, see the commentary on 2 Kings 12:5–17, where both the formal divergences and the essential agreement of the two narratives are pointed out.

2 Chronicles 24:11. וַיְהִי בַעֲת יְבִיא וּגֹר, translate: It came to pass at the time when they brought the chest to the guard of the king by the Levites, i.e., to the board of oversight appointed by the king from among the Levites. עַת *stat. constr.* before a sentence following. לְיוֹם בְּיוֹם does not denote every day, but every time when there was much money in the chest.

2 Chronicles 24:13. וַתֵּעַל אֲרוֹכָה, and there was a band laid upon the work, i.e., the restoration of the house of God was furthered; cf. for this symbolical expression, Neh. 4:1, Jer. 8:7.

2 Chronicles 24:14. וַיַּעֲשֶׂהוּ כְלִים, therefrom (the king) caused to be made (prepared) vessels for the house of Jahve, (namely) vessels of the service, i.e., according to Num. 4:12, in the holy place, and for the offering of burnt-offering, i.e., altar vessels, and (besides) bowls, and (other) vessels of gold and silver. The last clause of v. 14 leads on to the following: “They (king and people) offered burnt-offering continually so long as Jehoiada lived.”

2 Chronicles 24:15–22. *Jehoiada's death: the fall of the people into idolatry: the protest of the prophet Zechariah against it, and the stoning of him.*—This section is not found in 2 Kings 12, but is important for the understanding of the later history of Joash (v. 23ff.). With the death of the grey-haired high priest came a turning-point in the reign of Joash. Jehoiada had saved the life and throne of Joash, preserved to the

kingdom the royal house of David, to which the promises belonged, and had put an end to the idolatry which had been transplanted into Judah by Joram's marriage into the royal house of Ahab, restoring the Jahve-worship. For this he was honoured at his death, his body being laid in the city of David among the kings: “For he had done good in Israel, and towards God and His house” (the temple). According to 2 Kings 12:7, he still took an active part in the repair of the temple in the twenty-third year of Joash, and according to v. 14 he lived for some time after the completion of that work. But after his death the people soon forgot the benefits they owed him.

2 Chronicles 24:17f. The princes of Judah besought the king to allow them to worship the Astartes and idols, and the king hearkened to them, did not venture to deny their request.

וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַמִּלְכָּה, they bowed themselves before the king, i.e., they besought him. What they thus beseechingly requested is not stated, but may be gathered from what they did, according to v. 18. They forsook Jahve the God of their fathers, etc. There came wrath upon Judah because of this their trespass. קִצְפָּה, a wrathful judgment of the Lord, cf. 29:8, viz., the invasion of the land by Hazael, v. 23ff. On the construction אֲשַׁמְתֶּם זֶה, cf. Ew. § 293, c, S. 740. Against this defection prophets whom the Lord sent did indeed lift up their testimony, but they would not hearken to them. Of these prophets, one, Zechariah the son of the high priest Jehoiada, is mentioned by name in v. 20ff., who, seized by the Spirit of the Lord, announced to the people divine punishment for their defection, and was thereupon, at the king's command, stoned in the court of the temple. With רִוְחָ לְבָשָׂה cf. 1 Chronicles 12:18, and the commentary on Judg. 6:34. מִעַל לְעַם, above the people, viz., as we learn from v. 21, in the inner, higher-lying court, so that he was above the people who were in the outer court. “Why transgress ye the commandments of the Lord, and (why) will ye not prosper?” Fidelity to the Lord is the

condition of prosperity. If Israel forsake the Lord, the Lord will also forsake it; cf. 12:5; 15:2.

2 Chronicles 24:21. And they (the princes and the people) conspired against him, and stoned him, at the command of the king, in the court of the temple. This זְכַרְיָהּ is the Ζαχαρίας whose slaughter is mentioned by Christ in Matt. 23:36 and Luke 11:51 as the last prophet-murderer narrated in the Old Testament, whose blood would come upon the people, although Matthew calls him υἱὸς Βαραχίου. According to these passages, he was slain between the temple and the altar of burnt-offering, consequently in the most sacred part of the court of the priests. That the king, Joash, could give the command for this murder, shows how his compliance with the princes' demands (v. 17) had made him the slave of sin. Probably the idolatrous princes accused the witness for God of being a seditious person and a rebel against the majesty of the crown, and thereby extorted from the weak king the command for his death. For it is not said that Joash himself worshipped the idols; and even in v. 22 it is only the base ingratitude of which Joash had been guilty, in the slaughter of the son of his benefactor, which is adduced against him. But Zechariah at his death said, "May the Lord look upon it, and take vengeance" (דָּרַשׁ, to seek or require a crime, i.e., punish it). This word became a prophecy, which soon began to be fulfilled, v. 23ff.

2 Chronicles 24:23–26. The punishment comes upon them. *Joash afflicted by the invasion of Judah by Hazael the Syrian; and his death in consequence of a conspiracy against him.*— These two events are narrated in 2 Kings 12:18–22 also, the progress of Hazael's invasion being more exactly traced; see the commentary on 2 Kings 12:18f. The author of the Chronicle brings forward only those parts of it which show how God punished Joash for his defection from Him.

2 Chronicles 24:23. "At the revolution of a year," i.e., scarcely a year after the murder of the prophet Zechariah, a Syrian army invaded Judah and advanced upon Jerusalem; "and they destroyed all the princes of the people from

among the people," i.e., they smote the army of Joash in a battle, in which the princes (the chief and leaders) were destroyed, i.e., partly slain, partly wounded. This punishment came upon the princes as the originators of the defection from the Lord, v. 17. "And they sent all their booty to the king (Hazael) to Damascus." In this booty the treasures which Joash gave to the Syrians (2 Kings 12:19) to buy their withdrawal are also included. In order to show that this invasion of the Syrians was a divine judgment, it is remarked in v. 24 that the Syrians, with a small army, gained a victory over the very large army of Judah, and executed judgment upon Joash. עָשָׂה שְׁפָטִים, as in Ex. 12:12, Num. 33:4, frequently in Ezekiel, usually construed with אָ, here with אָת, analogous to the אָת טוֹב, e.g., 1 Sam. 24:19. These words refer to the wounding of Joash, and its results, v. 25f. In the war Joash was badly wounded; the Syrians on their withdrawal had left him behind in many wounds (מִחַלְיִים only met with here,

synonymous with תַּחֲלָאִים, 21:19). Then his own servants, the court officials named in v. 26, conspired against him, and smote him upon his bed. In 2 Kings 12:21, the place where the king, lying sick upon his bed, was slain is stated. He met with his end thus, "because of the blood of the sons of Jehoiada the priest" which had been shed. The plural בָּנָי is perhaps only an orthographical error for בָּן, occasioned by the preceding דָּמִי (Berth.); but more probably it is, like בָּנָי, 28:3 and 33:6, a rhetorical plural, which says nothing as to the number, but only brings out that Joash had brought blood-guiltiness upon himself in respect of the children of his benefactor Jehoiada; see on 28:3. Upon the murdered king, moreover, the honour of being buried in the graves of the kings was not bestowed; cf. 21:20. On the names of the two conspirators, v. 26, see on 2 Kings 12:21. In v. 27 it is doubtful how וּרְב is to be read. The Keri demands יָרְב, which Berth. understands thus: And as regards his sons, may the

utterance concerning him increase; which might signify, "May the wish of the dying Zechariah, v. 22, be fulfilled on them in a still greater degree than on their father." But that is hardly the meaning of the Keri. The older theologians took יָרַב relatively: *et quam creverit s. multiplicatum fuerit*. Without doubt, the Keth. יָרַב or יָרַב is the correct reading. הַמָּשָׁא, too, is variously interpreted. Vulg., Luther, and others take it to be synonymous with מִשְׁאָת, vv. 6, 9, and understand it of the money derived from Moses' tax; but to that עָלָיו is by no means suitable. Others (as Then.) think of the tribute laid upon him, 2 Kings 12:19, but very arbitrarily. On the other hand, Clericus and others rightly understand it of prophetic threatenings against him, corresponding to the statement in v. 19, that God sent prophets against him. As to the Midrash of the book of Kings, see the Introduction, p. 389f.

2 Chronicles 25

The Reign of Amaziah. Cf. 2 Kings 14:1–20.

2 Chronicles 25:1–4. The statement as to the duration and spirit of the reign agrees with 2 Kings 14:1–6, except that in v. 2 the estimation of the spirit of the reign according to the standard of David, "only not as his ancestor David, but altogether as his father Joash did," which we find in the book of Kings, is replaced by "only not with a perfect heart;" and the standing formula, "only the high places were not removed," etc., is omitted.

2 Chronicles 25:5–16. The succeeding section, vv. 5–16, enlarges upon Amaziah's preparations for war with Edom, which had revolted under Joram of Judah, 2 Kings 8:22; upon the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and on the results of this war;—on all which we have in 2 Kings 14:7 only this short note: "he smote Edom in the valley of Salt 10,000 men, and took Selah in war, and called its name Joktheel unto this day." But the more exact statements of the Chronicle as to the preparations and the results of this war and victory are important for Amaziah's later war with Kings Joash of Israel,

which is narrated in v. 17ff. of our chapter, because in them lie the causes of that war, so fatal to Amaziah; so that the history of Amaziah is essentially supplemented by those statements of the Chronicle which are not found in 2 Kings.

2 Chronicles 25:5–13. *The preparations for the war against Edom, and the victory over the Edomites in the Valley of Salt.*—V. 5. Amaziah assembled Judah, i.e., the men in his kingdom capable of bearing arms, and set them up (ordered them) according to the princes of thousands and hundreds, of all Judah and Benjamin, and passed them in review, i.e., caused a census to be taken of the men liable to military service from twenty years old and upward. They found 300,000 warriors "bearing spear and target" (cf. 14:7); a relatively small number, not merely in comparison with the numbers under Jehoshaphat, 2 Chronicles 17:14ff., which are manifestly too large, but also with the numberings made by other kings, e.g., Asa, 2 Chronicles 14:7. By Joram's unfortunate wars, 2 Chronicles 21:17, those of Ahaziah, and especially by the defeat which Joash sustained from the Syrians, 24:43, the number of men in Judah fit for war may have been very much reduced. Amaziah accordingly sought to strengthen his army against the Edomites, according to v. 6, by having an auxiliary corps of 100,000 men from Israel (of the ten tribes) for 100 talents of silver, i.e., he took them into his pay. But a prophet advised him not to take the Israelitish host with him, because Jahve was not with Israel, viz., on account of their defection from Jahve by the introduction of the calf-worship. To Israel there is added, (with) all the sons of Ephraim, to guard against any misunderstanding.

2 Chronicles 25:8. Amaziah is to go alone, and show himself valiant in war, and the Lord will help him to conquer. This is without doubt the thought in v. 8, which, however, does not seem to be contained in the traditional Masoretic text. יְקַשְׁלֵךְ הָאֱלֹהִים can hardly, after the preceding imperatives—do, be strong for battle—be otherwise translated than by, "and God will

cause thee to stumble before the enemy." But this is quite unsuitable. Clericus, therefore, would take the words ironically: *sin minus, tu vadito*, etc.; i.e., if thou dost not follow my advice, and takest the Israelites with thee to the war, go, show thyself strong for the war, God will soon cause thee to stumble. But **כִּי אִם** can never signify *sin minus*. Others, as Schmidt and Ramb., translate: Rather do thou go alone (without the Israelitish auxiliaries), and be valiant, *alioquin enim, si illos tecum duxeris, corruere te faciet Deus*; or, May God make thee fall before the enemy (De Wette). But the supplying of *alioquin*, which is only hidden by De Wette's translation, cannot be grammatically justified. This interpretation of the **יִבְשִׁילָךְ** would be possible only if the negation **לֹא אִם כִּי** stood in the preceding clause and **יִבְשִׁילָךְ** was joined to it by **וְ**. The traditional text is clearly erroneous, and we must, with Ewald and Berth., supply a **לֹא** or **לֹא וְ** before **יִבְשִׁילָךְ**: God thou (alone), do, be valiant for battle, and God will not let thee come to ruin.¹³ After this we have very fittingly the reason assigned: "for with God there is power to help, and to cause to fall."

2 Chronicles 25:9. Amaziah had regard to this exhortation of the prophet, and asked him only what he should do for the 100 talents of silver which he had paid the Israelite auxiliary corps; to which the prophet answered that Jahve could give him more than that sum. Amaziah thereupon dismissed the hired Ephraimite mercenaries. **יִבְדְּדֵי־לֵם**, he separated them (sc., from his army prepared for battle), viz., the band, that they might go to their place, i.e., might return home. The **לְ** before **הִגְדֹּד** is *nota accus.*, and **לְהִגְדֹּד** is in apposition to the suffix in **יִבְדְּדֵי־לֵם**. But the auxiliaries thus dismissed returned home full of wrath against Judah, and afterwards fell upon the border cities of Judah, wasting and plundering (v. 13). Their anger probably arose from the fact that by their

dismissal the opportunity of making a rich booty in war was taken away.

2 Chronicles 25:11f. But Amaziah courageously led his people into the Valley of Salt, and smote the Edomites. **הִתְחַזַּק**, as in 15:8, refers back to **קָוָה**, v. 8: he showed himself strong, according to the word of the prophet. As to the Valley of Salt, see on 2 Sam. 8:13 and 1 Chronicles 18:12. Besides the 10,000 slain in the battle, the men of Judah took 10,000 other Edomites prisoners, whom they cast from the top of a rock. This statement is wanting in 2 Kings 14:7, where, instead of it, the capture of the city Sela (Petra) is mentioned. The conjecture of Thenius, that this last statement of the Chronicle has been derived from a text of the Kings which had become illegible at this place, has already been rejected as untenable by Bertheau. Except the word **סָלַע**, the two texts have nothing in common with each other; but it does suggest itself that **רֹאשׁ הַקְּלַע**, the top of the rock (which has become famous by this event), is to be looked for in the neighbourhood of the city Selah, as the war was ended only by the capture of Selah. Besides the battle in the Valley of Salt there were still further battles; and in the numbers 10,000, manifestly the whole of the prisoners taken in the war are comprehended, who, as irreconcilable enemies of Judah, were not made slaves, but were slain by being thrown down from a perpendicular rock.

2 Chronicles 25:13. The Ephraimite host dismissed by Amaziah fell plundering upon the cities of Judah, and smote of them (the inhabitants of these cities) 3000, and carried away great booty. They would seem to have made this devastating attack on their way home; but to this idea, which at first suggests itself, the more definite designation of the plundered cities, "from Samaria to Bethhoron," does not correspond, for these words can scarcely be otherwise understood than as denoting that Samaria was the starting-point of the foray, and not the limit up to which the plundered cities reached. For this reason Berth.

thinks that this attack upon the northern cities of Judah was probably carried out only at a later period, when Amaziah and his army were in Edom. The latter is certainly the more probable supposition; but the course of events can hardly have been, that the Ephraimite auxiliary corps, after Amaziah had dismissed it, returned home to Samaria, and then later, when Amaziah had marched into the Valley of Salt, made this attack upon the cities of Judah, starting from Samaria. It is more probable that the dismissal of this auxiliary corps, which Amaziah had certainly obtained on hire from King Joash, happened after they had been gathered together in Samaria, and had advanced to the frontier of Judah. Then, roused to anger by their dismissal, they did not at once separate and return home; but, Amaziah having meanwhile taken the field against the Edomites with his army, made an attack upon the northern frontier cities of Judah as far as Bethhoron, plundering as they went, and only after this plundering did they return home. As to Bethhoron, now Beit-Ur, see on 1 Chronicles 7:24.

2 Chronicles 25:14–16. *Amaziah's idolatry.*—V. 14. On his return from smiting the Edomites, i.e., from the war in which he had smitten the Edomites, Amaziah brought the gods (images) of the sons of Seir (the inhabitants of Mount Seir) with him, and set them up as gods, giving them religious adoration.¹⁴ In order to turn him away from this sin, which would certainly kindle Jahve's wrath, a prophet said to Amaziah, "Why dost thou seek the gods of the people, who have not delivered their people out of your hand?" The prophet keeps in view the motive which had induced the king to set up and worship the Edomite idols, viz., the belief of all polytheists, that in order to make a people subject, one must seek to win over their gods (cf. on this belief that remarks on Num. 22:17), and exposes the folly of this belief by pointing out the impotence of the Edomite idols, which Amaziah himself had learnt to know.

2 Chronicles 25:16. The king, however, in his blindness puts aside this earnest warning with

proud words: "Have we made thee a counsellor of the king? Forbear, why should they smite thee?" גַּתְנוּךְ is spoken collectively: We, the king, and the members of the council. And the prophet ceased, only answering the king thus: "I know that God hath determined to destroy thee, because thou hast done this (introduced Edomite idols), and hast not hearkened unto my counsel." The prophet calls his warning "counsel," referring to the king's word, that he was not appointed a counsellor to the king.

2 Chronicles 25:17–24. *The war with Joash, king of Israel.*—Instead of following the counsel of the prophet, Amaziah consulted (sc., with his public officials or courtiers), and challenged King Joash of Israel to war. The challenge, and the war which followed, are also narrated in 2 Kings 14:8–14 in agreement with our account, and have been already commented upon at that place, where we have also considered the occasion of this war, so fatal to Amaziah and the kingdom of Judah, on account of which has been handed down to us only in the supplementary narrative of the Chronicle. לָךְ in v. 17 for לְכָה, come, as in Num. 23:13 and Judg. 19:13.—In v. 20 the chronicler explains Amaziah's refusal to hear the warning of Joash before the war with him, by a reference to the divine determination: "For it (came) of God (that Amaziah still went to war), that He might deliver them (the men of Judah) into the hand, because they had sought the gods of Edom." וְנָתַן בְּיָדָהּ, to give into the power of the enemy.—In v. 23, שַׁעַר הַפּוֹנֵה is a manifest error for הַפְּנֵה (Kings, v. 13). Were הַפּוֹנֵה, the gate that turns itself, faces (in some direction), correct, the direction would have to be given towards which it turned, e.g., Ezek. 8:3.—וְקָל־הַזָּהָב וגו', v. 24, still depends upon תָּפַשׁ, v. 23: and (took away) all the gold, etc. In Kings, v. 14, וְלָקַח is supplied.

2 Chronicles 25:25–28. *The end of Amaziah's reign;* cf. 2 Kings 14:17–20.—Although conquered and taken prisoner by Joash, Amaziah did not lose the throne. For Joash, contented with the carrying away of the

treasures of the temple and of the palace, and the taking of hostages, set him again at liberty, so that he continued to reign, and outlived Joash by about fifteen years.

2 Chronicles 25:26. On the book of the kings of Judah and Israel, see the Introduction, p. 389f.

2 Chronicles 25:27. On the conspiracy against Amaziah, his death, etc., see the commentary on 2 Kings 14:17f. **בְּעִיר יְהוּדָה**, in the city of Judah, is surprising, since everywhere else “the city of David” is mentioned as the burial-place, and even in our passage all the ancient versions have “in the city of David.” **יְהוּדָה** would therefore seem to be an orthographical error for **דָּוִד**, occasioned by the immediately following **יְהוּדָה**.

2 Chronicles 26

The Reign of Uzziah (Azariah). Cf. 2 Kings 14:21, 22, and 15:1–7.

2 Chronicles 26:1–5. The statements as to Uzziah’s attainment of dominion, the building of the seaport town Elath on the Red Sea, the length and character of his reign (vv. 1–4), agree entirely with 2 Kings 14:21, 22, and 15:2, 3; see the commentary on these passages.

Uzziah (**עֲזַרְיָהוּ**) is called in 1 Chronicles 3:12 and in 2 Kings (generally) Azariah (**עֲזַרְיָה**); cf. on the use of the two names, the commentary on 2 Kings 14:21.—In v. 5, instead of the standing formula, “only the high places were not removed,” etc.) Kings), Uzziah’s attitude towards the Lord is more exactly defined thus: “He was seeking God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; and in the days when he sought Jahve, God gave him success.” **וַיִּזְכֹּר יְהוָה לְדָרְשׁוֹ** the infinitive with **לְ** is subordinated to **הָיָה**, to express the duration of his seeking, for which the participle is elsewhere used. Nothing further is known of the Zechariah here mentioned: the commentators hold him to have been an important prophet; for had he been a priest, or the high priest, probably **הַכֹּהֵן** would have been

used. The reading **בְּרֵאוֹת הָאֱלֹהִים** (Keth.) is surprising. **הַמְבִּין ב’ ה’** can only denote, who had insight into (or understanding for the) seeing of God; cf. Dan. 1:17. But Kimchi’s idea, which other old commentators share, that this is a periphrasis to denote the prophetic endowment or activity of the man, is opposed by this, that “the seeing of God” which was granted to the elders of Israel at the making of the covenant, Ex. 24:10, cannot be regarded as a thing within the sphere of human action or practice, while the prophetic beholding in vision is essentially different from the seeing of God, and is, moreover, never so called. **בְּרֵאוֹת** would therefore seem to be an orthographical error for **בְּיִרְאָת**, some MSS having **בִּירְאוֹת** or **בִּירְאָת** (cf. de Rossi, *variae lectt.*); and the LXX, Syr., Targ., Arab., Raschi, Kimchi, and others giving the reading **הַמְבִּין בְּיִרְאָת ה’**, who was a teacher (instructor) in the fear of God, in favour of which also Vitringa, *proll. in Jes.* p. 4, has decided.

2 Chronicles 26:6–13. *Wars, buildings, and army of Uzziah.*—Of the successful undertakings by which Uzziah raised the kingdom of Judah to greater worldly power and prosperity, nothing is said in the book of Kings; but the fact itself is placed beyond all doubt, for it is confirmed by the portrayal of the might and greatness of Judah in the prophecies of Isaiah (Is. 2–4), which date from the times of Uzziah and Jotham.

2 Chronicles 26:6. After Uzziah had, in the very beginning of his reign, completed the subjection of the Edomites commenced by his father by the capture and fortification of the seaport Elath (v. 2), he took the field to chastise the Philistines and Arabians, who had under Joram made an inroad upon Judah and plundered Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 21:16f.). In the war against the Philistines he broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod (i.e., after capturing these cities), and built cities in Ashdod, i.e., in the domain of Ashdod, and **בְּפִלְשְׁתִּים**, i.e., in other domains of the Philistines,

whence we gather that he had wholly subdued Philistia. The city of Gath had been already taken from the Philistines by David; see 1 Chronicles 18:1; and as to situation, see on 11:8. Jabneh, here named for the first time, but probably occurring in Josh. 15:11 under the name Jabneel, is often mentioned under the name Jamnia in the books of the Maccabees and in Josephus. It is now a considerable village, Jebnah, four hours south of Joppa, and one and a half hours from the sea; see on Josh. 15:11. Ashdod is now a village called Esdud; see on Josh. 13:3.

2 Chronicles 26:7. As against the Philistines, so also against the Arabians, who dwelt in Gur-Baal, God helped him, and against the Maanites, so that he overcame them and made them tributary. Gur-Baal occurs only here, and its position is unknown. According to the Targum, the city Gerar is supposed to be intended; Lxx translate ἐπὶ τῆς Πέτρας, having probably had the capital city of the Edomites, Petra, in their thoughts. The מְעוֹנֵים are the inhabitants of Maan; see on 1 Chronicles 4:41.

2 Chronicles 26:8. And the Ammonites also paid him tribute (מְנַחָה), and his name spread abroad even to the neighbourhood of Egypt; i.e., in this connection, not merely that his fame spread abroad to that distance, but that the report of his victorious power reached so far, he having extended his rule to near the frontiers of Egypt, for he was exceedingly powerful. הִתְהַלֵּךְ, to show power, as in Dan. 11:7.

2 Chronicles 26:9. In order enduringly to establish the power of his kingdom, he still more strongly fortified Jerusalem by building towers at the gates, and the wall of the citadel. At the corner gate, i.e., at the north-west corner of the city (see on 25:23 and 2 Kings 14:13), and at the valley gate, i.e., on the west side, where the Jaffa gate now is. From these sides Jerusalem was most open to attack. הַמְקַצֵּעַ, at the corner, i.e., according to Neh. 3:19f., 24:f., on the east side of Zion, at the place where the wall of Zion crossed over at an angle to the Ophel, and joined itself to the south wall of the temple

hill, so that the tower at this corner defended both Zion and the temple hill against attack from the valley to the south-east. וַיְחַזְקֵם, he made them (there) strong or firm; not, he put them in a condition of defence (Berth.), although the making strong was for that end.

2 Chronicles 26:10. Moreover, Uzziah took measures for the defence of his herds, which formed one main part of his revenues and wealth. He built towers in the wilderness, in the steppe-lands on the west side of the Dead Sea, so well fitted for cattle-breeding (i.e., in the wilderness of Judah), to protect the herds against the attacks of the robber peoples of Edom and Arabia. And he dug many wells to water the cattle; “for he had much cattle” in the wilderness just mentioned, and “in the lowland” (Shephelah) on the Mediterranean Sea (see 1 Chronicles 27:28), and “in the plain” (מִישׁוֹר), i.e., the flat land on the east side of the Dead Sea, extending from Arnon to near Heshbon in the north, and to the northeast as far as Rabbath Ammon (see on Deut. 3:10), i.e., the tribal land of Reuben, which accordingly at that time belonged to Judah. Probably it had been taken from the Israelites by the Moabites and Ammonites, and reconquered from them by Uzziah, and incorporated with his kingdom; for, according to v. 8, he had made the Ammonites tributary; cf. on 1 Chronicles 5:17. Husbandmen and vine-dressers had he in the mountains and upon Carmel, for he loved husbandry. After וְגַרְדָּמָה לֵוִי לֹא אֶבְרִים וְגַרְדָּמָה, the land, which is cultivated, stands here for agriculture. As to Carmel, see on Josh. 19:26.

2 Chronicles 26:11–14. His army. He had a host of fighting men that went out to war by bands (לְגִדּוֹד, in bands), “in the number of their muster by Jeiel the scribe, and Maaseiah the steward (שֹׁטֵר), under Hananiah, one of the king’s captains.” The meaning is: that the mustering by which the host was arranged in bands or detachments for war service, was undertaken by (בְּיַד) two officials practised in writing and the making up of lists, who were

given as assistants to Hananiah, one of the princes of the kingdom (על יד), or placed at his disposal.

2 Chronicles 26:12. The total number of the heads of the fathers'-houses in valiant heroes (לְגִבּוֹרִי with לְ of subordination) was 2600, and under these (על ידם, to their hand, i.e., subordinate to them) an army of 307,500 warriors with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. The army was consequently divided according to the fathers'-houses, so that probably each father's-house formed a detachment (גְּדוּד) led by the most valiant among them.

2 Chronicles 26:14. Uzziah supplied this force with the necessary weapons,—shield, lance, helmet, and coat of mail, bows and sling-stones. לְכָל is more closely defined by לְהֵם.

2 Chronicles 26:15. Besides this, he provided Jerusalem with machines for defence on the towers and battlements. הַשְּׁבוּזִים from הַשְּׁבוּזָה, literally *excogitata*, i.e., *machinae*, with the addition "invention of the artificers," are ingenious machines, and as we learn from the following לִירֵזָא וגו', slinging machines, similar or corresponding to the *catapultae* and *ballistae* of the Romans, by which arrows were shot and great stones propelled. Thus his name spread far abroad (cf. v. 8), for he was marvellously helped till he was strong.

2 Chronicles 26:16–22. *Uzziah's pride, and chastisement by leprosy. His death and burial.*—The fact that the Lord smote Uzziah with leprosy, which continued until his death, so that he was compelled to dwell in a hospital, and to allow his son Jotham to conduct the government, is narrated also in 2 Kings 15:5; but the cause of this punishment inflicted on him by God is stated only in our verses.

2 Chronicles 26:16. "When Uzziah had become mighty (כְּחֹזְקוֹ as in 12:1), his heart was lifted up (in pride) unto destructive deeds." He transgressed against Jahve his God, and came into the sanctuary of Jahve to offer incense

upon the altar of incense. With a lofty feeling of his power, Uzziah wished to make himself high priest of his kingdom, like the kings of Egypt and of other nations, whose kings were also *summi pontifices*, and to unite all power in his person, like Moses, who consecrated Aaron and his sons to be priests. Then, and Ewald, indeed, think that the powerful Uzziah wished merely to restore the high-priesthood exercised by David and Solomon; but though both these kings did indeed arrange and conduct religious festal solemnities, yet they never interfered in any way with the official duties reserved for the priests by the law. The arrangement of a religious solemnity, the dedicatory prayer at the dedication of the temple, and the offering of sacrifices, are not specifically priestly functions, as the service by the altars, and the entering into the holy place of the temple, and other sacrificial acts were.

2 Chronicles 26:17ff. The king's purpose was consequently opposed by the high priest Azariah and eighty priests, valiant men, who had the courage to represent to him that to burn incense to the Lord did not appertain to the king, but only to the sanctified Aaronite priests; but the king, with the censer in his hand, was angry, and the leprosy suddenly broke out upon his forehead. When the priests saw the leprosy, they removed the king immediately from the holy place; and Uzziah himself also hurried to go forth, because Jahve had smitten him; for he recognised in the sudden breaking out of the leprosy a punishment from God. Azariah is called כֹּהֵן הָרֵאשִׁי, i.e., a high priest, and is in all probability the same person as the high priest mentioned in 1 Chronicles 5:36 (see on the passage). לֹא לְךָ, "It (the offering of incense) is not for thine honour before Jahve." זָעַף, to foam up in anger. וַיִּזְעַפוּ, and while he foamed against the priests, i.e., was hot against them, the leprosy had broken out. מֵעַל-לְמִזְבֵּחַ, from by = near, the altar. Thus was Uzziah visited with the same punishment, for his haughty disregard of the

divinely appointed privileges of the priesthood, as was once inflicted upon Miriam for her rebellion against the prerogatives assigned to Moses by God (Num. 12:10).

2 Chronicles 26:21. But Uzziah had to bear his punishment until his death, and dwelt the rest of his life in a separate house, while his son conducted the government for him. This is also recorded in 2 Kings 15:5 (cf. for **בֵּית הַהִקְפָּשִׁית** the commentary on that passage). The reason of the separation of the king from intercourse with others, by his dwelling in the hospital, is given in the Chronicle in the words: “for he was cut off (shut out) from the house of Jahve.” This reason can only mean, that because he, as a leper, was shut out from the house of the Lord, he could not live in fellowship with the people of God, but must dwell in a separate house. For the rest, we cannot exactly say how long Uzziah continued to live under the leprosy; but from the fact that his son Jotham, who at Uzziah’s death was twenty-five years old, conducted the government for him, so much is clear, viz., that it can only have lasted a year or two.

2 Chronicles 26:22. The history of his reign was written by the prophet Isaiah (see the Introduction, p. 391).

2 Chronicles 26:23. At his death, Uzziah, having died in leprosy, was not buried in the graves of the kings, but only in the neighbourhood of them, in the burial-field which belonged to the kings, that his body might not defile the royal graves.

2 Chronicles 27

The Reign of Jotham. Cf. 2 Kings 15:32–38.

2 Chronicles 27:1–4. Jotham having ascended the throne at the age of twenty-five, reigned altogether in the spirit and power of his father, with the single limitation that he did not go into the sanctuary of Jahve (cf. 26:16ff.). This remark is not found in 2 Kings 15, because there Uzziah’s intrusion into the temple is also omitted. The people still did corruptly (cf. 26:16). This refers, indeed, to the continuation of the worship in the high places, but hints also

at the deep moral corruption which the prophets of that time censure (cf. especially Isa. 2:5f., 5:7ff.; Mic. 1:5; 2:1ff.).

2 Chronicles 27:3f. He built the upper gate of the house of Jahve, i.e., the northern gate of the inner or upper court (see on 2 Kings 15:35); the only work of his reign which is mentioned in the book of Kings. But besides this, he continued the fortifying of Jerusalem, which his father had commenced; building much at the wall of the Ophel. **הַעֲפֹל** was the name of the southern slope of the temple mountain (see on 33:14); the wall of Ophel is consequently the wall connecting Zion with the temple mountain, at which Uzziah had already built (see on 26:9). He likewise carried on his father’s buildings for the protection of the herds (2 Chronicles 26:10), building the cities in the mountains of Judah, and castles (**בִּירְנִיּוֹת**, 17:12) and towers in the forests of the mountains of Judah (**הַרְשִׁים** from **הָרֶשֶׁת**, a thicket).

2 Chronicles 27:5–9. He made war upon the king of the Ammonites, and overcame them. The Ammonites had before paid tribute to Uzziah. After his death they would seem to have refused to pay this tribute; and Jotham made them again tributary by force of arms. They were compelled to pay him after their defeat, in that same year, 100 talents of silver, 10,000 cor of wheat, and a similar quantity of barley, as tribute. **זֹאת הֵשִׁיבוּ לוֹ**: this they brought to him again, i.e., they paid him the same amount as tribute in the second and third years of their subjection also. After three years, consequently, they would seem to have again become independent, or refused the tribute, probably in the last years of Jotham, in which, according to 2 Kings 15:37, the Syrian king Rezin and Pekah of Israel began to make attacks upon Judah.

2 Chronicles 27:6. By all these undertakings Jotham strengthened himself, sc. in the kingdom, i.e., he attained to greater power, because he made his ways firm before Jahve, i.e., walked steadfastly before Jahve; did not incur guilt by falling away into idolatry, or by faithless infringement of the rights of the Lord

(as Uzziah did by his interference with the rights of the priesthood). From the כָּל־מַלְחָמָתָיו in the concluding remark (v. 7) we learn that he had waged still other successful wars. The older commentators reckon among these wars, the war against Rezin and Pekah, which kings the Lord began in his days to send against Judah (see 2 Kings 15:37), but hardly with justice. The position of this note, which is altogether omitted in the Chronicle, at the end of the account of Jotham in 2 Kings 15:37, appears to hint that this war broke out only towards the end of Jotham's reign, so that he could not undertake anything important against this foe.

2 Chronicles 27:8. The repetition of the chronological statement already given in v. 1 is probably to be explained by supposing that two authorities, each of which contained this remark, were used.

2 Chronicles 28

The Reign of Ahaz. Cf. 2 Kings 16.

2 Chronicles 28. In the general statements as to the king's age, and the duration and the spirit of his reign, both accounts (Chronicles vv. 1–4; Kings, vv. 1–4), agree entirely, with the exception of some unessential divergences; see the commentary on 2 Kings 16:1–4. From v. 5 onwards both historians go their own ways, so that they coincide only in mentioning the most important events of the reign of this quite untheocratic king. The author of the book of Kings, in accordance with his plan, records only very briefly the advance of the allied kings Rezin and Pekah against Jerusalem, the capture of the seaport Elath by the Syrians, the recourse which the hard-pressed Ahaz had to the help of Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria, whom he induced, by sending him the temple and palace treasures of gold and silver, to advance upon Damascus, to capture that city, to destroy the Syrian kingdom, to lead the inhabitants away captive to Kir, and to slay King Rezin (vv. 5–9). Then he records how Ahaz, on a visit which he paid the Assyrian king in Damascus, saw an altar which so delighted him, that he sent a pattern of it to the priest Urijah, with the

command to build a similar altar for the temple of the Lord, on which Ahaz on his return not only sacrificed himself, but also commanded that all the sacrifices of the congregation should be offered. And finally, he recounts how he laid violent hands on the brazen vessels of the court, and caused the outer covered sabbath way to be removed into the temple because of the king of Assyria (vv. 10–18); and then the history of Ahaz is concluded by the standing formulae (vv. 19, 20). The author of the Chronicle, on the contrary, depicts in holy indignation against the crimes of the godless Ahaz, how God punished him for his sins. 1. He tells us how God gave Ahaz into the hand of the king of Syria, who smote him and led away many prisoners to Damascus, and into the hand of King Pekah of Israel, who inflicted on him a dreadful defeat, slew 120,000 men, together with a royal prince and two of the highest officials of the court, and carried away 200,000 prisoners—women and children—with a great booty (vv. 5–8); and how the Israelites yet, at the exhortation of the prophet Oded, and of some of the heads of the people who supported the prophet, again freed the prisoners, provided them with food and clothing, and conducted them back to Jericho (vv. 9–15). 2. He records that Ahaz turned to the king of Assyria for help (v. 16), but that God still further humbled Israel by an invasion of the land by the Edomites, who carried prisoners away (v. 17); by an attack of the Philistines, who deprived Judah of a great number of cities (v. 18); and finally also by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser, who, although Ahaz had sent him the gold and silver of the temple and of the palaces of the kings and princes, yet did not help him, but rather oppressed him (v. 20f.). 3. Then he recounts how, notwithstanding all this, Ahaz sinned still more against Jahve by sacrificing to the idols of the Syrians, cutting up the vessels of the house of God, closing the doors of the temple, and erecting altars and high places in all corners of Jerusalem, and in all the cities of Judah, for the purpose of sacrificing to idols (vv. 22–25). This whole description is planned and wrought out rhetorically; cf. C. P. Caspari, *der syrisch-*

ephraimitische Krieg, S. 42ff. Out of the historical materials, those facts which show how Ahaz, notwithstanding the heavy blows which Jahve inflicted upon him, always sinned more deeply against the Lord his God, are chosen, and oratorically so presented as not only to bring before us the increasing obduracy of Ahaz, but also, by the representation of the conduct of the citizens and warriors of the kingdom of Israel towards the people of Judah who were prisoners, the deep fall of that kingdom.

2 Chronicles 28:5–8. *The war with the Kings Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel.*—On the events of this war, so far as they can be ascertained by uniting the statements of our chapter with the summary account in 2 Kings 16, see the commentary on 2 Kings 16:5ff. The author of the Chronicle brings the two main battles prominently forward as illustrations of the way in which Jahve gave Ahaz into the power of his enemies because of his defection from Him. Into the power of the king of Aram. They (יִבְנוּ, and they, the Arameans) smote בו, in him, i.e., they inflicted on his army a great defeat. Just so also מִמֶּנּוּ signifies of his army. שְׁבִיָּה גְדוֹלָה, a great imprisonment, i.e., a great number of prisoners. And into the power of the king of Israel, Pekah, who inflicted on him a still greater defeat. He slew in (among) Judah 120,000 men “in one day,” i.e., in a great decisive battle. Judah suffered these defeats because they (the men of Judah) had forsaken Jahve the God of their fathers. Judah’s defection from the Lord is not, indeed, expressly mentioned in the first verses of the chapter, but may be inferred as a matter of course from the remark as to the people under Jotham, 27:2. If under that king, who did that which was right in the eyes of Jahve, and stedfastly walked before the Lord (2 Chronicles 27:6), they did corruptly, they must naturally have departed much further from the God of the fathers, and been sunk much deeper in the worship of idols, and the worship on high places, under Ahaz, who served the Baals and other idols.

2 Chronicles 28:7. In this battle, Zichri, an Ephraimite hero, slew three men who were closely connected with the king: Maaseiah, the king’s son, i.e., not a son of Ahaz, for in the first years of his reign, in which this war arose, he cannot have had an adult son capable of bearing arms, but a royal prince, a cousin or uncle of Ahaz, as in 18:25; 22:11, etc. (cf. Caspari, *loc. cit.* S. 45ff.); Azrikam, a prince of the house, probably not of the house of God (2 Chronicles 31:13; 1 Chronicles 9:11), but a high official in the royal palace; and Elkanah, the second from the king, i.e., his first minister; cf. Esth. 10:3, 1 Sam. 23:17.

2 Chronicles 28:8. The Israelites, moreover, carried away 200,000—women, sons, and daughters—from their brethren, and a great quantity of spoil, and brought the booty (prisoners and goods; cf. for לְשָׁלֵל of men, Judg. 5:30) to Samaria. אֶחְיָהָם, the brethren of the Israelites, is the name given, with emphasis, to the inhabitants of Judah, here and in v. 11, in order to point out the cruelty of the Israelites in not scrupling to carry away captive the defenceless women and children of their brethren.

The modern critics have taken offence at the large numbers, 120,000 slain and 200,000 women and children taken prisoners, and have declared them to be exaggerations of the wonder-loving chronicler (Ges. on Isa., De Wette, Winer, etc.). But in this they are mistaken; for if we consider the war more closely, we learn from Isa. 7:6 that the allied kings purposed to annihilate the kingdom of Judah. And, moreover, the Ephraimites acted always with extreme cruelty in war (cf. 2 Kings 15:16); but more especially cherished the fiercest hatred against the men of Judah, because these regarded them as having fallen away from the service of the true God (2 Chronicles 25:6–10; 13:4ff.). But in a war for the existence of the kingdom, Ahaz must certainly have called out the whole male population capable of bearing arms, which is estimated in the time of Amaziah at 300,000 men, and in that of Uzziah at 307,500 (2

Chronicles 25:5; 26:13),—numbers which appear thoroughly credible, considering the size and populousness of Judah. If we suppose the army of Ahaz to have been as large, in a decisive battle fought with all possible energy nearly 120,000 men may have fallen, especially if the Ephraimites, in their exasperation, unsparingly butchered their enemies, as the narrative would seem to hint both by the word *הָרַג* in v. 6, which signifies to murder, massacre, butcher, and by the saying of the prophet, v. 9, “Ye massacred among them with a rage which reached to heaven.” By the character of the war, which resembled a civil or even a religious war, and by the cruelty of the Israelites, the great number of those carried captive is accounted for; for after the great defeat of the men of Judah the whole land fell into the hands of the enemy, so that they could sate their hatred and anger to their heart’s content by carrying off the defenceless women and children to make them slaves. And finally, we must also consider that the numbers of the slain and of the prisoners are not founded upon exact enumeration, but upon a mere general estimate. The immense loss which was sustained in the battle was estimated on the side of Judah at 120,000 men; and the number of captive women and children was so immense, that they were, or might be, estimated at 200,000 souls, it being impossible to give an exact statement of their number. These numbers were consequently recorded in the annals of the kingdom, whence the author of the Chronicle has taken them; cf. Caspari, S. 37ff.

2 Chronicles 28:9–15. *The liberation of the prisoners.*—In Samaria there was a prophet of the Lord (i.e., not of the Jahve there worshipped in the calf images, but of the true God, like Hosea, who also at that time laboured in the kingdom of the ten tribes), Oded by name. He went forth to meet the army returning with the prisoners and the booty, as Azariha-ben-Oded (2 Chronicles 15:2) once went to meet Asa; pointed out to the warriors the cruelty of their treatment of their brethren, and the guilt,

calling to Heaven for vengeance, which they thereby incurred; and exhorted them to turn away the anger of God which was upon them, by sending back the prisoners. To soften the hearts of the rude warriors, and to gain them for his purpose, he tells them (v. 9), “Because the Lord God of your fathers was wroth, He gave them (the men of Judah) into your hand:” your victory over them is consequently not the fruit of your power and valour, but the work of the God of your fathers, whose wrath Judah has drawn upon itself by its defection from Him. This you should have considered, and so have had pity upon those smitten by the wrath of God; “but he have slaughtered among them with a rage which reacheth up to heaven,” i.e., not merely with a rage beyond all measure, but a rage which calls to God for vengeance; cf. Ezra 9:6.

2 Chronicles 28:10. “And now the sons of Judah and Jerusalem ye purpose to subject to yourselves for bondmen and bondwomen!” *בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה* is *accus.*, and precedes as being emphatic; i.e., your brethren, whom the wrath of God has smitten, you purpose to keep in subjection. *אֲנָחְם* also is emphatically placed, and then is again emphasized at the end of the sentence by the suffix in *לְכֶם*: “Are there not, only concerning you, with you, sins with Jahve your God?” i.e., Have you, to regard only you, not also burdened yourselves with many sins against the Lord? The question *הֲלֵא*, is a lively way of expressing assurance as to a matter which is not at all doubtful.

2 Chronicles 28:11. After thus quickening the conscience, he calls upon them to send back the prisoners which they had carried away from among their brethren, because the anger of Jahve was upon them. Already in their pitiless butchery of their brethren they had committed a sin which cried to heaven, which challenged God’s anger and His punishments; but by the carrying away of the women and children from their brethren they had filled up the measure of their sin, so that God’s anger and rage must fall upon them.

2 Chronicles 28:12. This speech made a deep impression. Four of the heads of the Ephraimites, here mentioned by name,—according to v. 12, four princes at the head of the assembled people,—came before those coming from the army (קָוִים עָלַי, to come forward before one, to meet one), and said, v. 13, “Bring not the captives hither; for in order that a sin of Jahve come upon us, do you purpose (do you intend) to add to our sins and to our guilt?” i.e., to increase our sins and our guilt by making these prisoners slaves; “for great is our guilt, and fierce wrath upon Israel.”

2 Chronicles 28:14. Then the armed men (הַחֲלוּצִים, cf. 1 Chronicles 12:23) who had escorted the prisoners to Samaria left the prisoners and the booty before the princes and the whole assembly.

2 Chronicles 28:15. “And the men which were specified by name stood up.” אֲשֶׁר נִקְבְּוּ בְשֵׁמוֹת does not signify those before mentioned (v. 12), but the men specified by name, distinguished or famous men (see on 1 Chronicles 12:31), among whom, without doubt, those mentioned in v. 12 are included, but not these alone; other prominent men are also meant. These received the prisoners and the booty, clothed all the naked, providing them with clothes and shoes (sandals) from the booty, gave them to eat and to drink, anointed them, and set all the feeble upon asses, and brought them to Jericho to their brethren (countrymen). The description is picturesque, portraying with satisfaction the loving pity for the miserable. מֵעֲרָמִים, nakedness, *abstr. pro concr.*, the naked. לְכָל-בוֹשֶׁל is accus., and a nearer definition of the suffix in יָבִיאוּ: they brought them, (not all, but only) all the stumbling, who could not, owing to their fatigue, make the journey on foot. Jericho, the city of palm trees, as in Judg. 3:13, in the tribe of Benjamin, belonged to the kingdom of Judah; see Josh. 18:21. Arrived there, the prisoners were with their brethren.

The speech of the prophet Oded is reckoned by Gesenius, on Isaiah, S. 269, among the speeches

invented by the chronicler; but very erroneously so: cf. against him, Caspari, *loc cit.* i. S. 49ff. The speech cannot be separated from the fact of the liberation of the prisoners carried away from Judah, which it brought about; and that is shown to be a historical fact by the names of the tribal princes of Ephraim, who, in consequence of the warning of the prophet, took his part and accomplished the sending of them back; they being names which are not elsewhere met with (v. 12). The spontaneous interference of these tribal chiefs would not be in itself impossible, but yet it is very improbable, and becomes perfectly comprehensible only by the statement that these men were roused and encouraged thereto by the word of a prophet. We must consequently regard the speech of the prophet as a fact which is as well established as that narrated in vv. 12–15. “If that which is narrated in v. 12ff. be not invented, it would betray the greatest levity to hold that which is recorded in vv. 9–11 to be incredible” (Casp.). And, moreover, the speech of the prophet does not contain the thoughts and phrases current with the author of the Chronicle, but is quite suitable to the circumstances, and so fully corresponds to what we should expect to hear from a prophet on such an occasion, that there is not the slightest reason to doubt the authenticity of its contents. Finally, the whole transaction is exactly parallel to the interference of the prophet Shemaiah in 1 Kings 12:22–24 (2 Chronicles 11:1–4), who exhorted the army of Judah, fully determined upon war with the ten tribes which had just revolted from the house of David, not to make war upon their brethren the Israelites, as the revolt had been brought about by God. “That fact at the beginning of the history of the two separated kingdoms, and this at the end of it, finely correspond to each other. In the one place it is a Judaeen prophet who exhorts the men of Judah, in the other an Ephraimite prophet who exhorts the Ephraimites, to show a conciliatory spirit to the related people; and in both cases they are successful. If we do not doubt the truth of the even narrated in 1 Kings 12:22–24, why should

that recorded in 2 Chronicles 28:9–11 be invented?" (Casp. S. 50.)

2 Chronicles 28:16–21. *The further chastisements inflicted upon King Ahaz and the kingdom of Judah.*—V. 16. At this time, when the kings Rezin and Pekah had so smitten Ahaz, the latter sent to the king of Assyria praying him for help. The time when Ahaz sought the help of the king of Assyria is neither exactly stated in 2 Kings 16:7–9, nor can we conclude, as Bertheau thinks we can, from Isa. 7f. that it happened soon after the invasion of Judah by the allied kings. The plural מְלָכֵי אַשּׁוּר is rhetorical, like the plur. בְּנָיו, v. 3. For, that Ahaz applied only to one king, in the opinion of the chronicler also, we learn from vv. 20, 21. By the plural the thought is expressed that Ahaz, instead of seeking the help of Jahve his God, which the prophet had promised him (Isa. 7:4ff.), turned to the kings of the world-power, so hostile to the kingdom of God, from whom he naturally could obtain no real help. Even here the thought which is expressed only in vv. 20, 21, is present to the mind of the author of the Chronicle. For before he narrates the issue of the help thus sought from the Assyrian world-power in vv. 17–19, he ranges all the other afflictions which Judah suffered by its enemies, viz., the devastating inroads of the Edomites and Philistines, in a series of circumstantial clauses, as they preceded in time the oppression of Tiglath-pileser.

2 Chronicles 28:17. V. 17 is to be translated, "And besides, the Edomites had come, and had inflicted a defeat upon Judah, and carried away captives." עוֹד, yet besides, *praeterea*, as in Gen. 43:6, Isa. 1:5. The Edomites had been made subject to the kingdom of Judah only by Amaziah and Uzziah (2 Chronicles 25:11ff., 26:2); but freed by Rezin from this (cf. 2 Kings 16:6), they immediately seized the opportunity to make an inroad upon Judah, and take vengeance on the inhabitants.

2 Chronicles 28:18. And the Philistines whom Uzziah had subdued (2 Chronicles 26:6) made use of the pressure of the Syrians and

Ephraimites upon Judah, not only to shake off the yoke imposed upon them, but also to fall plundering upon the cities of the lowland and the south of Judah, and to extend their territory by the capture of several cities of Judah. They took Beth-shemesh, the present Ain Shems; and Ajalon, the present village *Jâlo* (see on 1 Chronicles 6:44 and 54); Gederoth in the lowland (Josh. 15:41), not yet discovered, for there are not sufficient grounds for identifying it with Gederah (Josh. 15:36), which v. de Velde has pointed out south-eastward from Jabneh (see on 1 Chronicles 12:4); Shocho, the present Shuweike, which Rehoboam had fortified (2 Chronicles 11:7); Timnah, on the frontier of the tribal domain of Judah, the present Tibneh, three-quarters of an hour to the west of Ain Shems (see on Josh. 15:10); and Gimzo, now *Jimsû*, a large village about two miles south-east of Lydda (Lud) on the way to Jerusalem (Rob. *sub voce*). The three last-named cities, with their daughters, i.e., the small villages dependent upon them.

2 Chronicles 28:19. Judah suffered this defeat, because God humbled them on account of Ahaz. Ahaz is called king of Israel, not because he walked in the ways of the kings of the kingdom of the ten tribes (v. 2), but ironically, because his government was the bitterest satire upon the name of the king of Israel, i.e., of the people of God (Casp.); so that Israel here, and in v. 27, as in 21:2; 12:6, is used with reference to the pregnant signification of the word. בִּי הַפְּרִיעַ, for (Ahaz) had acted wantonly in Judah; not: made Judah wanton, for הַפְּרִיעַ is construed with ב, not with *accus. obj.*, as in Ex. 5:4.

After this episode the narrator comes back upon the help which Ahaz sought of the Assyrians. The Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser (on the name, see on 1 Chronicles 5:6) did indeed come, but עָלָיו, against him (Ahaz), and oppressed him, but strengthened him not. וַיִּצַר וַיִּצְקוּ לוֹ וְלֹא הִזְקוּ Thenius and Bertheau translate: he oppressed him, that is, besieged him, yet did not overcome him; adducing in support of this,

that *חָזַק* *c. accus.* cannot be shown to occur in the signification to strengthen one, and according to Jer. 20:7, 1 Kings 16:22, is to be translated, to overcome. But this translation does not at all suit the reason given in the following clause: “for Ahaz had plundered the house of Jahve, ... and given it to the king of Asshur; but it did not result in help to him.” The sending away of the temple and palace treasures to the Assyrian king, to obtain his help, cannot possibly be stated as the reason why Tiglath-pileser besieged Ahaz, but did not overcome him, but only as a reason why he did not give Ahaz the expected help, and so did not strengthen him. *חָזַק וְלֹא* corresponds to the *לֹא לְעֹזְרָה לּוֹ*, v. 21, and both clauses refer back to *לְעֹזֵר לּוֹ*, v. 16. That which Ahaz wished to buy from Tiglath-pileser, by sending him the treasures of the palace and the temple,—namely, help against his enemies,—he did not thereby obtain, but the opposite, viz., that Tiglath-pileser came against him and oppressed him. When, on the contrary, Thenius takes the matter thus, that the subjection of Ahaz under Tiglath-pileser was indeed prevented by the treasures given, but the support desired was not purchased by them, he has ungrammatically taken *חָזַק* as imperfect, and violently torn away the *לֹא לְעֹזְרָה לּוֹ* from what precedes. If we connect these words, as the adversative *וְלֹא* requires, with *וַיִּתֵּן וּגְרָ*, then the expression, “Ahaz gave the Assyrian king the treasures of the temple, ... but it did not result in help to him,” gives no support to the idea that Tiglath-pileser besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. The context therefore necessarily demands that *חָזַק* should have the active signification, to strengthen, notwithstanding that *חָזַק* in Kal is mainly used as intransitive. Moreover, *וַיִּצַר לּוֹ* also does not denote he besieged, as *וַיִּצַר אֵלָיו* or *עָלָיו*, 2 Sam. 20:15, 1 Sam. 23:8; but only, he oppressed him, and cannot here be translated otherwise than the *הִצַּר לּוֹ*, v. 22, which corresponds to it, where

Bertheau also has decided in favour of the signification *oppress*. It is not stated wherein the oppression consisted; but without doubt it was that Tiglath-pileser, after he had both slain Rezin and conquered his kingdom, and also taken away many cities in Galilee and the land of Naphtali from Pekah, carrying away the inhabitants to Assyria (2 Kings 16:9 and 15:29), advanced against Ahaz himself, to make him a tributary. The verbs *חָלַק* and *וַיִּתֵּן* (v. 21) are pluperfects: “for Ahaz had plundered,” etc. Not when Tiglath-pileser oppressed him, but when he besought help of that king, Ahaz had sent him the treasures of the temple and the palace as *שָׂחָד*, 2 Kings 16:7, 8. *חָלַק* denotes to plunder, like *חָלַק*, a share of booty, Num. 31:36, and booty, Job 17:5. The selection of this word for the taking away of the treasures of silver and gold out of the temple and palace arises from the impassioned nature of the language. The taking away of these treasures was, in fact, a plundering of the temple and of the palace. Had Ahaz trusted in the Lord his God, he would not have required to lay violent hands on these treasures. *בֵּית הַמֶּלֶךְ* is added to *וְהַשָּׂרִים*, to signify that Ahaz laid hands upon the precious things belonging to the high officials who dwelt in the palace, and delivered them over to the Assyrian king (Berth.).

Although the author of the Chronicle makes the further remark, that the giving of these treasures over did not result in help to Ahaz, yet it cannot be at all doubtful that he had the fact recorded in 2 Kings 16:7–9 before his eyes, and says nothing inconsistent with that account. According to 2 Kings 16:9, Tiglath-pileser, in consequence of the present sent him, took the field, conquered and destroyed the kingdom of Rezin, and also took possession of the northern part of the kingdom of Israel, as is narrated in 2 Kings 15:29. The author of the Chronicle has not mentioned these events, because Ahaz was not thereby really helped. Although the kings Rezin and Pekah were compelled to abandon their plan of capturing Jerusalem and subduing the kingdom of Judah,

by the inroad of the Assyrians into their land, yet this help was to be regarded as nothing, seeing that Tiglath-pileser not only retained the conquered territories and cities for himself, but also undertook the whole campaign, not to strengthen Ahaz, but for the extension of his own (the Assyrian) power, and so made use of it, and, as we are told in v. 20 of the Chronicle, oppressed Ahaz. This oppression is, it is true, not expressly mentioned in 2 Kings 16, but is hinted in 2 Kings 16:18, and placed beyond doubt by 2 Kings 18:7, 14, 20; cf. Isa. 36:5. In 2 Kings 16:18 it is recorded that Ahaz removed the covered sabbath portico which had been built to the house of God, and the external entrance of the king into the house of the Lord, because of (מִפְּנֵי) the king of Assyria. Manifestly Ahaz feared, as J. D. Mich. has already rightly concluded from this, that the king of Assyria, whom he had summoned to his assistance, might at some time desire to take possession of the city, and that in such a case this covered sabbath porch and an external entrance into the temple might be of use to him in the siege. This note, therefore, notwithstanding its obscurity, yet gives sufficiently clear testimony in favour of the statement in the Chronicle, that the king of Assyria, who had been called upon by Ahaz for help, oppressed him, upon which doubt has been cast by Gesen. *Isa.* i. S. 269, etc. Tiglath-pileser must have in some way shown a desire to possess Jerusalem, and Ahaz have consequently feared that he might wish to take it by force. But from 2 Kings 18:7, 14, 20, cf. Isa. 36:5, it is quite certain Ahaz had become tributary to the Assyrian king, and the kingdom dependent upon the Assyrians. It is true, indeed, that in these passages, strictly interpreted, this subjection of Judah is only said to exist immediately before the invasion of Sennacherib; but since Assyria made no war upon Judah between the campaign of Tiglath-pileser against Damascus and Samaria and Sennacherib's attack, the subjection of Judah to Assyria, which Hezekiah brought to an end, can only have dated from the time of Ahaz, and can only have commenced when Ahaz had called in Tiglath-pileser to aid him against his enemies.

Certainly the exact means by which Tiglath-pileser compelled Ahaz to submit and to pay tribute cannot be recognised under, and ascertained from, the rhetorical mode of expression: Tiglath-pileser came against him, and oppressed him. Neither וַיִּבֹא עָלָיו nor וַיִּצַר לוֹ require us to suppose that Tiglath-pileser advanced against Jerusalem with an army, although it is not impossible that Tiglath-pileser, after having conquered the Israelite cities in Galilee and the land of Naphtali, and carried away their inhabitants to Assyria (2 Kings 15:29), may have made a further advance, and demanded of Ahaz tribute and submission, ordering a detachment of his troops to march into Judah to enforce his demand. But the words quoted do not necessarily mean more than that Tiglath made the demand on Ahaz for tribute from Galilee, with the threat that, if he should refuse it, he would march into and conquer Judah; and that Ahaz, feeling himself unable to cope successfully with so powerful a king, promised to pay the tribute without going to war. Even in this last case the author of the Chronicle might say that the king who had been summoned by Ahaz to his assistance came against him and oppressed him, and helped him not. Cf. also the elaborate defence of the account in the Chronicle, in Caspari, S. 56ff.

2 Chronicles 28:22–25. Increase of Ahaz' transgressions against the Lord.—V. 22. After this proof that Ahaz only brought greater oppression upon himself by seeking help from the king of Assyria (vv. 16–21), there follows (v. 22f.) an account of how he, in his trouble, continued to sin more and more against God the Lord, and hardened himself more and more in idolatry. וַיִּבֹא עָלָיו corresponds to the בָּעַתָּה v. 16. "At the time when they oppressed him, he trespassed yet more against the Lord, he King Ahaz." In the last words the rhetorical emphasizing of the subject comes clearly out. The sentence contains a general estimation of the attitude of the godless king under the divine chastisement, which is then illustrated by facts (vv. 23–25).

2 Chronicles 28:23. He sacrificed to the gods of Damascus, which smote him, saying, i.e., thinking, The gods of the kings of Aram which helped them, to them will I sacrifice, and they will help me. כִּי serves to introduce the saying, and both הָם and לָהֶם are rhetorical. Berth. incorrectly translates the participle הַמְכִּימִים by the pluperfect: who had smitten him. It was not after the Syrians had smitten him that Ahaz sought to gain by sacrifice the help of their gods, but while the Syrians were inflicting defeats upon him; not after the conclusion of the Syrian war, but during its course. The ungrammatical translation of the participle by the pluperfect arises from the view that the contents of our verse, the statement that Ahaz sacrificed to the Syrian gods, is an unhistorical misinterpretation of the statement in 2 Kings 16:10ff., about the altar which Ahaz saw when he went to meet the Assyrian king in Damascus, and a copy of which he caused to be made in Jerusalem, and set up in the temple court, in the place of the copper altar of burnt-offering. But we have already rejected that view as unfounded, in the exposition of 2 Kings 16:10. Since Ahaz had cast and erected statues to the Baals, and even sacrificed his son to Moloch, he naturally would not scruple to sacrifice to the Assyrian gods to secure their help. But they (these gods) brought ruin to him and to all Israel. לְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל is in the accusative, and co-ordinate with the suffix in הַכְּשִׁילוֹ.

2 Chronicles 28:24f. Not content with thus worshipping strange gods, Ahaz laid violent hands upon the temple vessels and suppressed the temple worship. He collected all the vessels of the house of God together, and broke them in pieces. These words also are rhetorical, so that neither the יִצְאָה, which depicts the matter vividly, nor the בָּל, is to be pressed. The קָצַץ of the vessels consisted, according to 2 Kings 16:17, in this, that he mutilated the artistically wrought vessels of the court, and cut out the panels from the bases, and took away the lavers from them, and took down the brazen sea from

the oxen on which it stood, and set it upon a pavement of stones. "And he closed the doors of the house of Jahve," in order to put an end to the Jahve-worship in the temple, which he regarded as superfluous, since he had erected altars at the corners of all the streets in Jerusalem, and in all the cities of Judah. The statement as to the closing of the temple doors, to which reference is made in 2 Chronicles 29:3, 7, is said by Berth. not to reset upon good historical recollection, because the book of Kings not only does not say anything of it, but also clearly gives us to understand that Ahaz allowed the Jahve-worship to continue, 2 Kings 16:15f. That the book of Kings (2 Kings 16:2) makes no mention of this circumstance does not prove much, it being an *argumentum e silentio*; for the book of Kings is not a complete history, it contains only a short excerpt from the history of the kings; while the intimation given us in 2 Kings 16:15f. as to the continuation of the worship of Jahve, may without difficulty be reconciled with the closing of the temple doors. The דְּלִתוֹת בַּיִת יְהוָה are not the gates of the court of the temple, but, according to the clear explanation of the Chronicle, 2 Chronicles 29:7, the doors of the porch, which in 29:3 are also called doors of the house of Jahve; the "house of Jahve" signifying here not the whole group of temple buildings, but, in the narrower sense of the words, denoting only the main body of the temple (the Holy Place and the Most Holy, wherein Jahve was enthroned). By the closing of the doors of the porch the worship of Jahve in the Holy Place and the Most Holy was indeed suspended, but the worship at the altar in the court was not thereby necessarily interfered with: it might still continue. Now it is the worship at the altar of burnt-offering alone of which it is said in 2 Kings 16:15 that Ahaz allowed it to continue to this extent, that he ordered the priest Urijah to offer all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices, meat-offerings and drink-offerings, which were offered morning and evening by both king and people, not upon the copper sacrificial altar (Solomon's), but on the altar built after the pattern of that which he had seen at Damascus.

The cessation of worship at this altar is also left unmentioned by the Chronicle, and in 29:7. Hezekiah, when he again opened the doors of the house of Jahve, only says to the priests and Levites, "Our fathers have forsaken Jahve, and turned their backs on His sanctuary; yea, have shut the doors of the porch, put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense nor offered burnt-offerings in the Holy Place *unto the God of Israel.*" Sacrificing upon an altar built after a heathen model was not sacrificing to the God of Israel. There is therefore no ground to doubt the historical truth of the statement in our verse. The description of the idolatrous conduct of Ahaz concludes with the remark, v. 25, that Ahaz thereby provoked Jahve, the God of his fathers, to anger.

2 Chronicles 28:26, 27. *The end of his reign.*—V. 27. Ahaz indeed both died and was buried in the city, in Jerusalem (as 2 Kings 16:20), but was not laid in the graves of the kings, because he had not ruled like a king of the people of God, the true Israel. Since the name Israel is used in a pregnant sense, as in v. 19, the terms in which the place where he died is designated, "in the city, in Jerusalem," would seem to have been purposely selected to intimate that Ahaz, because he had not walked during life like his ancestor David, was not buried along with David when he died.

2 Chronicles 29

Ch. 29–32.—The Reign of Hezekiah. Cf. 2 Kings 18–20.

2 Chronicles 29–32. Hezekiah, the pious son of the godless Ahaz, recognised that it was to be the business of his reign to bring the kingdom out of the utterly ruinous condition into which Ahaz had brought it by his idolatry and his heathen policy, and to elevate the state again, both in respect to religion and morals, and also in political affairs. He consequently endeavoured, in the first place, to do away with the idolatry, and to restore the Jahve-worship according to the law, and then to throw off the yoke of subjection to the Assyrian. These two undertakings, on the success of which God

bestowed His blessing, form the contents of the history of his reign both in the books of Kings and in the Chronicle; but they are differently treated by the authors of these books. In the book of Kings, the extirpation of idolatry, and Hezekiah's faithfulness in cleaving to the Lord his God, are very briefly recorded (2 Kings 17:3–7); while the throwing off of the Assyrian yoke, which brought on Sennacherib's invasion, and ended with the destruction of the Assyrian army before Jerusalem, and the further results of that memorable event (the sickness and recovery of Hezekiah, the arrival of a Babylonian embassy in Jerusalem, and Hezekiah's reception of them), are very fully narrated in 2 Kings 18:8–20:19. The author of the Chronicle, on the contrary, enlarges upon Hezekiah's reform of the cultus, the purification of the temple from all idolatrous abominations, the restoration of the Jahve-worship, and a solemn celebration of the passover, to which the king invited not only his own subjects, but also the remainder of the ten tribes (2 Chronicles 29–31); and gives merely a brief summary of the chief points in Sennacherib's invasion, and the events connected with it (2 Chronicles 32).

2 Chronicles 29. *The beginning of his reign* (vv. 1, 2). *Purification and consecration of the temple* (vv. 3–36).—Vv. 1 and 2. Age of Hezekiah, duration and spirit of his reign, as in 2 Kings 18:1–3. With v. 3 the account of the restoration of the Jahve-worship begins. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, Hezekiah caused the temple doors to be opened, and the priests and Levites to assemble, in order that he might rouse them by an energetic address to purify the house of God from all the uncleannesses of idolatry (vv. 3–11). They, vigorously commencing the work, completed the purification of the temple with its courts and vessels in sixteen days, and reported to the king what had been done (vv. 12–19); and then the king and the chiefs of the city offered a great sacrifice to consecrate the purified sanctuary, upon which followed burnt-offerings, and sacrifices, and thankofferings of the whole assembly (vv. 20–36).

2 Chronicles 29:3–19. *The purification of the temple by the priests and Levites.*—V. 3. In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he caused the doors of the house of Jahve to be opened and repaired (חִזַּק as in 24:12, where it alternates with חִדְּשׁ). Cf. herewith the remark in 2 Kings 18:16, that Hezekiah caused the doors of the הֵיכָל to be covered with leaf-gold. The date, *in the first month*, in the first year of his reign, is variously interpreted. As the Levites, according to v. 17, began the purification on the first day of the first month, in eight days had reached the porch, and on the sixteenth day of the first month had completed the work, while the king had, according to v. 4, before called upon the priests and Levites to sanctify themselves for the work, and those summoned then assembled their brethren for this purpose, and after they had consecrated themselves, began the cleansing (v. 15), it would seem as if the summons of the king and the calling together of the remaining Levites had occurred before the first day of the first month, when they began the purification of the house of God. On that account Caspari (*Beiträge z. Einleit. in d. B. Jesaiah*, S. 111) thinks that the first month (v. 3) is not the first month of the year (Nisan), but the first month of the reign of Hezekiah, who probably became king shortly before Nisan, towards the end of the year. But it is not at all likely that הַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן is used in a different sense in v. 3 from that in which it is used in v. 17. We therefore hold, with Berth. and others, the first month, both in v. 3 and in v. 17, to be the first month of the ecclesiastical year Nisan, without, however, accepting the supposition of Gumpach and Bertheau that the years of Hezekiah's reign began with the first of Tishri, for for that way of reckoning there are no certain data in the historical books of the Old Testament. The statement, "in the first year of his reign, in the first month" (not in the first year, in the first month of his reign), is sufficiently explained if Hezekiah ascended the throne in one of the last months of the calendar year, which began with Nisan. In that case, on the first of Nisan of the new year, so few

months, or perhaps only weeks, would have elapsed since his accession, that what he did in Nisan could not rightly have been dated otherwise than "in the first year of his reign." The other difficulty, that the purification of the temple began on the first day of the first month (v. 7), while the preparations for it which preceded were yet, according to v. 3, made also in the first month, is removed if we take v. 3 to be a comprehensive summary of what is described in the following verses, and regard the connection between vv. 3 and 4ff. as only logical, not chronological, the וְאֵתֵּן consec. (וְאֵתֵּן) expressing, not succession in time, but connection in thought. The opening of the doors of the house of God, and the repairing of them (v. 3), did not precede in time the summons to the priests (v. 4), but is placed at the commencement of the account of the reopening and restoration of the temple as a contrast to the closing and devastation of the sanctuary by Ahaz. Hezekiah commenced this work in the first year of his reign, in the first month of the calendar year, and accomplished it as is described in vv. 4–17. If we take v. 3 as a statement of the contents of the succeeding section,—as are e.g., (1 Kings 6:14; 7:1) the statements, "he built the house, and completed it," where in both passages the completion of the building is described only in the succeeding verses,—we need not confine the preparations spoken of in vv. 4–15 to the first day of the first month, but may quite well suppose that these preparations preceded the first day of the month, and that only the accomplishment of that which had been resolved upon and commanded by the king fell in the first month, as is more accurately stated in v. 17.

2 Chronicles 29:4. Hezekiah gathered the priests and Levites together "into the open space of the east," i.e., in the eastern open space before the temple, not "in the inner court" (Berth.),—see on Ezra 10:9,—and called upon them (v. 5) to sanctify themselves, and then to sanctify the house of the Lord. To purify the temple they must first sanctify themselves (cf. v. 15), in order to proceed to the work of

sanctifying the house of God in a state of Levitical purity. The work was to remove all that was unclean from the sanctuary. הַנְּדָה is Levitical uncleanness, for which in v. 16 we have הַטְּמָאָה; here the abominations of idolatry. The king gave the reason of his summons in a reference to the devastation which Ahaz and his contemporaries had wrought in the house of God (vv. 6, 7), and to the wrath of God which had on that account come upon them (vv. 8, 9). "Our fathers" (v. 6), that is, Ahaz and his contemporaries, for only these had been guilty of displeasing God in the ways mentioned in vv. 6 and 7, "have turned away their face from the dwelling of Jahve, and turned their back (upon it)." These words are a symbolical expression for: they have ceased to worship Jahve in His temple, and exchanged it for idolatry.

2 Chronicles 29:7. Even (גַּם) the doors of the porch have they shut, and caused the service in the sanctuary, the lighting of the lamps, and the sacrifices of incense, to cease; see on 28:24. The words, "and they brought not burnt-offerings in the sanctuary to the God of Israel," do not imply the complete cessation of the legal sacrificial worship, but only that no burnt-offerings were brought to the God of Israel. Sacrifices offered upon the altar of burnt-offering built after a heathen pattern by Ahaz were not, in the eyes of the author of the Chronicle, sacrifices which were offered to the God of Israel; and it is also possible that even this sacrificial worship may have more and more decayed. קִדְּשׁ, v. 7, is the whole sanctuary, with the court of the priests.

2 Chronicles 29:8f. Wherefore the wrath of the Lord came upon Judah and Jerusalem. Cf. for the expression, 24:18; 32:25; on v. 8b, cf. Deut. 28:25, 37, Jer. 24:9; 25:9, etc. "As ye see with your eyes." The shameful defeats which Judah had sustained under Ahaz from the Syrians, Ephraimites, Philistines, and Edomites, and the oppression by the Syrian king (2 Chronicles 28:5ff., vv. 17–21), are here referred to, as we learn from v. 9.

2 Chronicles 29:10. To turn away this anger of God, Hezekiah wishes to make a covenant with

the Lord, i.e., to renew the covenant with Jahve by restoring His worship (עָם לְבָבֵי as in 6:7; 9:1, 1 Chronicles 28:2, etc.), and therefore calls upon the Levites not to neglect the performance of their duty. בָּנֵי he calls the Levites, addressing them in kindly language; cf. Prov. 1:8, etc. תִּשְׁלוּ in Niph. occurs only here, and denotes to avoid a thing from carelessness or laziness,—from שָׁלָה, to draw forth; Job 27:8. On v. 11b, cf. Deut. 10:8, 1 Chronicles 23:13.

2 Chronicles 29:12–19. This address was heard with gladness. The Levites present assembled their brethren, and set to work, after they had all sanctified themselves, to purify the temple. In vv. 12–14 fourteen names are mentioned as those of the audience, viz.: two Levites of each of the great families of Kohath, Merari, and Gershon; two of the family of Elizaphan, i.e., Elzaphan the son of Uzziel, the son of Kohath, Ex. 6:18, who in the time of Moses was prince of the family of Kohath, Num. 3:30; and then two Levites of the descendants of Asaph (of the family of Gershon); two of Heman's descendants (of the family of Kohath); and two of Jeduthun's (of the family of Merari): see on 1 Chronicles 6:18–32. Of these names, Mahath, Eden, and Jehiel occur again in 2 Chronicles 31:13–15; several others, Joah ben Zimmah and Kish ben Abdi, have occurred already in the genealogy, 1 Chronicles 6:5f. and v. 29, for in the various families the same name often repeats itself.

2 Chronicles 29:15. These fourteen heads of the various families and branches of Levi assembled their brethren (the other Levites who dwelt in Jerusalem); then they all sanctified themselves, and went forward, according to the command of the king, with the work of cleansing the temple. בְּדִבְרֵי יְהוָה belongs to כְּמִצְוֹת הַיְיָ, according to the command of the king, which was founded upon the words of Jahve, i.e., upon the commands of Moses' law; cf. 30:12.

2 Chronicles 29:16. The priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord (into the

holy place, probably also into the most holy place) to cleanse it, and removed all the uncleanness which was there into the court, whence the Levites carried it out into the valley of the brook Kidron (הוֹצֵא, out of the precincts of the temple). The Levites were forbidden by the law to enter the holy place, and this command was strictly observed. Of what nature the uncleannesses were which the priests found in the holy place (הַיְקִל) cannot be accurately ascertained. Owing to the prevalence of idolatry under Ahaz, vessels, e.g., sacrificial bowls, which were used in the worship, may have come into the holy place; and besides, all vessels of the holy place would require to be cleaned, and their filth removed. The closing of the temple doors (2 Chronicles 28:24) occurred only in the last year of Ahaz, while idolatry had been practised from the beginning of his reign. On the Kidron, see on 2 Kings 23:4.

2 Chronicles 29:17. The duration of the purification. On the first day of the first month they commenced with the purification of the courts; on the eighth day of the same month they came to the porch of Jahve, and with it began the purification of the temple building. This lasted eight days more, so that the work was finished on the sixteenth day of the first month.

2 Chronicles 29:18f. At the end of this business they made their report to the king. "All the vessels which King Ahaz had thrown away, i.e., made worthy of rejection," are the copper altar of burnt-offering, the brazen sea, and the lavers upon the bases (2 Kings 16:14, 17). הַכִּנּוֹי, we have prepared, is a shorter form of הַכִּינּוֹנוֹי; cf. Gesen. *Gramm.* § 72. 5, and J. Olshausen, *hebr. Grammat.* S. 565. The altar of Jahve is the altar of burnt-offering; cf. v. 21.

2 Chronicles 29:20–30. *The re-dedication of the temple by offering sacrifices.*—V. 20. Probably on the very next morning Hezekiah went with the princes (heads) of the city into the house of the Lord, and brought seven bullocks, seven rams, and seven lambs for a burnt-offering, and seven he-goats for a sin-

offering, "for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah," i.e., as expiation for and consecration of the kingdom, sanctuary, and people. These sacrifices were offered by the priests according to the prescription of the law of Moses, vv. 22–24. The burnt-offerings are first named, as in the sacrificial Torah in Lev. 1–6, although the offering of the sin-offering preceded that of the burnt-offering. The laying on of hands, too, is mentioned only with the sin-offering, v. 23, although according to Lev. 1:4 the same ceremony was gone through with the burnt-offerings; but that is not because a confession of sin was probably made during the laying on of hands, as Bertheau conjectures, adducing Lev. 16:21, for from that passage no such conclusion can be drawn. The ceremony is mentioned only in the one case to emphasize the fact that the king and the assembly (the latter, of course, by their representatives) laid their hands upon the sacrificial beasts, because the atonement was, according to the king's words, to be for all Israel. "All Israel" are probably not only all the inhabitants of the kingdom of Judah, but Israelites in general (the twelve tribes), for whom the temple in Jerusalem was the only lawful sanctuary. אָטָה אָתָּה signifies to bring the blood to the altar for an atonement, in the manner prescribed in Lev. 4:30, 34.

2 Chronicles 29:25. Hezekiah, moreover, restored again the music with which the Levites were wont to accompany the sacrificial act, and which David, with the prophets Gad and Nathan, had arranged. The וַיִּטְמַד *consec.* with וַיִּטְמַד expresses the secution of thought, and v. 25 corresponds to the 21st verse. First, the beasts to be sacrificed were prepared for the sacrifice, and then to the Levites was committed the performance of instrumental and vocal music during the sacrificial act. In reference to the musical instruments, see on 1 Chronicles 15:16. The Levites were appointed to sing, "according to the command of David;" but this command was אָמַר, by interposition of Jahve, viz., given by His prophets. David had consequently made

this arrangement at the divine suggestion, coming to him through the prophets. With חֲזָהּ הַמִּלֶּדֶה cf. 1 Chronicles 21:9. בְּיַד נְבִיאָיו is in explanatory apposition to יהוה בְּיַד, and נְבִיאָיו is not to be referred to David, although David is called in 8:14 “man of God.”

2 Chronicles 29:26. כְּלֵי דָוִד are the musical instruments the use of which David introduced into the public worship; see 1 Chronicles 23:5.—The first clause, v. 27, “And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt-offering upon the altar,” is repeated from v. 21 to form a connection for what follows: “At the time when the sacrificial act began, the song of Jahve commenced,” i.e., the praising of Jahve by song and instrumental music (שִׁיר לַיהוָה = שִׁיר יְהוָה, 1 Chronicles 25:7), and (the blowing) of trumpets, “and that under the leading (עַל יְדֵי) of the instruments of David.” This is to be understood as denoting that the blowing of the trumpets regulated itself by the playing of the stringed instruments,—suited itself to the song and the music of the stringed instruments.

2 Chronicles 29:28. During the offering of the burnt-offering, until it was ended, the whole congregation stood worshipping; and the song of the Levites, accompanied by the music of the stringed instruments and the trumpet-blowing of the priests, continued. הַשִּׁיר מְשׁוֹרֵר, “the song was singing,” stands for “the body of singers sang;” and the trumpets also stand for the trumpeters.

2 Chronicles 29:29. At the conclusion of the sacrificial act (לְהַעֲלוֹת is a contraction for לְהַעֲלוֹת הַקֹּדֶשׁ, v. 27) the king and all who were present knelt and worshipped.

2 Chronicles 29:30. The king and the princes commanded the Levites to sing praise unto the Lord with the words (psalms) of David and of Asaph; and they sang praise with joy, and bowed themselves and worshipped. This verse does not mean that the Levites began to sing psalms at the king’s command only after the sacrificial act and the instrumental music (v.

27f.) had been finished, but it forms a comprehensive conclusion of the description of the sacrificial solemnities. The author of the Chronicle considered it necessary to make express mention of the praising of God in psalms, already *implicite* involved in the הַשִּׁיר מְשׁוֹרֵר, v. 28, and to remark that the Levites also, at the conclusion of the song of praise, knelt and worshipped. Asaph is here called חֲזָהּ, as Jeduthun (Ethan) is in 2 Chronicles 35:15, and Heman, 1 Chronicles 25:5.

2 Chronicles 29:31–36. *The sacrifice of thank-offerings and praise-offerings and voluntary burnt-offering.*—Hezekiah introduces this, the concluding act of this religious festival, with the words, “Now have ye filled your hand to the Lord,” i.e., you have again consecrated yourselves to the service of the Lord (cf. Ex. 32:39 and the commentary on Lev. 7:37f.); “come near, and bring sacrifices and thank-offerings into the house of the Lord.” The words “Now have ye filled” are regarded by the commentators (Clericus, Ramb., Bertheau, etc.) as addressed to the priests; while the following וְגַם אֲנִי are supposed to be directed to the congregation, and Clericus and Ramb. consequently supply before וְגַם אֲנִי, *vos vero*,

Israelitae. The summons וְגַם אֲנִי can certainly only be addressed to the congregation, as is shown by the words וְיָבִיאוּ הַקֹּהֵל, and the congregation brought, which correspond to the summons. But the supplying of *vos vero* before וְגַם אֲנִי is quite arbitrary. If in וְגַם אֲנִי other persons are addressed than those to whom the king formerly said, “Now have ye filled your hands,” the change in the persons addressed would have been intimated by mention of the person, or at least by וְאַתֶּם, “but ye.” As the two clauses at present stand, they must be spoken to the same persons, viz., the whole assembled congregation, including the priests and Levites. We must therefore suppose that the phrase מִלֵּא יָדָהּ, which in its narrower sense denotes only the consecration of the priests for service at the

altar (see on Lev. 7:37), is here used in a wider sense, and transferred to the whole congregation. They, by their participation in the consecratory offerings, by laying on of hands and worship during the sacrificial act, had consecrated themselves anew to the service of the Lord as their God, and had anew made a covenant with the Lord (v. 10); so that only the sacrificial meal was wanting to the completion of this celebration of the covenant, and for this the offering of sacrifices was requisite. The collocation *וְזִבְחֵיהֶם וְתוֹדוֹת* is strange. *וְזִבְחֵיהֶם* are sacrifices of peace-offering, also called briefly *שְׁלָמִים*. Of these, in the law, three species—praise-offerings (*תּוֹדוֹת*), vowed offerings, and voluntary offerings—are distinguished (Lev. 7:11, 16). *תּוֹדוֹת* therefore denotes a species of the sacrifices or peace-offerings, the praise or thank-offerings in the stricter sense; and *וְתוֹדוֹת* must be taken as explicative: sacrifices, and that (or namely) praise-offerings. *וְכָל־נְדִיב לֵב*, and every one who was heartily willing, (brought) burnt-offerings; i.e., all who felt inwardly impelled to do so, brought of their own accord burnt-offerings.

2 Chronicles 29:32. The number of the burnt-offerings brought spontaneously by the congregation was very large: 70 bullocks, 100 rams, and 200 lambs.

2 Chronicles 29:33. *וְהִקְדָּשִׁים*, and the consecrated, i.e., the beasts brought as thank-offering (cf. 35:13, Neh. 10:34), were 600 bullocks and 3000 small cattle (sheep and goats).—In vv. 34–36 the account closes with some remarks upon these sacrifices and the festal solemnity. V. 34. But there were too few priests, and they were not able (so that they were not able) to flay all the burnt-offerings; and their brethren the Levites helped them till the work was ended (i.e., the flaying), and until the priests had sanctified themselves. In the case of private burnt-offerings the flaying of the beast was the business of the sacrificer (Lev. 1:6); while in the case of those offered on solemn occasions in the name of the

congregation it was the priest's duty, and in it, as the work was not of a specifically priestly character, the Levites might assist. The burnt-offerings which are spoken of in v. 34 are not merely those voluntarily offered (v. 34), but also the consecratory burnt-offerings (vv. 22, 27). Only v. 35 refers to the voluntary offerings alone. "For the Levites had been more upright to sanctify themselves than the priests." *וְשָׂרֵי לֵב*, *rectiores animo*, had endeavoured more honestly. Perhaps the priests had taken more part in the idolatrous worship of Ahaz than the Levites, which would be quite accounted for, as Kueper, *das Priesterth. des A. Bundes* (1870), S. 216, remarks, by their relation to the court of the king, and their dependence upon it. They consequently showed themselves more slack even in the purification than the Levites, who *forte etiam idololatricis sacris minus contaminati et impediti erant* (Ramb.).

2 Chronicles 29:35. V. 35 gives yet another reason why the Levites had to help the priests: "And also the burnt-offerings were in abundance, with the fat of the peace-offerings, and the drink-offerings for every burnt-offering." The priests could not accomplish the flaying for this reason also, that they had, besides, to see to the proper altar service (sprinkling of the blood, and burning of the sacrifices upon the altar), which taxed their strength, since, besides the consecratory burnt-offerings, there were the voluntary burnt-offerings (v. 31), which were offered along with the thank-offerings and the drink-offerings, which belonged to the burnt-offerings of Num. 15:1–15. Thus the service of the house of Jahve was arranged. *עֲבוֹדָה* is not the purification and dedication of the temple (Berth.), but only the sacrificial service, or rather all that concerned the regular temple worship, which had decayed under Ahaz, and had at length wholly ceased.

2 Chronicles 29:36. Hezekiah and the whole people rejoiced because of it. *עַל הַהֵכָן*, over that which God had prepared for the people (by the purification of the temple and the restoration of the Jahve worship), not "because God had made

the people ready” (Ramb., Berth.). The article with אֲשֶׁר represents the relative pronoun הַכִּי; see on 1 Chronicles 26:28. The joy was heightened by the fact that the thing was done suddenly.

2 Chronicles 30

2 Chronicles 30. *The celebration of the passover.*—Vv. 1–12. The preparations for this celebration.—V. 1. Hezekiah invited all Israel and Judah to it; “and he also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh,” the two chief tribes of the northern kingdom, which here, as is manifest from vv. 5, 10, are named *instar omnium*. But the whole sentence serves only to elucidate יִשְׁלַח עַל כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל. To all Israel (of the ten tribes) he sent the invitation, and this he did by letters. The verse contains a general statement as to the matter, which is further described in what follows.

2 Chronicles 30:2. The king consulted with his princes and the whole assembly in Jerusalem, i.e., with the community of the capital assembled in their representatives for this purpose, as to keeping the passover in the second month. This was (Num. 9:6–13) allowed to those who, by uncleanness or by absence on a distant journey, were prevented from holding the feast at the lawful time, the 14th of the first month. Both these reasons existed in this case (v. 3): the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves, and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem, sc. at the legal time in the first month. לְמִדָּי, contracted from מְהִדָּי, that which is sufficient, is usually interpreted, “not in sufficient number” (Rashi, Vulg., Berth., etc.); but the reference of the word to the number cannot be defended. לְמִדָּי denotes only *ad sufficientiam*, and means not merely that the priests had not sanctified themselves in such numbers as were required for the slaughtering and offering of the paschal lambs, but that the priesthood in general was not yet sufficiently consecrated, many priests not having at that time wholly renounced idolatry and consecrated themselves anew. Nor does the

passage signify, as Bertheau says it does, “that although the purification of the temple was completed only on the sixteenth day of the first month (2 Chronicles 29:17), the passover would yet have been celebrated in the first month, though perhaps not on the legal fourteenth day, had not a further postponement become necessary for the reasons here given;” for there is nothing said in the text of a “further postponement.” That is just as arbitrarily dragged into the narrative as the idea that Hezekiah ever intended to hold the passover on another day than the legal fourteenth day of the month, which is destitute of all support, and even of probability. The postponement of the passover until the second month in special circumstances was provided for by the law, but the transfer of the celebration to another day of the month was not. Such a transfer would have been an illegal and arbitrary innovation, which we cannot suppose Hezekiah capable of. Rather it is clear from the consultation, that the king and his princes and the congregations were persuaded that the passover could be held only on the fourteenth day of the month; for they did not consult as to the day, but only as to the month, upon the basis of the law: if not in the first, then at any rate in the second month. The day was, for those consulting, so definitely fixed that it was never discussed, and is not mentioned at all in the record. If this were so, then the consultation must have taken place in the first month before the fourteenth day, at a time when the lawful day for the celebration was not yet past. This is implied in the words, “for they could not hold it at that time.” בְּעֵת אֵת הַחֹדֶשׁ is the first month, in contrast to “in the second month;” not this or that day of the month. Now, since the reason given for their not being able to hold it in the first month is that the priests had not sufficiently purified themselves, and the people had not assembled themselves in Jerusalem, we learn with certainty from these reasons that it is not a celebration of the passover in the *first* year of Hezekiah’s reign which is here treated of, as almost all commentators think.¹⁵ In the whole

narrative there is nothing to favour such a supposition, except (1) the circumstance that the account of this celebration is connected by *consec.* (in *וַיִּשְׁלַח*) with the preceding purification of the temple and restoration of the Jahve-worship which took place in the first year of Hezekiah's reign; and (2) the statement that the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves, v. 3, which, when compared with that in 2 Chronicles 29:34, that the number of priests who had sanctified themselves was not sufficient to flay the beasts for sacrifice, makes it appear as if the passover had been celebrated immediately after the consecration of the temple; and (3) the mention of the second month in v. 2, which, taken in connection with the mention of the first month in 29:3, 17, seems to imply that the second month of the first year of Hezekiah's reign is meant. But of these three apparent reasons none is convincing.

The use of *consec.* to connect the account of the celebration of the passover with the preceding, without the slightest hint that the celebration took place in another (later) year, is fully accounted for by the fact that in no case is the year in which any event of Hezekiah's twenty-nine years' reign occurred stated in the Chronicle. In 2 Chronicles 32:1, Sennacherib's invasion of Judah is introduced only by the indefinite formula, "and after these events," though it happened in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah; while the arrangements as to the public worship made by this king, and recorded in 2 Chronicles 31, belong to the first years of his reign. Only in the case of the restoration of the Jahve-worship is it remarked, 29:3, that Hezekiah commenced it in the very first year of his reign, because that was important in forming an estimate of the spirit of his reign; but the statement of the year in which his other acts were done had not much bearing upon the practical aim of the chronicler. Nor does the reason given for the transfer of the celebration of the passover to the second month, viz., that the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves, prove that the celebration took

place in the first year of Hezekiah. During the sixteen years' reign of the idolater Ahaz, the priesthood had beyond doubt fallen very low,—become morally sunk, so that the majority of them would not immediately make haste to sanctify themselves for the Jahve-worship. Finally, the retrospective reference to 29:3, 17, would certainly incline us to take *בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי* to mean the second month of the first year; but yet it cannot be at once taken in that sense, unless the reasons given for the transfer of the celebration of the passover to the second month point to the first year. But these reasons, so far from doing so, are rather irreconcilable with that view. The whole narrative, 2 Chronicles 29 and 30, gives us the impression that Hezekiah had not formed the resolution to hold a passover to which the whole of Israel and Judah, all the Israelites of the ten tribes as well as the citizens of his kingdom, should be invited before or during the purification of the temple; at least he did not consult with his princes and the heads of Jerusalem at that time. According to 29:20, the king assembled the princes of the city only after the report had been made to him, on the completion of the purification of the temple on the sixteenth day of the first month, when he summoned them to the dedication of the purified temple by solemn sacrifice. But this consecratory solemnity occupied several days. The great number of burnt-offerings,—first seven bullocks, seven rams, and seven lambs, besides the sin-offering for the consecration of the temple (2 Chronicles 29:21); then, after the completion of these, the voluntary burnt-offering of the congregation, consisting of 70 bullocks, 100 rams, and 200 lambs, together with and exclusive of the thank-offerings (2 Chronicles 29:32),—could not possibly be burnt on *one* day on *one* altar of burnt-offering, and consequently the sacrificial meal could not well be held on the same day. If, then, the king consulted with the princes and the assembly about the passover after the conclusion of or during celebration,—say in the time between the seventeenth and the twentieth day,—it could not be said that the reason of the postponement of the passover

was that the priests had not yet sufficiently sanctified themselves, and the people were not assembled in Jerusalem: it would only have been said that the fourteenth day of the first month was already past. Caspari has therefore rightly regarded this as decisive. But besides that, the invitation to all Israel (of the ten tribes) to this passover is more easily explained, if the celebration of it took place after the breaking up of the kingdom of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, than if it was before that catastrophe, in the time of Hosea, the last king of that kingdom. Though King Hosea may not have been so evil as some of his predecessors, yet it is said of him also, "he did that which was evil in the sight of Jahve" (2 Kings 17:2). Would Hezekiah have ventured, so long as Hosea reigned, to invite his subjects to a passover at Jerusalem? and would Hosea have permitted the invitation, and not rather have repelled it as an interference with his kingdom? Further, in the invitation, the captivity of the greater part of the ten tribes is far too strongly presupposed to allow us to imagine that the captivity there referred to is the carrying away of several tribes by Tiglath-pileser. The words, "the escaped who are left to you from the hand of the king of Assyria" (v. 6), presuppose more than the captivity of the two and a half trans-Jordanic tribes and the Naphtalites; not merely because of the plural, the "kings of Assur," but also because the remaining five and a half tribes were not at all affected by Tiglath-pileser's deportation, while there is no mention made of any being carried away by King Pul, nor is it a probable thing in itself; see on 1 Chronicles 5:26. Finally, according to 2 Chronicles 31:1, the Israelites who had been assembled in Jerusalem for the passover immediately afterwards destroyed the pillars, Astartes, high places, and altars, not merely in all Judah and Benjamin, but also in Ephraim and Manasseh (consequently even in the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes), "unto completion," i.e., completely, leaving nothing of them remaining. Is it likely that King Hosea, and the other inhabitants of the kingdom of the ten tribes who had not gone to the passover, but

had laughed at and mocked the messengers of Hezekiah (v. 10), would have quietly looked on and permitted this? All these things are incomprehensible if the passover was held in the first year of Hezekiah, and make it impossible to accept that view.

Moreover, even the preparation for this passover demanded more time than from the seventeenth day of the first month to the fourteenth day of the second. The calling of the whole people together, "from Dan to Beersheba" (v. 5), could not be accomplished in three weeks. Even if Hezekiah's messengers may have gone throughout the land and returned home again in that time, we yet cannot suppose that those invited, especially those of the ten tribes, could at once commence their journey, so as to appear in Jerusalem at the time of the feast. In consequence of all these things, we must still remain stedfastly of the opinion already expressed in this volume in the *Commentary on the Books of Kings* (p. 306ff.), that this passover was not held in the first year of Hezekiah, only a week or two after the restoration of the Jahve-worship according to the law had been celebrated. But if it was not held in the first year, then it cannot have been held before the ruin of the kingdom of the ten tribes, in the sixth year of Hezekiah. In the third year of Hezekiah, Shalmaneser marched upon Samaria, and besieged the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes. But during the occupation of that kingdom by the Assyrians, Hezekiah could not think of inviting its inhabitants to a passover in Jerusalem. He can have resolved upon that only after the Assyrians had again left the country, Samaria having been conquered, and the Israelites carried away. "But after an end had been thoroughly made of the kingdom of the house of Israel, Hezekiah might regard himself as the king of all Israel, and in this character might invite the remnant of the ten tribes, as his subjects, to the passover (cf. Jer. 40:1); and he might cherish the hope, as the Israelitish people had been just smitten down by this last frightful catastrophe, that its remaining members would humble themselves under the mighty hand of

God, which had been laid on them solemnly, and turning to Him, would comply with the invitation; while before the ruin of the Israelitish kingdom, in inviting the Israelites of the ten tribes, he would have been addressing the subjects of a foreign king" (Caspari, S. 125). And with this view, the statement, 30:10, that the messengers of Hezekiah were laughed at by the majority of the Israelites, in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh unto Zebulun, may be easily reconciled. "If we only look," as Caspari pertinently says in answer to this objection, "at the conduct of those who remained in Judea after the destruction of Jerusalem, and who soon afterwards fled to Egypt to Jeremiah (Jer. 42:44), we will understand how the majority of the people of the kingdom of the ten tribes, who remained behind after the deportation by Shalmaneser, could be hardened and blinded enough to laugh at and mock the messengers of Hezekiah."

But if Hezekiah formed the resolution of holding such a passover festival only after the destruction of the kingdom of Israel, it may perhaps be asked why he did not take the matter into consideration early enough to allow of the festival being held at the legal time, i.e., in the first month? To this we certainly cannot give an assured answer, because, from the reasons given for the delay of the passover to the second month (v. 3), we can only gather that, when the king consulted with the princes in the matter, there was no longer sufficient time to carry out the celebration in the manner proposed at the legal time. But it is quite possible that Hezekiah resolved to invite the remnant of the ten tribes to the next passover, only in the beginning of the year, when the Assyrians had withdrawn from the land, and that in the consultation about the matter the two circumstances mentioned in v. 3 were decisive for the postponement of the feast to the second month. It became clear, on the one hand, that the whole priesthood was not yet sufficiently prepared for it; and on the other, that the summoning of the people could not be accomplished before the 14th Nisan, so as to allow of the feast being held in the way

proposed at the legal time; and accordingly it was decided, in order to avoid the postponement of the matter for a whole year, to take advantage of the expedient suggested by the law, and to hold the feast in the second month. From v. 14 and 2 Chronicles 31:1 we gather that at that time there were still standing in Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah and Benjamin, Mazzeboth, Asherim, Bamoth, and altars; consequently, that the Baal-worship had not yet been extirpated. The continuance of the Baal-worship, and that on the high places in Jerusalem and Judah, until the sixth or seventh year of Hezekiah's reign, will not much astonish us, if we consider that even before Ahaz the most pious kings had not succeeded in quite suppressing worship on the high places on the part of the people. The reopening of the temple, and of the Jahve-worship in it, Hezekiah might undertake and carry out in the beginning of his reign, because he had all those of the people who were well inclined upon his side. But it was otherwise with the altars on the high places, to which the people from ancient times had been firmly attached. These could not be immediately destroyed, and may have been again restored here and there after they had been destroyed, even in the corners of the capital. Many Levitic priests had, to a certainty, taken part in this worship on high places, since, as a rule, it was not heathen idols, but Jahve, to whom sacrifice was offered upon the high places, though it was done in an illegal way. Such Levitic priests of the high places could not, even if they had not practised idolatry, straightway take part in a passover to be celebrated to Jahve according to the precepts of the law. They must first sanctify themselves by abandoning the worship on the high places, and earnestly turning to the Lord and to His law. Now, if the passover was to be a general one, the time necessary for this sanctification of themselves must be granted to these priests. For the sanctification of these priests, and for the invitation of all Israel to the festival, the time up to the fourteenth of the second month was sufficient, and the king's proposal was

consequently approved of by the whole assembly.

2 Chronicles 30:5. They established the matter (יַעֲמִידוּ דְבָר, Vulg. rightly, according to the sense, *decreverunt*), to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan (cf. Judg. 20:1), that they should come to keep the passover. כִּי לֹא לָרֹב, for not in multitude had they celebrated it, as it is written. These words were interpreted as early as by Rashi thus: they had not celebrated it for a long time according to the precepts of the law, and were referred to the time of the division of the kingdom. But to this Berth. has rightly objected that the use of לָרֹב of time is unusual, and has correctly referred the words to the Israelites: they had not celebrated it in multitude, i.e., in the assembly of the whole people, as the law required. The words consequently tell us nothing as to the length of time during which it had not been celebrated in multitude: as to that, see v. 26. Still less does it follow from the words that under Hezekiah, after the restoration of the temple worship, the passover had not been yearly held.

2 Chronicles 30:6. "The runners (whether soldiers of the royal body-guard, cf. 12:10, or other royal couriers, as Esth. 3:13, 15, cannot be determined) went with letters from the hand of the king, ... and according to the commandment of the king to say." Tot he written invitation of the king and his princes they were to add words of exhortation: "Turn again to Jahve, ... that He may return (turn Himself) to the remnant which remains to you from the hand of the kings of Assyria," i.e., of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser.

2 Chronicles 30:7. Be not like your fathers, your brethren, i.e., those carried away by Tiglath and Shalmaneser. On יִתְּנֶם לְשָׂמָה cf. 29:8.

2 Chronicles 30:8. Be not stiff-necked; cf. 2 Kings 17:14. "Give the hand to the Lord," i.e., here, not submit yourselves, as 1 Chronicles 29:24, construed with תָּחַת; it denotes the

giving of the hand as a pledge of fidelity, as in 2 Kings 10:15, Ezra 10:19, Ezek. 17:18.

2 Chronicles 30:9. If ye return to the Lord, your brethren and your sons (who are in exile) shall be for mercy, i.e., shall find mercy of them who carried them away, and for returning, i.e., and they shall return into this land. כִּי יָחֲזֹק וְגַי. Ex. 34:6.

2 Chronicles 30:10. The couriers went about from city to city in the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, even unto Zebulun; but the people laughed to scorn and mocked at the summons to return, and the invitation to the passover festival. The words "from city to city" are not inconsistent with the view that the kingdom of Israel had already been ruined. The Assyrians had not blotted out all the cities from the face of the land, nor carried away every one of the inhabitants to the last man, but had been satisfied with the capture of the fortresses and their partial or complete demolition, and carried only the flower of the inhabitants away. No doubt also many had saved themselves from deportation by flight to inaccessible places, who then settled again and built in the cities and villages which had not been completely destroyed, or perhaps had been completely spared, after the enemy had withdrawn. From the statement, moreover, that the couriers passed through the land of Ephraim and Manasseh unto Zebulun, no proof can be derived that the messengers did not touch upon the domain of the tribes led away captive by Tiglath-pileser (Naphtali and the trans-Jordanic land), but only visited those districts of the country which formed the kingdom of Israel as it continued to exist after Tiglath-pileser. If that were so, it would follow that the kingdom had not then been destroyed. But the enumeration is not complete, as is manifest from the fact that, according to vv. 11 and 18, men of the tribes of Asher and Issachar came to Jerusalem in compliance with the invitation; and the domain of Asher extended to the northern frontier of Canaan. If we further take it into consideration, that, according to the resolution of the king and his princes, all Israel, from

Beersheba on the southern frontier to Dan on the northern, were to be invited, it is not to be doubted that the couriers went through the whole land.

2 Chronicles 30:12. Also upon Judah came the hand of God, to give them one heart, to do ...

The phrase *יְד יְהוָה הֵיטָה בָּ* has usually a punitive signification (cf. Ex. 9:3; Deut. 2:15, etc.), but here it is the helping hand of God. God wrought powerfully upon Judah to make them of one mind. *בְּדַבַּר יְהוָה* as in 29:15.

2 Chronicles 30:13–22. *The celebration of the passover.*—V. 13. The assembly of the people at Jerusalem to celebrate the feast became a great congregation.

2 Chronicles 30:14. Before the slaying of the passover, in order to purify and sanctify the city for the feast, they removed the (illegal) altars and places for offering incense which had been erected under Ahaz (2 Chronicles 28:24), and threw them into the Kidron (2 Chronicles 29:16). *מְקוֹטְרוֹת* is here a substantive: places for incense-offerings (cf. Ew. § 160, e), and denotes altars intended for the offering of the *קֹטֶרֶת*.

2 Chronicles 30:15. When they slaughtered the passover on the 14th, the Levites and priests also were ashamed, i.e., had sanctified themselves under the influence of a feeling of shame, and offered the sacrifice in the house of the Lord; i.e., they performed the sacrificial functions incumbent upon them at the passover in the temple, as is stated more in detail in v. 16. The clause *וְהַכֹּהֲנִים וְגו'* is a circumstantial clause, and the statement points back to v. 3. The mention of Levites along with the priests here is worthy of remark, since in 29:34 it is said that at the celebration of the dedication of the temple the Levites had sanctified themselves more zealously than the priests. But these two statements do not contradict each other. In 2 Chronicles 29:34 it is the Levites and priests then present in or dwelling in Jerusalem who are spoken of; here, on the contrary, it is the priests and the Levites of the whole kingdom of Judah. Even though, at the former period, the

Levites were more zealous in sanctifying themselves for the dedication of the temple, yet there must certainly have been many Levites in Judah, who, like many of the priests, did not immediately purify themselves from their defilement by the worship in the high places, and were only impelled and driven to sanctify themselves for the service of the Lord by the Zeal of the people who had come to Jerusalem to hold the passover.

2 Chronicles 30:16. Standing in their place, according to their right, i.e., according to the prescribed arrangement (see on 1 Chronicles 6:17), the priests sprinkled the blood (of the paschal lambs) from the hand of the Levites, they handing it to them. This was not the rule: in the case of the paschal lamb, the father of the family who slew the lamb had to hand the blood to the priest, that it might be sprinkled upon the altar; here the Levites did it for the reasons given in v. 17. Because many in the assembly had not sanctified themselves, the Levites presided over the slaying of the paschal lambs for every one who was unclean, to sanctify (the lambs) to the Lord (see also on 35:6, 11). *רֵבֶת*, *stat. constr.* before the noun with a preposition, stands as neuter substantively: there was a multitude in the assembly who ... *רֵבֶת* in v. 18 is to be taken in a similar manner, not as an adverb (Berth.). *רֵבֶת מְאֹפְרִים וְגו'* is in apposition to *מִרְבֵּית הָעָם*, a multitude of people, viz.: Many of Ephraim ... had not purified themselves, but ate the passover in an illegal fashion, not according to the precept (cf. Num. 9:6). This clause explains how it happened that the Levites presided at the slaying of the passover for those who had not sanctified themselves, i.e., they caught the blood and gave it to the priests. Had this been done by persons leuitically unclean, the expiatory sacrificial blood would have been defiled. The eating of the paschal lamb or the participation in the passover meal was indeed allowed only to the clean; but yet it was not so holy an act, i.e., did not bring the people into such immediate contact with God, who was present at His altar,

that those who were not clean might not, under some circumstances, be admitted to it. Here it was allowed, for Hezekiah had prayed for them that God might forgive the transgression of the law.

2 Chronicles 30:18. V. 18 ends, according to the Masoretic verse-division, with the preposition **בְּעַד**; but that division seems merely to have arisen from ignorance of the construction **הַכִּין לְבָבוֹ הַכִּין אֲשֶׁר**, of the fact that **בְּעַד** stands before a relative sentence without **אֲשֶׁר**, like **אֵל** in 1 Chronicles 15:12, and is certainly wrong. If we separate **בְּעַד** from what follows, we must, with Aben Ezra, supply **אֵלָהּ**, and make **הַכִּין** (v. 19) refer to Hezekiah, both being equally inadmissible. Rightly, therefore, the LXX, Vulg., and also Kimchi, with the majority of commentators, have given up this division of the verses as incorrect, and connected the words in this way: May the good Jahve atone, i.e., forgive every one who has fixed his heart (cf. 12:14) to seek God, Jahve, the God of his fathers, but not in accordance with the purity of the sanctuary. This intercession of Hezekiah's is worthy of remark, not only because it expresses the conviction that upright seeking of the Lord, which proceeds from the heart, is to be more highly estimated than strict observance of the letter of the law, but also because Hezekiah presumes that those who had come out of Ephraim, etc., to the passover had fixed their heart to seek Jahve, the God of their fathers, but had not been in a position to comply with the precept of the law, i.e., to purify themselves up to the day appointed for the passover.

2 Chronicles 30:20. God heard this intercession, and healed the people. **רָפָא**, *sanare*, is not to be explained by supposing, with Bertheau, that first sickness, and then even death, were to be expected as the results of transgression of the law, according to Lev. 15:31, and that the people might be already regarded as sick, as being on the point of becoming so. The use of the word is explained by the fact that sin was regarded as a spiritual

disease, so that **רָפָא** is to be understood of healing the soul (as Ps. 41:5), or the transgression (Hos. 14:5; Jer. 3:22).

2 Chronicles 30:21. And the Israelites that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness; and the Levites and priests praised the Lord day by day, singing to the Lord **בְּכָל יוֹם**, "with instruments of power to the Lord," i.e., with which they ascribed power to the Lord; or, to express it more clearly, which they played to the praise of the power of the Lord. The stringed instruments played by the Levites, and the trumpets blown by the priests, to accompany the psalm-singing, are meant. The singing of praise in connection with the sacrificial service took place on the seventh day of the feast.

2 Chronicles 30:22. Hezekiah spoke to the heart of all the Levites, i.e., spoke encouraging words of acknowledgment to all the Levites, "who showed good understanding in regard to Jahve," i.e., not *qui erant rerum divinarum peritiores aliosque instruere poterant*, but, as Clericus has already said, those who had distinguished themselves by intelligent playing to the honour of the Lord. "And they ate"—not merely the Levites and priests, but all who took part in the festival—the festal sacrifices, seven days. The expression **אָכַל אֶת-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ**, to hold the festal sacrificial meal, is formed after **אָכַל אֶת-הַפֶּסַח**, to eat the passover = the passover meal. This we gather from the following participial clause, "offering peace-offerings," of which the sacrificial meals were prepared. **וַיִּמְתְּנֵם**, and acknowledged the Lord, the God of their fathers. **הִתְנַדְּדָה** denotes here neither "to make confession of sin," nor "to approach with thank-offerings" (Berth.), but simply to acknowledge the Lord with heart and mouth, word and deed, or by prayer, praise, thanks, and offering of sacrifice.

2 Chronicles 30:23–27. *Prolongation of the festival for seven days more, and the conclusion of it.*—V. 23f. Since the king and the princes had

given a very large number of beasts for sacrifice as thank-offerings, it was resolved to keep joy for other seven days, i.e., to keep them festally, with sacrificial meals. The expression עָשָׂה יָמִים, to hold or celebrate days, is similar to עָשָׂה פֶּסַח, to hold the passover. שִׂמְחָה is an adverbial accusative: in joy. For this resolution two reasons are given in v. 24: 1. Hezekiah had given to the assembly 1000 bullocks and 7000 head of small cattle, and the princes had given 1000 bullocks and 10,000 head of small cattle besides; so that there was more than they could use during the seven days of the Mazzoth feast. Bertheau incorrectly supposes that these were "rich gifts for further sacrificial feasts." The gifts were bestowed for the Mazzoth festival, but were so plentiful that they sufficed for another festival of seven days. הָרִים, like תָּרוּמָה, denotes to bestow, i.e., to present beasts, etc., with the design that they should be used as sacrifices; cf. 35:7. 2. The second reason: "priests also had sanctified themselves in multitude," so as to be able to carry on the service at the altar, even with such numerous sacrifices, refers back to vv. 15 and 3.

2 Chronicles 30:25–27. Concluding remarks on this festival. There took part in it (1) the whole congregation of Judah, and the priests and Levites; (2) the whole congregation of those who had come out of Israel (the ten tribes); (3) the strangers, both those who came out of the land of Israel and those dwelling in Judah.

2 Chronicles 30:26. The joy was great, for there had not been the like in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon. The meaning is, that this feast could be compared only with the feast at the dedication of the temple in the time of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 7:1–10, in respect to its length, the richness of the sacrificial gifts, the multitude of those who participated, and the joyous feeling it caused" (Berth.). The feast at the dedication of the temple had been a festival of fourteen days; for the feast of tabernacles, which lasted seven days, came immediately after the proper dedicatory feast, and since the

time of Solomon all the tribes had never been united at a feast in Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 30:27. At the end of the Levitic priests dismissed the people with the blessing (the ׀ before הַלְלוּ in some MSS, and which the LXX, Vulg., and Syr. also have, is a copyist's gloss brought from v. 25; cf. against it, 2 Chronicles 23:18), and the historian adds, "Their voice was heard, and their prayer came to His holy dwelling-place, to heaven." This conclusion he draws from the divine blessing having been upon the festival; traceable partly in the zeal which the people afterwards showed for the public worship in the temple (2 Chronicles 31), partly in the deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem from the attack of the Assyrian Sennacherib (2 Chronicles 32).

2 Chronicles 31

2 Chronicles 31. *Destruction of the idols and the altars of the high places. Provisions for the ordering and maintenance of the temple worship, and the attendants upon it.*—V. 1. At the conclusion of the festival, all the Israelites who had been present at the feast (כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצְאִים to be understood as in 30:21) went into the cities of Judah, and destroyed all the idols, high places, and altars not only in Judah and Benjamin (the southern kingdom), but also in Ephraim and Manasseh (the domain of the ten tribes), utterly (עַד־לְכַלֵּה, cf. 24:10), and only then returned each to his home; cf. 2 Kings 18:4.

2 Chronicles 31:2–21. *Restoration of order in the public worship, and of the temple revenues and those of the priests.*—V. 2. Hezekiah appointed the courses of the priests and Levites according to their courses, each according to the measure of his service (cf. Num. 7:5, 7), viz., the priests and Levites (לְכָהוֹן וְלֵוִי are subordinated to אִישׁ in apposition by לְ), for burnt-offerings and thank-offerings, to serve (to wait upon the worship), and to praise and thank (by song and instrumental music) in the gates of the camp of Jahve, i.e., in the temple

and court of the priests; see on 1 Chronicles 9:18f.

2 Chronicles 31:3. And the portion of the king from his possession was for the burnt-offerings, etc.; that is, the material for the burnt-offerings which are commanded in Num. 28 and 29 the king gave from his possessions, which are enumerated in 2 Chronicles 32:27–29.

2 Chronicles 31:4–8. The priests and Levites received their maintenance from the first-fruits (Ex. 23:19; Num. 18:12; Deut. 26:2) and the tithes, which the people had to pay from the produce of their cattle-breeding and their agriculture (Lev. 27:30–33, cf. with Num. 18:21–24). Hezekiah commanded the people, viz., the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to give this portion to the Levites and priests, that they might hold themselves firmly to the law of Jahve, i.e., might devote themselves to the duties laid upon them by the law, the attendance upon the worship, without being compelled to labour for their subsistence; cf. Neh. 13:10ff.

2 Chronicles 31:5. When the word (the royal command) went forth (spread abroad), the Israelites brought in abundance the first-fruits which had been assigned to the priests (2 Chronicles 18:12f.), and the tithes, which were paid to the whole tribe of Levi (Num. 18:21–24). בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, v. 6, are not the inhabitants of the northern kingdom, but the Israelites who had emigrated from that kingdom into Judah (as 30:25; 11:16; 10:17). מַעֲשֵׂר קֳדָשִׁים, the tenth from the holy gifts which were consecrated to Jahve, is surprising, since in the law, Num. 18:8ff., it is not the tenth of the consecrated gifts which is spoken of, but only תְּרוּמוֹת הַקֳּדָשִׁים (Num. 18:19). Proceeding upon the assumption that all קֳדָשִׁים which were consecrated to Jahve were given over to the tribe of Levi, Bertheau finds no correspondence between the law and the statement of our verse, that the tenth of the holy things was given, and points out that the LXX seem to have read וְהִקְשִׁים instead of מַעֲשֵׂר קֳדָשִׁים, without, however, himself deciding

in favour of that reading. But the LXX have rendered the words קֳדָשִׁים הַמִּקְדָּשִׁים by ἐπιδέκατα αἰγῶν καὶ ἡγίασαν, and consequently cannot have read וְהִקְשִׁים for מַעֲשֵׂר, since in their translation ἐπιδέκατα corresponds to מַעֲשֵׂר. But the deviation of the statement in our verse from the law, Num. 18, arises partly from an incorrect or inexact interpretation of the provisions of the law, Num. 18:8ff. In the law, קֳדָשִׁים as such were not assigned to the tribe of Levi, or more correctly to the priests (Aaron and his sons), but only the תְּרוּמוֹת לְכָל-קֳדָשִׁים, the heave-offerings of all the holy gifts of the sons of Israel, i.e., the pieces or parts of the sacrificial gifts of the Israelites which were not burnt upon the altar, consequently the greater part of the meal, and oil, and flesh of the oblations, the sin-offerings, the trespass-offerings, and of the peace-offerings, the wave-breast and wave-thigh, and whatever else was waved in wave-offerings; see on Num. 18:8ff. These Therumoth of the consecrated gifts are in our verse designated מַעֲשֵׂר קֳדָשִׁים, because they were only a fragment of that which was consecrated to the Lord, just as the tenth was a fragment of the whole herd, and of the field produce. The statement of our verse, therefore, differs only in expression from the prescription of the law, but in substance it completely agrees with it. וַיִּתְּנוּ עֵרְמוֹת עֵרְ, and they made many heaps, i.e., they brought the first-fruits and tithes in heaps.

2 Chronicles 31:7. In the third month, consequently immediately at the end of the grain harvest, they commenced to found the heaps (to lay the foundation of the heaps); and in the seventh month, i.e., at the end of the fruit and wine harvest, they completed them (the heaps). In the third month fell pentecost, or the harvest feast; in the seventh, the feast of tabernacles, after the gathering in of all the fruits. לִיסוֹד has Daghesh in ס, because this verb in the imperf. assimilates its י like ך to the second radical, and the infinitive is formed after the imperf.; cf. Ew. § 245, a.

2 Chronicles 31:8. When Hezekiah and the priests saw these heaps, they praised the Lord and His people Israel.

The employment and storing of these gifts, vv. 9–19.—V. 9f. Hezekiah questioned (יִדְרֹשׁ) the priests and Levites concerning the heaps, i.e., not as to whether they were sufficient for the support of the priests and Levites, but as to how it happened that such masses had been heaped up. Thereupon Azariah the high priest (hardly the Azariah mentioned 26:17, who forty years before tried to prevent Uzziah from pressing into the holy place), of the house of Zadok, answered him: Since they began to bring (לְבִיאִים) for (לְהֵבִיא) the heave-offerings into the house of the Lord, we have eaten and satisfied ourselves, and have left in plenty. The *infin. absol.* אָבוּל stand in animated speech instead of the first pers. plur. perf. From the same animation arises the construction of אֶת־הַהֶמְכֹּחַ with הַנּוֹתָר; for “that which is left” signifies, and we have left this quantity here.

2 Chronicles 31:11f. Then the king commanded to prepare cells in the house of God for the storing of the provisions. Whether new cells were built, or cells already existing were prepared for this purpose, cannot be decided, since הֵכֵן may signify either. Into these cells they brought the תְּרוּמָה, which here denotes the first-fruits (cf. v. 5), the tithes, and the dedicated things, בְּאֵמֻנָה, with fidelity, cf. 19:9. עָלֵיהֶם, over them (the first-fruits, etc.) the Levite Cononiah was set as ruler (inspector), and his brother Shimei as second ruler (מִשְׁנָה).

2 Chronicles 31:13. To them at their hand, i.e., as subordinate overseers, were given ten Levites, who are enumerated by name. Of the names, Jehiel and Mahath occur in 29:12 and 14. בְּמִפְקֵד is translated by the Vulg. *ex imperio*, better *ex mandato Hizkiae*. Azariah, the prince of the house of God, is the high priest mentioned in v. 10.—To the fourteen Levites named in vv. 13 and 14 was committed the

oversight and storing of the first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts. Besides these, there were special officers appointed for the distribution of them.—In vv. 14–19 these are treated of; v. 14 dealing with the distribution of the voluntary gifts of God, i.e., all which was offered to God of spontaneous impulse (Lev. 23:38; Deut. 12:17), to which the first-fruits and tithes did not belong, they being assessments prescribed by the law. Over the freewill offerings the Levite Kore, the doorkeeper towards the east (see on 1 Chronicles 9:18), was set. His duty was to give (distribute) “the heave-offerings of Jahve,” i.e., that portion of the thank-offerings which properly belonged to Jahve, and which was transferred by Him to the priests (Lev. 7:14; 32:10, 14f.; Num. 5:9), and the “most holy,” i.e., that part of the sin and trespass offerings (Lev. 6:10, 22; 7:6) and of the oblations (Lev. 2:3, 10) which was to be eaten by the priests in the holy place.

2 Chronicles 31:15. At his hand (מִיַּד = על יָדוֹ, v. 13), i.e., under his superintendence, there were six Levites, enumerated by name, in the priests’ cities, with fidelity, “to give to their brethren in their courses, as well to the great as to the small” (i.e., to the older and to the younger), sc. the portion of the gifts received which fell to each. By the brethren in their courses we are to understand not merely the Levites dwelling in the priests’ cities, who on account of their youth or old age could not come into the temple, but also those who at the time were not on duty, since the Levites’ courses performed it by turns, only some courses being on duty in the temple, while the others were at home in the priests’ cities. The object to לָתֵת, v. 15, is not to be taken straightway from the objects mentioned with לָתֵת in v. 14. For the most holy gifts could not be sent to the priests’ cities, but were consumed in the holy place, i.e., in the temple. Nor can we confine לָתֵת to the נְדָבוֹת הָאֱלֹהִים; for since the gifts of the people, laid up in the cells, consisted in first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts (v. 11), and special officers were appointed for the storing and distribution of them, the business of

distribution could not consist merely in the giving out of freewill offerings, but must have extended to all the offerings of the people. When, therefore, it is said of the Levite Kore, in v. 14, that he was appointed over the freewill offerings, to distribute the heave-offerings and the most holy, only his chief function is there mentioned, and the functions of the officials associated with and subordinated to him in the priests' cities are not to be confined to that. The object to לָחַט, v. 15, is consequently to be determined by the whole context, and the arrangements which are assumed as known from the law; i.e., we must embrace under that word the distribution of the first-fruits, tithes, and consecrated gifts, of which the Levites in the priests' cities were to receive their portion according to the law.—In v. 16, the אֲחֵיהֶם בְּמִקְלָקוֹת of v. 15 is more closely defined by an exception: "Besides their catalogue of the men (i.e., exclusive of those of the male sex catalogued by them) from three years old and upward, namely, of all those who came into the house of Jahve to the daily portion, for their service in their offices according to their courses." דְּבָרֵי-יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ signifies, in this connection, the portion of the holy gifts coming to them for every day; cf. Neh. 11:23. The meaning of the verse is: From those dwelling in the priests' cities were excluded those who had come to perform service in the temple; and, indeed, not merely those performing the service, but also their male children, who were catalogued along with them if they were three years old and upward. Thence it is clear that those entering upon their service took their sons with them when they were three years old. These children ate in the place of the sanctuary of the portion coming to their parents.

2 Chronicles 31:17. V. 17 contains a parenthetic remark as to the catalogues. וְאֵת, as *nota accus.*, serves here to emphasize the statement which is added as an elucidation (cf. Ew. § 277, d): "But concerning the catalogue of the priests, it was (taken, prepared) according to the fathers'-houses; and the Levites, they

were from twenty years old and upwards in their offices in their courses." All the duties were discharged by several courses. On the age fixed on, see 1 Chronicles 23:27.

2 Chronicles 31:18. The connection and interpretation of this verse is doubtful. If we take וְלִהְיִיחַשׁ as a continuation of וְאֵת־הַתִּיחַשׁ, v. 17, it gives us no suitable sense. The addition, "and also to every priest and Levite was a larger or smaller portion given according to the catalogue" (Ramb., etc.), is arbitrary, and does not fully express the אֶת־כָּל־טַפָּם before בְּרִיחַשׁ. Berth., on the other hand, correctly remarks, "After the parentheses in vv. 16 and 17, וְלִהְיִיחַשׁ may be taken as a continuation of לָחַט in v. 16;" but the word itself he translates wrongly thus: The men were in the priests' cities, also to register their children, etc., disregarding the construction of וְלִהְיִיחַשׁ with אֶת. —From v. 19, where the same construction recurs, we learn how to interpret הַתִּיחַשׁ בְּכָל־ט': the catalogue = those registered in (of) all their children. According to this view, וְלִהְיִיחַשׁ corresponds to the לְאֲחֵיהֶם, v. 15: to give to their brethren, ... and to the registered of all their children, their wives, and their sons and daughters, viz., to the whole multitude (sc., of the wives, sons, and daughters), i.e., as many of them as there were. This interpretation of the לְכָל־קֶהֱלָא seems simpler than with Schmidt and Ramb. to understand קֶהֱלָא to denote the coroporation of priests. There was therefore no one forgotten or overlooked; "for according to their fidelity (v. 15) did they show themselves holy in regard to the holy," i.e., they acted in a holy manner with the holy gifts, distributed them disinterestedly and impartially to all who had any claim to them.

2 Chronicles 31:19. And for the sons of Aaron, the priests, in the field of the districts of their cities (cf. Lev. 25:34; Num. 35:5), in each city were men (appointed) famous (בְּשִׂמּוֹת) אֲשֶׁר נִקְבוּ, as in 28:15; see on 1 Chronicles 12:31), to give portions to each male among the priests, and to all that were registered among the Levites. As

for the inhabitants of the priests' cities (v. 15), so also for the priests and Levites dwelling in the pasture grounds of the priests' cities, were special officers appointed to distribute the priestly revenues.

2 Chronicles 31:20, 21. The conclusion of this account. Thus did Hezekiah in all Judah, and wrought in general that which was good and right and *הִצְדִּיק* before the Lord his God; and in every work that he commenced for the service of the house of God, and for the law and the commandment (i.e., for the restoration of the law and its commands), to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

2 Chronicles 32

2 Chronicles 32. *Sennacherib's campaign against Judah and Israel: Hezekiah's sickness, the remainder of his reign, and his death.* Cf. 2 Kings 18:13–20:21, and Isa. 36–39.

2 Chronicles 32:1–13. Sennacherib's campaign against Judah and Jerusalem, and the annihilation of his whole army by the angel of the Lord. In 2 Kings 18 and 19, and Isa. 36 and 37, we have two minute parallel accounts of this war, which threatened the existence of the kingdom of Judah, in both of which the course of this attack by the Assyrian world-power upon the kingdom of God is circumstantially narrated. The author of the Chronicle gives only a short narrative of the main events of the struggle; but, notwithstanding its brevity, supplies us with several not unessential additions to these detailed accounts. After stating that Sennacherib invaded Judah with the design of conquering the kingdom for himself (v. 1), the author of the Chronicle described the preparations which Hezekiah made for the defence of the capital in case it should be besieged (vv. 2–8). Then we have an account of Sennacherib's attempts to get Jerusalem into his power, by sending his generals, who sought to induce the people to submit by boastful speeches, and by writing threatening letters to Hezekiah (vv. 9–19); and, finally, of Hezekiah's prayer to God for help, and the answer to his prayer—the wonderful

annihilation of the Assyrian army (vv. 20–23). The purpose of the chronicler in narrating these events was a didactic one: he wishes to show how God the Lord helped the pious King Hezekiah in this danger to his kingdom, and humbled the presumption of Sennacherib confiding in the might of his powerful army. For this purpose, a brief rhetorical summary of the main events of the struggle and its issues was sufficient. As to the facts, see the commentary on 2 Kings 18f. and Isa. 36f.

2 Chronicles 32:1. The didactic and rhetorical character of the narrative is manifest in the very form of the introductory statement. Instead of the chronological statement of 2 Kings 18:13, we find the loose formula of connection: *AFTER* these events and this fidelity (cf. 31:20), Sennacherib came (*בָּא*) and entered into Judah (*וַיָּבֹא בִיהוּדָה*), and besieged the fenced cities, and thought (*וַיֵּאמֶר*) to break (conquer) them for himself. He had already taken a number of them, and had advanced as far as Lachish in the south-west of Judah, when he made the attempt to get Jerusalem into his power; cf. 2 Kings 18:13f.

2 Chronicles 32:2–8. *Preparations of Hezekiah for the strengthening and defending of Jerusalem.*—We find an account of this neither in 2 Kings 18 nor in Isa. 36; but the fact is confirmed both by Isa. 22:8–11, and by the remark 2 Kings 20:20 (cf. v. 30 of our chapter).

2 Chronicles 32:2ff. When Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib advanced, and his face was to war against Jerusalem, i.e., that he purposed to capture Jerusalem, he consulted with his princes and his valiant men to cover the waters of the springs which were outside the city; and they helped him, brought much people together, and covered all the springs, and the brook which ran through the midst of the land. *סָתַם* does not denote to obstruct, but only to hide by covering and conducting the water into subterranean channels. The brook which flowed through the midst of the land is the Gihon, which was formed by the waters flowing from the springs, and was dried up by these

springs being covered and the water diverted. For further information, see on v. 30. The object of this measure is stated in the words which follow: Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water? i.e., why should we provide them with much water, when they advance against the city and besiege it? The plural, kings of Assyria, is rhetorical, as in 28:16.

2 Chronicles 32:5. The fortification of Jerusalem. יָהֲחַזֵּק, he showed himself strong, courageous, as in 15:8; 23:1. And he built the whole wall which was broken, i.e., he strengthened it by building up the breaches and defective places; cf. Isa. 22:9f. The words וַיַּעַל עַל־הַמְּגִדֹּלוֹת are obscure, since the translation “he mounted on the towers” has no meaning. But if וַיַּעַל be taken as a Hiph., “he caused to ascend upon the towers,” the object is wanting; and if we supply walls, it is arbitrary, for we might just as well suppose it to be machines which he caused to be carried to the top of the towers for defence against the enemy (2 Chronicles 26:15). The LXX have wholly omitted the words, and the translation of the Vulg., *et extruxit turres desuper*, appears to be only a guess, but is yet perhaps correct, and presupposes the reading וַיַּעַל עָלֶיהָ מְגִדֹּלוֹת, “and brought up upon it towers,” in favour of which Ewald also decides. This conjecture is in any case simpler than Bertheau’s, that וַיַּעַל עַל is a false transcription of וַיַּעַלֶּיהָ: “he built the whole wall, and towers upon it, and outside was the other wall,” and is therefore to be preferred to it. The “other wall” enclosed the lower city (Acra). This, too, was not first built by Hezekiah; he only fortified it anew, for Isa. 22:11 already speaks of two walls, between which a body of water had been introduced: see on v. 30. He fortified also the Millo of the city of David (see on 1 Chronicles 11:8), and supplied the fortifications with weapons (שָׁלַח, a weapon of defence; see on Joel 2:8) in multitude, and with shields; cf. 26:14.

2 Chronicles 32:6. And, moreover, he set captains of war over the people, i.e., the populace of Jerusalem, assembled them in the open space at the city gate (which gate is not stated; cf. Neh. 8:1, 16), and addressed them in encouraging words; cf. 30:22. On v. 7a, cf. 20:15, Deut. 31:6, etc. “For with us is more than with him.” רַב, quite general, the closer definition following in v. 8: “With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is Jahve, our God, to help us.” An arm of flesh = frail human power; cf. Isa. 21:3: their (the Egyptians’) horses are flesh, not spirit; Jer. 17:5, Ps. 56:5. “And the people leaned themselves on (i.e., trusted in) the words of Hezekiah.” These statements are not inconsistent with the account in 2 Kings 18:14–16, that Hezekiah began to negotiate with the Assyrian king Sennacherib when he had begun to take the fenced cities of the land unto Lachish, promised to pay him tribute, and actually paid the sum demanded, employing for that purpose even the sheet gold on the temple doors. These negotiations are passed over, not only in our narrative, but also in Isa. 36, because they had no influence upon the after course and the issue of the war. Sennacherib was not induced to withdraw by the payment of the sum demanded, and soon after the receipt of it he sent a detachment from Lachish against Jerusalem, to summon the city to surrender. The fortification of Jerusalem which the Chronicle records began before these negotiations, and was continued while they were in progress.

2 Chronicles 32:9–19. *The advance of an Assyrian army against Jerusalem*, and the attempts of Sennacherib’s generals to induce the population of the capital to submit by persuasive and threatening speeches, are very briefly narrated, in comparison with 2 Kings 18:17–36. In v. 9, neither the names of the Assyrian generals, nor the names of Hezekiah’s ambassadors with whom they treated, are given; nor is the place where the negotiation was carried on mentioned. עֲבָדָיו, his servants, Sennacherib’s generals. וְהוּא עַל־לָךְ, while he himself lay near (or against) Lachish, and all the

army of his kingdom with him. מְמַשְׁלֵתוֹ, his dominion, i.e., army of his kingdom; cf. Jer. 34:1.

2 Chronicles 32:10ff. Only the main ideas contained in the speech of these generals are reported; in vv. 10–12 we have the attempt to shake the trust of the people in Hezekiah and in God (Kings. vv. 19–22). וַיִּשְׁבְּבוּ is a continuation of the question, In what do ye trust, and why sit ye in the distress, in Jerusalem? מִסִּית as in 2 Kings 18:32: Hezekiah seduces you, to give you over to death by hunger and thirst. This thought is much more coarsely expressed in 2 Kings 18:27.—On v. 12, cf. 2 Kings 18:22: מִזְבֵּחַ אֶחָד is the one altar of burnt-offering in the temple.

2 Chronicles 32:13f. The description of Sennacherib's all-conquering power: cf. 2 Kings 18:35; Isa. 36:20, and 37:11–13. "Who is there among all the gods of these peoples, whom my fathers utterly destroyed, who could have delivered his people out of my hand, that your God should save you?" The idea is, that since the gods of the other peoples, which were mightier than your God, have not been able to save their peoples, how should your God be in a position to rescue you from my power? This idea is again repeated in v. 15, as a foundation for the exhortation not to let themselves be deceived and misled by Hezekiah, and not to believe his words, and that in an assertative form: "for not one god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people, ... much less then (אַף כִּי) your gods: they will not save you;" and this is done in order to emphasize strongly the blasphemy of the Assyrian generals against the Almighty God of Israel. To communicate more of these blasphemous speeches would in the chronicler's view be useless, and he therefore only remarks, in v. 16, "And yet more spake his (Sennacherib's) servants against God Jahve, and against His servant Hezekiah;" and then, in v. 17, that Sennacherib also wrote a letter of similar purport, and (v. 18) that his servants called with a loud voice in the Jews' speech to the people of Jerusalem upon the wall, to throw

them into fear and terrify them, that they might take the city. What they called to the people is not stated, but by the infinit. לִיְרָאֵם וּלְבַהֲלֵם it is hinted, and thence we may gather that it was to the same effect as the blasphemous speeches above quoted (יְרָאֵם, inf. Pi., as in Neh. 6:19).—

On comparing 2 Kings 18 and 19, it is clear that Sennacherib only sent the letter to Hezekiah after his general Rabshakeh had informed him of the fruitlessness of his efforts to induce the people of Jerusalem to submit by speeches, and the news of the advance of the Cushite king Tirhakah had arrived; while the calling aloud in the Jews' language to the people standing on the wall, on the part of his generals, took place in the first negotiation with the ambassadors of Hezekiah. The author of the Chronicle has arranged his narrative rhetorically, so as to make the various events form a climax: first, the speeches of the servants of Sennacherib; then the king's letter to Hezekiah to induce him and his counsellors to submit; and finally, the attempt to terrify the people in language intelligible to them. The conclusion is the statement, v. 19: "They spake of the God of Jerusalem as of the gods of the peoples of the earth, the work of the hands of man;" cf. 2 Kings 19:18.

2 Chronicles 32:20–23. *Prayer of King Hezekiah and of the prophet Isaiah for the help of the Lord.*—V. 20. The main contents of Hezekiah's prayer are communicated in 2 Kings 19:14–19 and Isa. 37:15–19. There it is not expressly said that Isaiah also prayed, but it may be inferred from the statement in 2 Kings 19:2ff. and Isa. 37:2ff. that Hezekiah sent a deputation to the prophet with the request that he would pray for the people. In answer Isaiah promised the ambassadors deliverance, as the word of the Lord. עַל זֵאת, on account of this, i.e., on account of the contempt shown for the God of Israel, which was emphatically dwelt upon both in the prayer of Hezekiah (2 Kings 19:16) and in the word of Isaiah, v. 22ff.

2 Chronicles 32:21. The deliverance: cf. 2 Kings 19:35ff.; Isa. 37:36ff. The number of

Assyrians smitten by the angel of the Lord is not stated, as it was not of importance, the main fact being that the whole Assyrian host was annihilated, so that Sennacherib had to return with disgrace into his own land. This is what is signified by the rhetorical phrase: The angel of Jahve destroyed all the valiant warriors, and the leaders and princes of the king of Assyria, and he returned with shame of face (cf. Ezra 9:7; Ps. 44:16) to his land, where his sons slew him in the temple. In regard to the facts, see on 2 Kings 19:37 and Isa. 37:38. The Keth. *מיציו* is an orthographical error for *מיציו*, a contraction of *מן יציו* and *יציו* from *יציו*, a passive formation with intransitive signification: some of those who went forth from his own bowels, i.e., some of his sons; cf. the similar formation *מילידי*, 1 Chronicles 20:4.

2 Chronicles 32:22. Conclusion of this event. So the Lord helped, etc., *מִיַּד־כָּל*, and out of the hand of all, sc. his enemies; but we need not on that account, with some manuscripts, bring *אֶיְבָיו* into the text. *וַיִּגְהַלְמֵם*, and protected them round about. *וַיְהַלְמֵם*, to lead, guide, with the additional idea of care and protection (Ps. 31:4; Isa. 49:10; 51:18); and consequently here, protect, defend. There is therefore no need of the conjecture *וַיִּגְהַלְמֵם*, which Berth. holds to be the original reading, without considering that, though *וַיִּגְהַלְמֵם* is a current phrase with the chronicler (cf. 14:6; 15:15; 20:30; 1 Chronicles 22:18), the supposition that these words became *מִסְגְּרֵם* by an orthographical error is not at all probable.

2 Chronicles 32:23. Many brought gifts to the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to King Hezekiah. *רַבִּים* is not to be restricted to Israelites, but probably denotes chiefly neighbouring peoples, who by the destruction of the Assyrian army were also freed from this dreaded enemy. They, too, might feel impelled to show their reverence for the God of Israel,

who had so wonderfully delivered His people by their gifts.

2 Chronicles 32:24–26. *Hezekiah's sickness and recovery; his pride and his humiliation.*—V. 24. As to the sickness of Hezekiah, and the miraculous sign by which the prophet Isaiah assured him of recovery, see the account in 2 Kings 20:1–11 and Isa. 38. The Chronicle has only given us hints on this matter. *וַיִּאמֶר* and *נָתַן* refer to the same subject—God. Hezekiah prayed, and in consequence of his prayer God spake to him, sc. by the mouth of the prophet, and gave him a miraculous sign.

2 Chronicles 32:25. “But Hezekiah rendered not according to the benefit unto him, for his heart was proud.” In his sickness he had promised to walk in humility all his days (Isa. 38:15); yet he became proud after his recovery; and his pride showed itself especially in his showing all his treasures to the Babylonian embassy, in idle trust in them and in the resources at his command (cf. 2 Kings 20:12–15; Isa. 39:1–4). “And there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem,” which participated in the king's sentiments (cf. 19:10; 1 Chronicles 27:24). Isaiah proclaimed this wrath to him in the prophecy that all the treasures of the king would be carried away to Babylon, and that some of his sons should become courtiers of the king of Babylon (2 Kings 20:16–18; Isa. 39:5–7), to which we should perhaps also reckon the threatening prophecy in Mic. 3:12.

2 Chronicles 32:26. Then Hezekiah humbled himself in his pride, and the wrath came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah (cf. Isa. 39:8). The threatened judgment was postponed because of this humiliation, and broke over the royal house and the whole kingdom only at a later time in the Chaldean invasion.

2 Chronicles 32:27–33. *Hezekiah's riches; concluding estimate of his reign; his death and burial.*—V. 27. Like Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 17:5; 18:1), Solomon (2 Chronicles 1:12), and David (1 Chronicles 29:28), Hezekiah attained to riches and glory, and made unto himself treasure-chambers for silver, gold, precious

stones, and spices, shields, and all manner of splendid furniture. The מְגִנִּים are named instead of weapons in general. The collection of them brings to recollection the בַּיִת כְּלֵי (2 Kings 20:13 and Isa. 39:2).

2 Chronicles 32:28. Storehouses also (magazines) for the agricultural produce, and stalls for all manner of cattle, and stalls for the herds, like David (1 Chronicles 27:25ff.) and Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:10). מִסְכָּנוֹת is a transposition of מְכַנְסוֹת, storehouses, from כָּנַס, to heap up. "Cattle and cattle" = all kinds of cattle. אָרוֹת, synonymous with אָרִיזוֹת (2 Chronicles 9:5), stables or stalls for cattle. The word אָרוֹת, which occurs only here, must have the same signification, and be held to be a transposed form of that word.

2 Chronicles 32:29. And cities (?) made (procured) he for himself. עָרִים cannot in this connection denote the usual cities; it must mean either watch-towers (from עָרַר, to watch) or dwelling-places for herds and cattle, since עָרַר, according to 2 Kings 17:9, is used of any enclosed place, from a watch-tower to a fenced city. רְכוּשׁ, as in 31:3, of possessions in herds.

2 Chronicles 32:30. The same Hezekiah covered the upper outlet of the water Gihon, and brought it down westwards to the city of David, i.e., by a subterranean channel into the city of David (see on v. 3). The form וַיִּשְׂרַם is Piel וַיִּשְׂרַם; the Keri is the same conjug., only contracted into וַיִּשְׂרַם, as וַיִּבֶשׂ for וַיִּבֶשׂ, the ו of the third person having amalgamated with the first radical, under the influence of the ו consec. With the last clause in v. 30 cf. 31:21, 1 Chronicles 29:23.

2 Chronicles 32:31. "And so (i.e., accordingly) in the case of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, ... God left him." וְכֵן does not denote *attamen*; it never has an adversative meaning. Bertheau rightly translates, "and accordingly," with the further remark, that by וְכֵן the account

of Hezekiah's treatment of the Babylonian ambassadors, which could not be reckoned among his fortunate deeds, is brought into harmony with the remark that he prospered in all his undertakings. It was permitted by God that Hezekiah should on this occasion be lifted up, and should commit an iniquity which could not but bring misfortune with it; not in order that He might plunge him into misfortune, but to try him, and to humble him (cf. v. 26).

2 Chronicles 32:32. הַסִּדִּים, pious deeds, as in 6:42. חֲזוֹן יִשׂ is the book of Isaiah's prophecies; see the Introduction, p. 388.

2 Chronicles 32:33. Hezekiah was buried "on the height of the graves of the sons of David," perhaps because there was no longer room in the hereditary burying-place of the kings; so that for Hezekiah and the succeeding kings special graves had to be prepared in a higher place of the graves of the kings. "They did him honour in his death," by the burning of many spices, as we may conjecture (cf. 16:14; 21:19).

2 Chronicles 33

The Reigns of Manasseh and Amon. Cf. 2 Kings 21.

2 Chronicles 33:1-20. *The reign of Manasseh;* cf. 2 Kings 21:1-18.—The characteristics of this king's reign, and of the idolatry which he again introduced, and increased in a measure surpassing all his predecessors (vv. 1-9), agrees almost verbally with 2 Kings 21:1-9. Here and there an expression is rhetorically generalized and intensified, e.g., by the plurals לְבַעֲלִים and אֲשֵׁרוֹת (v. 3) instead of the sing. לְבַעַל and אֲשֵׁרָה (Kings), and בָּנָיו (v. 6) instead of בָּנִי (see on 28:3); by the addition of וְכִשְׁוֹף to עוֹנֵן, and of the name the Vale of Hinnom, v. 6 (see on Josh. 15:18, גֵּי for גֵּיא); by heaping up words for the law and its commandments (v. 8); and other small deviations, of which פָּסַל הַסֵּמֶל (v. 7) instead of פָּסַל הָאֲשֵׁרָה (Kings) is the most important. The word סֵמֶל, sculpture or statue, is

derived from Deut. 4:16, but has perhaps been taken by the author of the Chronicle from Ezek. 8:3, where *סמל* probably denotes the statue of Asherah. The form *עילום* for *עולם* (v. 7) is not elsewhere met with.

2 Chronicles 33:10. At v. 10, the account in the Chronicle diverges from that in 2 Kings. In 2 Kings 21:10–16 it is related how the Lord caused it to be proclaimed by the prophets, that in punishment of Manasseh's sins Jerusalem would be destroyed, and the people given into the power of their enemies, and how Manasseh filled Jerusalem with the shedding of innocent blood. Instead of this, in v. 10 of the Chronicle it is only briefly said that the Lord spake to Manasseh and to his people, but they would not hearken; and then in vv. 11–17 it is narrated that Manasseh was led away to Babylon by the king of Assyria's captains of the host; in his trouble turned to the Lord his God, and prayed; was thereupon brought by God back to Jerusalem; after his return, fortified Jerusalem with a new wall; set commanders over all the fenced cities of Judah; abolished the idolatry in the temple and the city, and restored the worship of Jahve.

2 Chronicles 33:11. As Manasseh would not hear the words of the prophets, the Lord brought upon him the captains of the host of the king of Assyria. These "took him with hooks, and bound him with double chains of brass, and brought him to Babylon." *לִכְדוּ בַחֲזָזִים* signifies neither, they took him prisoner in thorns (hid in the thorns), nor in a place called Chochim (which is not elsewhere found), but they took him with hooks. *חֲזָז* denotes the hook or ring which was drawn through the gills of large fish when taken (Job 40:26), and is synonymous with *חָח* (2 Kings 19:28; Ezek. 19:4), a ring which was passed through the noses of wild beasts to subdue and lead them. The expression is figurative, as in the passages quoted from the prophets. Manasseh is represented as an unmanageable beast, which the Assyrian generals took and subdued by a ring in the nose. The figurative expression is explained by

the succeeding clause: they bound him with double chains. *נְחֻשְׁתַּיִם* are double fetters of brass, with which the feet of prisoners were bound (2 Sam. 3:34; Judg. 16:21; 2 Chronicles 36:6, etc.).

2 Chronicles 33:12. *וַיִּבֶטֶת הָעֶצֶר לוֹ = וַיִּכְהָצֵר לוֹ*, 28:22. In this his affliction he bowed himself before the Lord God of his fathers, and besought Him; and the Lord was entreated of him, and brought him again to Jerusalem, into his kingdom. The prayer which Manasseh prayed in his need was contained, according to v. 18f., in the histories of the kings of Israel, and in the sayings of the prophet Hozai, but has not come down to our day. The "prayer of Manasseh" given by the LXX is an apocryphal production, composed in Greek; cf. my *Introduction to the Old Testament*, § 247.

2 Chronicles 33:14. After his return, Manasseh took measures to secure his kingdom, and especially the capital, against hostile attacks. "He built an outer wall of the city of David westward towards Gihon in the valley, and in the direction of the fish-gate; and he surrounded the Ophel, and made it very high." The words *חֻמָּה הַיְצוֹנָה* (without the article) point to the building of a new wall. But since it has been already recorded of Hezekiah, in 32:5, that he built "the other wall without," all modern expositors, even Arnold in Herz.'s *Realenc.* xviii. S. 634, assume the identity of the two walls, and understand *וַיִּבְנֶן* of the completion and heightening of that "other wall" of which it is said *וַיִּבְיֶהָ מְאֹד*, and which shut in Zion from the lower city to the north. In that case, of course, we must make the correction *הַחֻמָּה*. The words "westward towards Gihon in the valley, and *לְבוֹאֵ ב'* in the direction to (towards) the fish-gate," are then to be taken as describing the course of this wall from its centre, first towards the west, and then towards the east. For the valley of Gihon lay, in all probability, outside of the western city gate, which occupied the place of the present Jaffa gate. But the fish-gate was, according to Neh. 3:3, at the east end

of this wall, at no great distance from the tower on the north-east corner. The valley (הַנֶּחֱלָל) is a hollow between the upper city (Zion) and the lower (Acra), probably the beginning of the valley, which at its south-eastern opening, between Zion and Moriah, is called Tyropoion in Josephus. The words, "he surrounded the Ophel," sc. with a wall, are not to be connected with the preceding clauses, as Berth. connects them, translating, "he carried the wall from the north-east corner farther to the south, and then round the Ophel;" for "between the north-east corner and the Ophel wall lay the whole east wall of the city, as far as to the south-east corner of the temple area, which yet cannot be regarded as a continuation of the wall to the Ophel wall" (Arnold, *loc. cit.*). Jotham had already built a great deal at the Ophel wall (2 Chronicles 27:3). Manasseh must therefore only have strengthened it, and increased its height. On the words וַיִּשְׁם שׁ cf. 32:6 and 17:2.

2 Chronicles 33:15–17. And he also removed the idols and the statues from the house of the Lord, i.e., out of the two courts of the temple (v. 5), and caused the idolatrous altars which he had built upon the temple hill and in Jerusalem to be cast forth from the city. In v. 16, instead of the Keth. וַיִּבֶן, he built (restored) the altar of Jahve, many manuscripts and ancient editions read וַיִּכֶן, he prepared the altar of Jahve. This variation has perhaps originated in an orthographical error, and it is difficult to decide which reading is the original. The Vulg. translates יִבֶן *restauravit*. That Manasseh first removed the altar of Jahve from the court, and then restored it, as Ewald thinks, is not very probable; for in that case its removal would certainly have been mentioned in v. 3ff. Upon the altar thus restored Manasseh then offered thank-offerings and peace-offerings, and also commanded his subjects to worship Jahve the God of Israel. But the people still sacrificed on the high places, yet unto Jahve their God.

"As to the carrying away of Manasseh," says Bertheau, "we have no further information in the Old Testament, which is not surprising,

seeing that in the books of Kings there is only a very short notice as to the long period embraced by Manasseh's reign and that of Amon." He therefore, with Ew., Mov., Then., and others, does not scruple to recognise this fact as historical, and to place his captivity in the time of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon. He however believes, with Ew. and Mov., that the statements as to the removal of idols and altars from the temple and Jerusalem (v. 15) is inconsistent with the older account in 2 Kings 23:6 and 12, the clear statements of which, moreover, our historian does not communicate in 2 Chronicles 34:3f. For even if the Astarte removed by Josiah need not have been the אֲשֶׁרָה of our chapter, yet it is expressly said that only by Josiah were the altars built by Manasseh broken down; yet we would scarcely be justified in supposing that Manasseh removed them, perhaps only laid them aside, that Amon again set them up in the courts, and that Josiah at length destroyed them. It does not thence follow, of course, that the narrative of the repentance and conversion of Manasseh rests upon no historic foundation; rather it is just such a narrative as would be supplemented by accounts of the destruction of the idolatrous altars and the statue of Astarte: for that might be regarded as the necessary result of the conversion, without any definite statement being made.¹⁶

Against this we have the following objections to make: Can we well imagine repentance and conversion on Manasseh's part without the removal of the abominations of idolatry, at least from the temple of the Lord? And why should we not suppose that Manasseh removed the idol altars from the temple and Jerusalem, but that Amon, who did evil as did his father Manasseh, and sacrificed to all the images which he had made (2 Kings 21:21f.; 2 Chronicles 33:22), again set them up in the courts of the temple, and placed the statue again in the temple, and that only by Josiah were they destroyed? In 2 Kings 23:6 it is indeed said, Josiah removed the Asherah from the house of Jahve, took it forth from Jerusalem, and burnt it, and ground it to dust in the valley

of Kidron; and in v. 12, that Josiah beat down and brake the altars which Manasseh had made in both courts of the house of Jahve, and threw the dust of them into Kidron. But where do we find it written in the Chronicle that Manasseh, after his return from Babylon, beat down, and brake, and ground to powder the סמל in the house of Jahve, and the altars on the temple mount and in Jerusalem? In 2 Chronicles 33:15 we only find it stated that he cast these things forth from the city (וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ חוּצָה לְעִיר). Is casting out of the city identical with breaking down and crushing, as Bertheau and others assume? The author of the Chronicle, at least, can distinguish between removing (הִסִּיר) and breaking down and crushing. Cf. 15:16, where הִסִּיר is sharply distinguished from כָּרַת and הִדֵּק; further, 2 Chronicles 31:1 and 34:4, where the verbs שָׁבַר, גִּדַּע, and הִדֵּק are used of the breaking in pieces and destroying of images and altars by Hezekiah and Josiah. He uses none of these verbs of the removal of the images and altars by Manasseh, but only וַיִּסֵּר and וַיִּשְׁלֹךְ חוּצָה לְעִיר (v. 15). If we take the words exactly as they stand in the text of the Bible, every appearance of contradiction disappears.¹⁷ From what is said in the Chronicle of Manasseh's deeds, we cannot conclude that he was fully converted to the Lord. That Manasseh prayed to Jahve in his imprisonment, and by his deliverance from it and his restoration to Jerusalem came to see that Jahve was God (הַאֱלֹהִים), who must be worshipped in His temple at Jerusalem, and that he consequently removed the images and the idolatrous altars from the temple and the city, and cast them forth,—these facts do not prove a thorough conversion, much less “that he made amends for his sin by repentance and improvement” (Mov.), but merely attest the restoration of the Jahve-worship in the temple, which had previously been completely suspended. But the idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah was not thereby extirpated; it was only in so far repressed that it could not longer be publicly practised in the temple. Still less was

idolatry rooted out of the hearts of the people by the command that the people were to worship Jahve, the God of Israel. There is not a single word of Manasseh's conversion to Jahve, the God of the fathers, with all his heart (בְּלֵב שֶׁלֵּם). Can it then surprise us, that after Manasseh's death, under his son Amon, walking as he did in the sins of his father, these external barriers fell straightway, and idolatry again publicly appeared in all its proportions and extent, and that the images and altars of the idols which had been cast out of Jerusalem were again set up in the temple and its courts? If even the pious Josiah, with all his efforts for the extirpation of idolatry and the revivification of the legal worship, could not accomplish more than the restoration, during his reign, of the temple service according to the law, while after his death idolatry again prevailed under Jehoiakim, what could Manasseh's half-measures effect? If this be the true state of the case in regard to Manasseh's conversion, the passages 2 Kings 24:3; 23:26, Jer. 15:4, where it is said that the Lord had cast out Judah from His presence because of the sins of Manasseh, cease to give any support to the opposite view. Manasseh is here named as the person who by his godlessness made the punishment of Judah and Jerusalem unavoidable, because he so corrupted Judah by his sins, that it could not now thoroughly turn to the Lord, but always fell back into the sins of Manasseh. Similarly, in 2 Kings 17:21 and 22, it is said of the ten tribes that the Lord cast them out from His presence because they walked in all the sins of Jeroboam, and departed not from them.

With the removal of the supposed inconsistency between the statement in the Chronicle as to Manasseh's change of sentiment, and the account of his godlessness in 2 Kings 21, every reason for suspecting the account of Manasseh's removal to Babylon as a prisoner disappears; for even Graf admits that the mere silence of the book of Kings can prove nothing, since the books of Kings do not record many other events which are recorded in the Chronicle and are proved to be historical. This

statement, however, is thoroughly confirmed, both by its own contents and by its connection with other well-attested historical facts. According to v. 14, Manasseh fortified Jerusalem still more strongly after his return to the throne by building a new wall. This statement, which has as yet been called in question by no judicious critic, is so intimately connected with the statements in the Chronicle as to his being taken prisoner, and the removal of the images from the temple, that by it these latter are attested as historical. From this we learn that the author of the Chronicle had at his command authorities which contained more information as to Manasseh's reign than is to be found in our books of Kings, and so the references to these special authorities which follow in vv. 18 and 19 are corroborated. Moreover, the fortifying of Jerusalem after his return from his imprisonment presupposes that he had had such an experience as impelled him to take measures to secure himself against a repetition of hostile surprises. To this we must add the statement that Manasseh was led away by the generals of the *Assyrian* king to *Babylon*. The Assyrian kings Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser (or Sargon) did not carry away the Israelites to Babylon, but to Assyria; and the arrival of ambassadors from the Babylonian king Merodach-Baladan in Jerusalem, in the time of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:12; Isa. 39:1), shows that at that time Babylon was independent of Assyria. The poetic popular legend would without doubt have made Manasseh also to be carried away to Assyria by the troops of the Assyrian king, not to Babylon. The statement that he was carried away to Babylon by Assyrian warriors rests upon the certainty that Babylon was then a province of the Assyrian empire; and this is corroborated by history. According to the accounts of Abydenus and Alexander Polyhistor, borrowed from Berosus, which have been preserved in Euseb. *Chronicles arm.* i. p. 42f., Sennacherib brought Babylon, the government of which had been usurped by Belibus, again into subjection, and made his son Esarhaddon king over it, as his representative. The subjection of the

Babylonians is confirmed by the Assyrian monuments, which state that Sennacherib had to march against the rebels in Babylon at the very beginning of his reign; and then again, in the fourth year of it, that he subdued them, and set over them a new viceroy (see M. Duncker, *Gesch. des Alterth.* i. S. 697f. and 707f. and ii. S. 592f., der 3 Aufl.). Afterwards, when Sennacherib met his death at the hand of his sons (2 Kings 19:37; Isa. 37:38), his oldest son Esarhaddon, the viceroy of Babylon, advanced with his army, pursued the flying parricides, and after slaying them ascended the throne of Assyria, 680 B.C.¹⁸ Of Esarhaddon, who reigned thirteen years (from 680 to 667), we learn from Ezra 4:2, col. with 2 Kings 24:17, that he brought colonists to Samaria from Babylon, Cutha, and other districts of his kingdom; and Abydenus relates of him, according to Berosus (in Euseb. *Chronicles* i. p. 54), that Axerdis (i.e., without doubt Esarhaddon) subdued Lower Syria, i.e., the districts of Syria bordering on the sea, to himself anew. From these we may, I think, conclude that not only the transporting of the colonists into the depopulated kingdom of the ten tribes is connected with this expedition against Syria, but that on this occasion also Assyrian generals took King Manasseh prisoner, and carried him away to Babylon, as Ewald (*Gesch.* iii. S. 678), and Duncker, S. 715, with older chronologists and expositors (Usher, des Vignoles, Calmet, Ramb., J. D. Mich., and others), suppose. The transport of Babylonian colonists to Samaria is said in *Seder Olam rab.* p. 67, ed. Meyer, and by D. Kimchi, according to Talmudic tradition, to have taken place in the twenty-second year of Manasseh's reign; and this statement gains confirmation from the fact—as was remarked by Jac. Cappell. and Usher—that the period of sixty-five years after which, according to the prophecy in Isa. 7:8, Ephraim was to be destroyed so that it should no more be a people, came to an end with the twenty-second year of Manasseh, and Ephraim, i.e., Israel of the ten tribes, did indeed cease to be a people only with the immigration of heathen colonists into its land (cf. Del. on Isa. 7:8). But the twenty-second year of Manasseh

corresponds to the year 776 B.C. and the fourth year of Esarhaddon.

By this agreement with extra-biblical narratives in its statement of facts and in its chronology, the narrative in the Chronicle of Manasseh's captivity in Babylon is raised above every doubt, and is corroborated even by the Assyrian monuments. "We now know," remarks Duncker (ii. S. 92) in this connection, "that Esarhaddon says in his inscriptions that twenty-two kings of Syria hearkened to him: he numbers among them Minasi (Manasseh of Judah) and the kings of Cyprus." As to the details both of his capture and his liberation, we cannot make even probable conjectures, since we have only a few bare notices of Esarhaddon's reign; and even his building works, which might have given us some further information, were under the influence of a peculiarly unlucky star, for the palace built by him at Kalah or Nimrod remained unfinished, and was then destroyed by a great fire (cf. Spiegel in Herz.'s *Realencykl.* xx. S. 225). Yet, from the fact that in 2 Chronicles 33:1, as in 2 Kings 21:1, the duration of Manasseh's reign is stated to have been fifty-five years, without any mention being made of an interruption, we may probably draw this conclusion at least, that the captivity did not last long, and that he received his liberty upon a promise to pay tribute, although he appears not to have kept this promise, or only for a short period. For that, in the period between Hezekiah and Josiah, Judah must have come into a certain position of dependence upon Assyria, cannot be concluded from 2 Kings 23:19 (cf. v. 15 with 17:28) and 2 Chronicles 23:29, as E. Gerlach thinks.

2 Chronicles 33:18–20. Conclusion of Manasseh's history. His other acts, his prayer, and words of the prophets of the Lord against him, were recorded in the history of the kings of Israel; while special accounts of his prayer, and how it was heard (הִקְטִיר־לֹוֹ, the letting Himself be entreated, i.e., how God heard him), of his sons, and the high places, altars, and images which he erected before his humiliation,

were contained in the sayings of Hozai (see the Introduction, p. 388f.).

2 Chronicles 33:20. Manasseh was buried in his house, or, according to the more exact statement in 2 Kings 21:18, in the garden of his house—in the garden of Uzza; see on that passage.

2 Chronicles 33:21–25. *The reign of Amon.* Cf. 2 Kings 21:19–26.—Both accounts agree; only in the Chronicle, as is also the case with Manasseh and Ahaz, the name of his mother is omitted, and the description of his godless deeds is somewhat more brief than in Kings, while the remark is added that he did not humble himself like Manasseh, but increased the guilt. In the account of his death there is nothing said of his funeral, nor is there any reference to the sources of his history. See the commentary on 2 Kings 21:19ff.

2 Chronicles 34

Ch. 34 and 35—Reign of Josiah. Cf. 2 Kings 22 and 23:1–30.

2 Chronicles 34 and 35. The account of Josiah in the Chronicle agrees in all essential points with the representation in 2 Kings 22 and 23, but is chronologically more exact, and in many parts more complete than that. In the second book of Kings, the whole reform of the cultus carried out by Josiah is viewed in its connection with the discovery of the book of the law, on the occasion of the temple being repaired; and the narrative comprehends not only the repair of the temple, the discovery, the reading of the book of the law before the assembled people, and the renewal of the covenant, but also the extirpation of idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah and in all the cities of Israel, and the celebration of the passover in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign; see the introductory remarks to 2 Kings 22. In the Chronicle, on the contrary, these events are more kept apart, and described according to their order in time. As early as in the eighth year of his reign, Josiah, still a youth, began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in his twelfth year to purge Jerusalem and Judah of idolatry (2 Chronicles

34:3). In the eighteenth year the book of the law was discovered in the temple, brought to the king, and read before him (vv. 8–18); whereupon he, deeply moved by the contents of the book which had been read, and by the answer of the prophetess Huldah when inquired of concerning it (vv. 19–28), went into the temple with the elders of the people, caused the law to be read to the whole people, and made a covenant before the Lord to obey the law (vv. 29–32). He then caused all the idolatrous abominations which were still to be found in the land of Israel to be removed (v. 33), and prepared to hold the passover, as it had not been held since the days of Solomon (2 Chronicles 35:1–19). In other respects the main difference between the two accounts is, that in 2 Kings the suppression of idolatry is narrated with greater minuteness; the passover, on the contrary, being only briefly noticed;—while in the Chronicle the purification of Jerusalem, Judah, and the kingdom of Israel is shortly summarized (2 Chronicles 34:3–7), but the celebration of the passover is minutely described on its ceremonial side (2 Chronicles 35:1–19).

2 Chronicles 34:1, 2. *Duration and spirit of Josiah's reign;* agreeing with 2 Kings 22:1 and 2, only the note as to Josiah's mother being here omitted.

2 Chronicles 34:3–7. *Extirpation of idolatry.* In the eighth year of his reign, while he was yet a youth, being then only sixteen years old, Josiah began to seek the God of his ancestor David, and in the twelfth year of his reign he commenced to purify Judah and Jerusalem from the high places, Asherim, etc. The cleansing of the land of Judah from the numerous objects of idolatry is summarily described in vv. 4 and 5; and thereupon there follows (vv. 6 and 7) the destruction of the idolatrous altars and images in the land of Israel,—all that it seemed necessary to say on that subject being thus mentioned at once. For that all this was not accomplished in the twelfth year is clear from the *החל לטהר*, “he commenced to cleanse,” and is moreover attested by v. 33. The description

of this destruction of the various objects of idolatry is rhetorically expressed, only carved and cast images being mentioned, besides the altars of the high places and the Asherim, without the enumeration of the different kinds of idolatry which we find in 2 Kings 23:4–20.—On v. 4, cf. 31:1. *ינתצו*, they pulled down before him, i.e., under his eye, or his oversight, the altars of the Baals (these are the *במות*, v. 3); and the sun-pillars (cf. 14:4) which stood upwards, i.e., above, upon the altars, he caused to be hewn away from them (*מעליהם*); the Asherim (pillars and trees of Asherah) and the carved and molten images to be broken and ground (*הדק*, cf. 15:16), and (the dust of them) to be strewn upon the graves (of those) who had sacrificed to them. *הזבחים* is connected directly with *הקברים*, so that the actions of those buried in them are poetically attributed to the graves. In 2 Kings 23:6 this is said only of the ashes of the Asherah statue which was burnt, while here it is rhetorically generalized.

2 Chronicles 34:5. And he burnt the bones of the priests upon their altars, i.e., he caused the bones of the idolatrous priests to be taken from their graves and burnt on the spot where the destroyed altars had stood, that he might defile the place with the ashes of the dead. In these words is summarized what is stated in 2 Kings 23:13 and 14 as to the defilement of the places of sacrifice built upon the Mount of Olives by the bones of the dead, and in vv. 16–20 as to the burning of the bones of the high priests of Bethel, after they had been taken from their graves, upon their own altars. *מזבחיותם* is an orthographical error for *מזבחותם*.

2 Chronicles 34:6, 7. Vv. 6 and 7 form a connected sentence: And in the cities of Manasseh ..., in their ruins round about, there he pulled down the altars, etc. The tribe of Simeon is here, as in 15:9, reckoned among the tribes of the kingdom of Israel, because the Simeonites, although they belonged geographically to the kingdom of Judah, yet in religion remained attached to the worship on

the high places practised by the ten tribes; see on 15:9. "And unto Naphtali" is added, to designate the kingdom of Israel in its whole extent to the northern frontier of Canaan. The form *בְּחָר בְּתִיָּהֶם* (in the Keth. divided into two words) gives no suitable sense. R. Sal. explains, *timentes in planitie habitare, sed fixerunt in monte domicilia*, rendering it "in their mountain-dwellings." This the words cannot mean.¹⁹ The Keri *בְּחָרְבֵי תִיָּהֶם*, "with their swords," is suggested by Ezek. 26:9, and is accepted by D. Kimchi, Abu Melech, and others, and understood to denote instruments with which the altars, groves, and images were cut down. But this interpretation also is certainly incorrect. The word is rather to be pointed *בְּחָרְבֵי תִיָּהֶם*, in their wastes (ruins) (cf. Ps. 109:10), and to be taken as an explanatory apposition to *בְּעָרֵי*: in the cities of Manasseh ..., namely, in their ruins round about; for the land had been deserted since the times of Shalmaneser, and its cities were in great part in ruins. The statement as to the locality precedes in the form of an absolute sentence, and that which is predicated of it follows in the form of an apodosis with *ו* *consec.* (*וַיִּנְתֵּן*). *בַּתַּת לְהַדִּק*, he dashed to pieces to crush; the form *הַדִּק* is not a perfect after *ל*, but an infinitive which has retained the vowel of the perfect; cf. Ew. § 238, d.

2 Chronicles 34:8–18. *The cleansing and repairing of the temple, and the finding of the book of the law.* Cf. 2 Kings 22:3–10.—In the eighteenth year of his reign, when he was purging the land and the house (of God), he sent. *לְטַהֵר* does not indeed signify "after the purging" (De Wette, with the older expositors), but still less is it a statement of the object, "to purge" (Berth.); for that is decisively disposed of both by its position at the beginning of the sentence, where no statement of the object would stand, but still more by the fact that a statement of the object follows, *לְלַחֹק וְגו'*, used of time denotes "about," and so with the *inf.*, e.g., Jer. 46:13: at (his) coming = when he came.

Shaphan was *סוֹפֵר*, state secretary, according to 2 Kings 22:3. With him the king sent the governor of the city Maaseiah, and the chancellor Joah. These two are not mentioned in 2 Kings 22:3, but have not been arbitrarily added by the chronicler, or invented by him, as Then. groundlessly supposes. "To repair the house of Jahve." What these high royal officials had to do with it we learn from what follows.

2 Chronicles 34:9f. They, together with the high priest, gave the money which had been received for the repair of the temple to the overseers of the building, who then gave it to workmen to procure building materials and for wages, just as was done when the temple was repaired by Joash, 2 Chronicles 24:11–13. The Keri *וַיִּשְׁבוּ* is a correction resulting from a misinterpretation of the Keth. *וַיִּשְׁבּוּ*, "and of the dwellers in Jerusalem." The enumeration, "from the hand of Manasseh, Ephraim," etc., is rhetorical. In *וַיִּתְּנוּ*, v. 10, the verb of v. 9 is again taken up: they handed it to the overseers of the building, and they to the workmen. *עָשָׂה הֵם* is a rare form of the plur. *עָשִׂי*; see on 1 Chronicles 23:24. The overseers of the building (*הַמְּפַקְדִים*—*עָשִׂי*) are the subject of the second *וַיִּתְּנוּ*; and before the following *לְעָשִׂי*, which stands in 2 Kings, is to be supplied. *בְּדוֹק* is a *denom.* from *בָּדַק*, and signifies to repair what has been damaged. The statement of v. 10 is made more definite by v. 11: they gave it, namely, to the workers in stone and wood, and to the builders to buy hewn stones and timber for couplings, and for the beams of the houses (*לְקַרְוֹת*, to provide with beams; *הַבְּתִים* are the various buildings of the temple and its courts), which the kings of Judah had allowed to decay (*הִשְׁחִיתוּ*, not of designed destroying, but of ruining by neglect).—In v. 12 we have still the remark that the people did the work with fidelity, and the money could consequently be given to them without reckoning, cf. 2 Kings 22:7; and then the names of the building inspectors follow.

Two Levites of the family of Merari, and two of the family of Kohath, were overseers; לְנִצְחָה, i.e., to lead in the building, to preside over it as upper overseers; and besides them, the Levites, all who were skilled in instruments of song (cf. 1 Chronicles 25:6ff.). As men who by their office and their art occupied a conspicuous place among the Levites, the oversight of the workmen in the temple was committed to them, not “that they might incite and cheer the workmen by music and song” (Berth.).

2 Chronicles 34:13a. V. 13a is probably to be taken, along with v. 12b, in the signification, “All the Levites who were skilled in music were over the bearers of burdens, and were overseers of all the workmen in reference to every work.” The ו before עַל הַסְּבָלִים certainly to go against this interpretation, and Berth. would consequently erase it to connect עַל הַסְּבָלִים with the preceding verse, and begin a new sentence with וּמְנַצְּחִים: “and they led all the workmen.” But if we separate וּמְנַצְּחִים from עַל הַסְּבָלִים, this mention of the bearers of burdens (סבלים) comes awkwardly in between the subject and the predicate, or the statement as to the subject. We hold the text to be correct, and make the ו before עַל הַסְּבָלִים correspond to the ו before מְנַצְּחִים, in the signification, *et—et*. The Levites, all who were skilled in instruments of song, were both over the bearers of burdens, and overseeing the workmen, or leading the workmen. Besides, of the Levites were, i.e., still other Levites were, scribes and officers and porters, i.e., were busied about the temple in the discharge of these functions.

2 Chronicles 34:14. In bringing out the money that had been brought into the house of the Lord, the high priest found the book of Moses’ law. It is not clearly implied in the words, that he found it in the place where the money was laid up. The book of the law which was found is merely characterized as the book of the Mosaic law by the words בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה, not necessarily as Moses’ autograph. The communication of this

discovery by the high priest to the state secretary Shaphan, and by him to the king, is narrated in vv. 15–18, just as in 2 Kings 22:8–10. The statement, v. 16, “And Shaphan brought the book to the king,” instead of the words, “and Shaphan the סֹפֵר came (went) to the king,” involves no difference as to the facts; it rather makes the matter clear. For since in 2 Kings 22:10, immediately after the statement that Hilkiah gave him the book, it is said that Shaphan read from it to the king, he must have brought it to the king. With this elucidation, both the omission of וַיִּקְרָאָהוּ (2 Kings 22:8), and the insertion of עוֹד after וַיָּשֶׁב, v. 16, is connected. The main thing, that which it concerned the author of the Chronicle to notice, was the fact that the book of the law which had been discovered was immediately brought and read to the king; while the circumstance that Shaphan, when the book was given him, also opened it and read in it, is omitted, as it had no further results. But since Shaphan did not go to the king merely to bring him the book, but rather, in the first place, to report upon the performance of the commission entrusted to him in respect of the money, this report required to be brought prominently forward by the עוֹד: He brought the book to the king, and besides, made his report to the king. All that has been committed to thy servants (נָתַן בְּיַד), that they do; they have poured out the money, etc. The עֲבָדִים are not Shaphan and the others mentioned in v. 8, but in general those who were entrusted with the oversight of the repair of the temple, among whom, indeed, the chief royal officials were not included. After this report there follows in v. 18 an account of the book which Shaphan had brought, and which, as we were informed in v. 16, in anticipation of the event, he gave to the king.

2 Chronicles 34:19–28. *The dismay of the king at the contents of the book which was read to him, and his inquiry of the prophetess Huldah as to the judgments threatened in the law.*— Compare with this the parallel account in 2 Kings 22:11–20, with the commentary there

given, as both accounts agree with the exception of some unimportant variations in expression. Instead of Abdon ben Micah (v. 20) we find in 2 Kings Achbor ben Micayahu, perhaps the correct reading. In v. 21, the expression, “and for those that are left in Israel and Judah,” i.e., for the remainder of the people who were left in Israel after the destruction of the kingdom, and in Judah after the divine chastisements inflicted, mainly by the Assyrians under Hezekiah and Manasseh, is clearer and more significant than that in 2 Kings 22:13, “and for the people, and for all Judah.” וַתִּתְּבַר, to pour itself forth (of anger), is quite as suitable as וַתִּצְתָּה, inflame, kindle itself, in Kings, v. 13. In v. 22, those sent with the high priest Hilkiah are briefly designated by the words וְאֲשֶׁר הִמְלִיךְ, and whom the king, *scil.* had sent; in 2 Kings 22:14, on the contrary, the individual names are recorded (Ewald, *Gramm.* § 292, *b*, would supply אָמַר, after the LXX). The names of the ancestors of the prophetess Huldah also are somewhat different. כִּזְאֵת, as the king had said to him, is omitted in 2 Kings.—In v. 24, כָּל־הָאָלוֹת, all the curses, is more significant than כָּל־דִּבְרֵי, 2 Kings 22:16. וַתִּתְּבַר (v. 25) is a statement of the result of the עֲזָבוֹנִי: Because they have forsaken me, my anger pours itself forth. In v. 27, the rhetorical expansion of the words which God had spoken of Jerusalem in the law, לְהִיֹּת לְשִׁמָּה וְגו', inserted in 2 Kings 22:19 as an elucidation, are omitted. After the preceding designation of these words as “the curses written in the law,” any further elucidation was superfluous. On the contents of the saying of the prophetess Huldah, see the commentary on 2 Kings 22:16ff.

2 Chronicles 34:29–33. *The reading of the book of the law in the temple, and the solemn renewal of the covenant*, to which the king assembled the elders of Judah and Jerusalem, with all the people, after the saying of the prophetess Huldah had been reported to him, are recorded in 2 Kings 23:1–3 as they are in the Chronicle, and have been commented upon

at the former passage. Only v. 32, the contents of which correspond to the words, “And the whole people entered into the covenant” (2 Kings 23:3), will need explanation. וַיַּעֲמֵד is usually translated, “he caused the people to enter into the covenant” (after 2 Kings). This is in substance correct, but exegetically cannot be defended, since בְּבְרִית does not precede, so as to allow of its here being supplied from the context. וַיַּעֲמֵד only signifies, he caused all who were in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand, and they did according to the covenant of God; whence we can easily supply in the first clause, “and to do according to the covenant.” The collocation, “in Jerusalem and in Benjamin,” is an abbreviation of the complete formula, “in Jerusalem and Judah and Benjamin;” then in the following clause only the inhabitants of Jerusalem are named as representatives of the inhabitants of the whole kingdom.

2 Chronicles 34:33. But not only his own subjects did Josiah induce to act towards God in accordance with the covenant; in all the districts of the sons of Israel he removed the idolatrous abominations, and compelled every one in Israel to serve Jahve. The “sons of Israel,” as distinguished from the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Benjamin (v. 32), are the remnant of the ten tribes in their land, where Josiah, according to v. 6f., had also destroyed the idolatrous places of worship and the images. The statement in our verse, with which the account of Josiah’s cultus reform is concluded, refers to that. וַיַּעֲבֵד לְעַבְדוֹ, he made to serve, compelled them to serve. By the abolition of idolatry he compelled them to worship Jahve. The last words of the verse are accordingly to be interpreted as signifying that Josiah, so long as he lived, allowed no open idolatry, but externally maintained the worship of Jahve. These measures could not effect a real, heartfelt conversion to God, and so the people fell again into open idolatry immediately after Josiah’s death; and Jeremiah continually complains of the defection and corruption of Judah and Israel: cf. Jer. 11, 13, 25, etc.

2 Chronicles 35

2 Chronicles 35:1–19. *The solemnization of the passover.*—To ratify the renewal of the covenant, and to confirm the people in the communion with the Lord into which it had entered by the making of the covenant, Josiah, immediately after the finding of the book of the law and the renewal of the covenant, appointed a solemn passover to be held at the legal time, which is only briefly mentioned in 2 Kings 23:21–23, but in the Chronicle is minutely described.

2 Chronicles 35:1. V. 1 contains the superscription-like statement, that Josiah held a passover to the Lord; and they held the passover in the 14th day of the first month, consequently at the time fixed in the law. It happened otherwise under Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 30:2, 13, and 15). With v. 2 commences the description of the festival: and first we have the preparations, the appointment of the priests and Levites to perform the various services connected with the festival (vv. 2–6), and the procuring of the necessary beasts for sacrifice (vv. 10–15); then the offering of the sacrifices and the preparation of the meals (vv. 10–15); and finally the characterization of the whole festival (vv. 16–19).

2 Chronicles 35:2. He appointed the priests according to their guards or posts, i.e., according to the service incumbent upon each division, and “he strengthened them for the service of the house of Jahve,” namely, by encouraging speech, and by teaching as to the duties devolving upon them, according to the provisions of the law. Cf. the summons of Hezekiah, 29:5ff.; and as to the *יְהִיזֶק*, Nah. 2:18.

2 Chronicles 35:3. The Levites are designated “those teaching all Israel, those holy to the Lord,” in reference to what is commanded them in the succeeding verses. The Keth. *מְבַוִּיִּם* does not elsewhere occur, and must be regarded as a substantive: the teachers; but it is probably only an orthographical error for *מְבַיִּיִּם* (Neh. 8:7), as the Keri demands here also. As to the fact, cf. 17:8f. The Levites had to teach the

people in the law. Josiah said to them, “Set the ark in the house which Solomon did build; not is to you to bear upon the shoulder;” i.e., ye have not any longer to bear it on your shoulders, as formerly on the journey through the wilderness, and indeed till the building of the temple, when the ark and the tabernacle had not yet any fixed resting-place (1 Chronicles 17:5). The summons *תָּנִנוּ אֶת־אֲרוֹן וְגוֹ'* is variously interpreted. Several Rabbins regard it as a command to remove the ark from its place in the most holy place into some subterranean chamber of the temple, so as to secure its safety in the event of the threatened destruction of the temple taking place. But this hypothesis needs no refutation, since it in no way corresponds to the words used. Most ancient and modern commentators, on the other hand, suppose that the holy ark had, during the reigns of the godless Manasseh and Amon, either been removed by them from its place, or taken away from the most holy place, from a desire to protect it from profanation, and hidden somewhere; and that Josiah calls upon the Levites to bring it back again to its place. Certainly this idea is favoured by the circumstance that, just as the book of the law, which should have been preserved in the ark of the covenant, had been lost, and was only recovered when the temple was being repaired, so the ark also may have been removed from its place. But even in that case the sacred ark would have been brought back to its place, according to the law, at the completion of the purification of the temple, before the king and people made the covenant with Jahve, after the law had been read to them in the temple, and could not have remained in its hiding-place until the passover. Still less probable is Bertheau’s conjecture, “that the Levites bore the just reconsecrated ark upon their shoulders at the celebration of the passover, under the idea that they were bound by the law to do so; but Josiah taught them that the temple built by Solomon had caused an alteration in that respect. They were no longer bearers of the ark; they might set it in its place, and undertake other duties.” For the idea that the Levites bore

the ark at the celebration of the passover is utterly inconsistent with the context, since vv. 3–6 do not treat of what was done at the passover, but merely of that which was to be done. But even if we were to alter “they bare” into “they wished to bear,” yet there is no historic ground for the idea attributed by Bertheau to the Levites, that at the celebration of the passover the ark was to be brought forth from the most holy place, and carried in procession in the temple courts or elsewhere. Finally, the reasons stated for the call, *תָּנוּ וּגְרוּ*, cannot be made to harmonize with the two views above mentioned. If it was only the bringing back of the ark to its ancient place in the most holy place which is here spoken of, why are the words “which Solomon built” added after *בְּבֵית*; and why is the command based upon the statement, “Ye have not to carry it any more upon your shoulders, but are to serve the Lord your God and His people in another way”? Both the additional clause and these reasons for the command show clearly that Josiah, in the words *תָּנוּ וּגְרוּ*, did not command something which they were to do at the approaching passover, but merely introduces therewith the summons: “Serve now the Lord,” etc. R. Sal. saw this, and has given the sense of the verse thus: *quum non occupemini amplius ullo labore vasa sacra portandi, Deo servite et populo ejus mactando et excoriando agnos paschales v. 4ff.* It therefore only remains to ascertain how this signification is consistent with the words *בְּבֵית* *הַקִּי*. The exhortation, “Set the ark in the house,” must certainly not be understood to mean, “Leave it in the place where it has hitherto stood,” nor, “Bring the sacred ark back into the house;” for *נָתַן* with *בְּ* does not mean to bring back, but only to place anywhere, set; and is here used not of material placing, but of mental. “Set the ark in the house” is equivalent to, “Overlook, leave it in the temple; you have not any longer, since Solomon built a house for it, to bear it upon your shoulders;” i.e., Think not on that which formerly, before the building of the temple,

belonged to your service, but serve the Lord and His people now in the manner described in v. 4ff. The interpretation of the words as denoting a material setting or removing of the ark, is completely excluded by the facts, (1) that in the description of what the Levites did at the passover, “according to the command of the king,” which follows (vv. 10–15), not a word is said of the ark; and (2) that the bearing of the ark into the most holy place was not the duty of the Levites, but of the priests. The duty of the Levites was merely to bear the ark when it had to be transported for great distances, after the priests had previously wrapped it up in the prescribed manner. In vv. 4–6 the matters in which they are to serve the Lord in the preparation of the passover are more fully stated. The Keth. *הַכּוֹנוֹ הַכּוֹנוֹ* is *imper. Niph.* *הַכּוֹנוֹ*, Make yourselves ready according to your fathers’-houses, in your divisions, according to the writing of David. *בְּ* in *בְּכִתְבֵי*, as in *בְּמִצְוֹת*, 29:25; but *כְּ* does not = *מִצְוֹת*, but is to be understood of writings, in which the arrangements made by David and Solomon in reference to the service of the Levites were recorded.

2 Chronicles 35:5. “Stand in the sanctuary for the divisions of the fathers’-houses of your brethren, the people of the nation, and indeed a part of a father’s-house of the Levites;” i.e., Serve your brethren the laymen, according to their fathers’-houses, in the court of the temple, in such fashion that a division of the Levites shall fall to each father’s-house of the laymen; cf. 12. So Bertheau correctly; but he would erase the *וְ* before *תִּלְקַתְּ* without sufficient reason. Older commentators have supplied the preposition *לְ* before *תִּלְקַתְּ*: Stand, according to the divisions of the fathers’-houses, and according to the division of a father’s-house of the Levites; which gives the same sense, but can hardly be justified grammatically.

2 Chronicles 35:6. Kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare it (the passover) for your brethren (the laymen), doing according to the word of the Lord by

Moses (i.e., according to the law of Moses). The sanctification mentioned between the killing and the preparation of the passover probably consisted only in this, that the Levites, after they had slain the lamb, had to wash themselves before they gave the blood to the priest to sprinkle upon the altar (cf. v. 11 and 30:16). As to the slaying of the lamb by the Levites, cf. the remarks on 30:16.

2 Chronicles 35:7–9. The bestowal of beasts for sacrifice on the part of the king and his princes.—V. 7. The king gave (יָרַם as in 30:24) to the sons of the people small cattle, viz., lambs and young goats, all for the passover-offerings, for all that were present, to the number of 30,000 (head), and 3000 bullocks from the possession of the king (cf. 31:3; 32:29).

כָּל־הַנִּמְצָא is all the people who were present, who had come to the feast from Jerusalem and the rest of Judah without having brought lambs for sacrifice.

2 Chronicles 35:8. And his princes (the king's princes, i.e., the princes of the kingdom) presented for a free-will offering to the people, the priests, and the Levites. לִנְדָבָה is not to be taken adverbially, as Berth. thinks: according to goodwill, but corresponds to the לְפָסְחָיִם, i.e., for free-will offerings, Lev. 7:16. The number of these gifts is not stated. From the princes of the king we must distinguish the prefects of the house of God and the princes of the Levites, who are mentioned by name in vv. 8b and 9. Of these the first presented sheep and cattle for passover-sacrifices to the priests, the latter to the Levites. Of the three נְגִידִים of the house of God named in v. 8b, Hilkiah is the high priest (2 Chronicles 34:9), Zechariah perhaps the next to him (בֵּהֶן מִשְׁנֵה, 2 Kings 25:18, Jer. 52:24), and Jehiel is probably, as Berth. conjectures, the chief of the line of Ithamar, which continued to exist even after the exile (Ezra 8:2). Of the Levite princes (v. 9) six names are mentioned, three of which, Conaniah, Shemaiah, and Jozabad, are met with under Hezekiah in 31:12–15, since in the priestly and Levitic families the

same names recur in different generations. The Conaniah in Hezekiah's time was chief overseer of the temple revenues; the two others were under overseers. Besides the פִּסְחָיִם for which the king and the princes of the priests and of the Levites gave צֹאן, i.e., lambs and young goats, בָּקָר, oxen, in considerable numbers, are mentioned as presents; 3000 from the king, 300 from the princes of the priests, and 500 from the princes of the Levites. Nothing is said as to the purpose of these, but from v. 13 we learn that the flesh of them was cooked in pots and caldrons, and consequently that they were intended for the sacrificial meals during the seven days of the Mazzoth-feast; see on vv. 12 and 13.

2 Chronicles 35:10–15. The preparation of the paschal sacrifice and the paschal meals.—V. 10 leads on to the carrying out of the arrangements. "So the service was prepared;" the preparation for the festival mentioned in vv. 3–9 was carried out. The priests stood at their posts (cf. 30:16), and the Levites according to their courses, according to the command of the king (in vv. 4 and 5).

2 Chronicles 35:11. And they (the Levites, cf. v. 6) slew the passover (the lambs and young goats presented for the passover meal), and the priests sprinkled (the blood of the paschal lambs) from their hand (i.e., which the Levites gave them), while the Levites flayed them; as also under Hezekiah, 30:17.

2 Chronicles 35:12. "And they took away the burnt-offerings, to give them to the divisions of the fathers'-houses of the sons of the people, to offer unto the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses; and so also in regard to the oxen." הִסְרִי signifies the taking off or separating of the pieces intended to be burnt upon the altar from the beasts slain for sacrifice, as in Lev. 3:9f., 4:31. הָעֵלָה, in this connection, can only signify the parts of the paschal lamb which were to be burnt upon the altar, viz., the same parts which were separated from sheep and goats when they were brought as thank-offerings and burnt upon the altar (Lev. 3:6–16). These pieces are

here called הֶעֱלָה, because they not only were wholly burnt like the burnt-offering, but also were burnt upon the flesh of the evening burnt-offering to God, for a savour of good pleasure; cf. Lev. 3:11, 16, with Lev. 1:13. They cannot have been special burnt-offerings, which were burnt along with or at the same time with the fat of the paschal lambs; for there were no special festal burnt-offerings, besides the daily evening sacrifice, prescribed for the passover on the evening of the 14th Nisan; and the oxen given by the king and the princes for the passover are specially mentioned in the concluding clause of the verse, וְכִן לִבְקָר, so that they cannot have been included in הֶעֱלָה. The suffix in לְתַתָּם might be referred to הַפֶּסַח: to give the paschal lambs, after the עֲלָה had been separated from them, to the divisions of the people. But the following לְהַקְרִיב לַיהוָה does not harmonize with that interpretation; and the statement in v. 13, that the Levites gave the roasted and boiled flesh to the sons of the people, is still more inconsistent with it. We must consequently refer לְתַתָּם to the immediately preceding noun, הֶעֱלָה: to give the parts separated from the paschal lambs to be burnt upon the altar to the divisions of the people, that they might offer them to the Lord. This can only mean that each division of the fathers'-houses of the people approached the altar in turn to give the portions set apart from the עֲלָה to the priests, who then offered them on the fire of the altar to the Lord. On בְּכַתּוּב בַּסֵּ' Gusset. has already rightly remarked: *Lex Mosis hic allegatur non quasi omnia illa quae praecedunt, exprimerentur in ipsa, sed respective seu respectu eorum quae mandata erant; quibus salvis adjungi potuerunt quidam modi agendi innocui et commodi ad legis jussa exsequenda.* וְכִן לִבְקָר, and so was it done also with the oxen, which consequently were not offered as burnt-offerings, but as thank-offerings, only the fat being burnt upon the altar, and the flesh being used for sacrificial meals.

2 Chronicles 35:13. The passover, i.e., the flesh of the paschal lamb, they roasted (בִּשְׁלַל בָּאֵשׁ), to make ready upon the fire, i.e., roast; see on Ex. 12:9), according to the ordinance (as the law appointed); and "the sanctified (as they called the slaughtered oxen, cf. 29:33) they sod (בִּשְׁלוּ), sc. בַּמַּיִם, cf. Ex. 12:9) in pots, caldrons, and pans, and brought it speedily to the sons of the people," i.e., the laymen. From this Bertheau draws the conclusion, "that with the paschal lambs the oxen were also offered as thank-offerings; and the sacrificial meal consisted not merely of the paschal lamb, but also of the flesh of the thank-offerings: for these must have been consumed on the same day as they were offered, though the eating of them on the following day was not strictly forbidden, Lev. 7:15-18." But this conclusion is shown to be incorrect even by this fact, that there is no word to hint that the roasting of the paschal lambs and the cooking of the flesh of the oxen which were offered as thank-offerings took place simultaneously on the evening of the 14th Nisan. This is implied neither in the לִבְקָר, nor in the statement in v. 14, that the priests were busied until night in offering the עֲלָה and the חֲלָבִים. According to v. 17, the Israelites held on that day, not only the passover, but also the Mazzoth-feast, seven days. The description of the offering and preparation of the sacrifices, partly for the altar and partly for the meal, vv. 13-15, refers, therefore, not only to the passover in its more restricted sense, but also to the seven days' Mazzoth festival, without its being expressly stated; because both from the law and from the practice it was sufficiently well known that at the פֶּסַח meal only צֹאן (lambs or goats) were roasted and eaten; while on the seven following days of the Mazzoth, besides the daily burnt-offering, thank-offerings were brought and sacrificial meals were held; see on Deut. 16:1-8. The connecting, or rather the mingling, of the sacrificial meal prepared from the roasted lambs with the eating of the sodden flesh of oxen, would have been too great an offence against the legal

prescriptions for the paschal meal, to be attributed either to King Josiah, to the priesthood, or to the author of the Chronicle, since the latter expressly remarks that the celebration was carried out according to the prescription of the law of Moses, and according to the "right."

2 Chronicles 35:14. And afterwards (אַחַר, *postea*, after the passover had been prepared for the laymen in the way described) the Levites prepared it for themselves and for the priests; for the latter, however, only because they were busied with the offering of the *עֹלָה* and the *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם* till night. Most expositors understand by *עֹלָה* the fat of the paschal lambs, which was burnt upon the altar, as in v. 12; and *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם*, the fat of oxen, which was likewise burnt upon the altar, "but was not, as it seems, designated by the expression *הָעֹלָה*" (Berth.). This interpretation certainly at first sight seems likely; only one cannot see why only the fat of the oxen, and not that of the paschal lambs also, should be called *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם*, since in the law the parts of all thank-offerings (oxen, sheep, and goats) which were burnt upon the altar are called *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם*. We will therefore be more correct if we take *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם* to be a more exact definition of *הָעֹלָה*: the burnt-offering, viz., the fat which was offered as a burnt-offering; or we may take *הָעֹלָה* here to denote the evening burnt-offering, and *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם* the fat of the paschal lambs. But even if the first-mentioned interpretation were the only correct one, yet it could not thence be concluded that on the passover evening (the 14th Nisan) the fat not only of the 37,600 lambs and goats, but also of the 3800 oxen, were offered upon the altar; the words, that the priests were busied until night with the offering of the *עֹלָה* and the *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם*, are rather used of the sacrificing generally during the whole of the seven days' festival. For the compressed character of the description appears in v. 15, where it is remarked that neither the singers

nor the porters needed to leave their posts, because their brethren the Levites prepared (the meal) for them. With the words, "according to the command of David," etc., cf. 1 Chronicles 25:1 and 6.

2 Chronicles 35:16–19. The character of the passover and Mazzoth festivals.—V. 16. "So all the service of the Lord was prepared the same day, in regard to the preparing of the passover, and the offering of the burnt-offerings upon the altar, according to the command of the king." This statement, like that in v. 10, summarizes all that precedes, and forms the transition to the concluding remarks on the whole festival. *בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא* is not to be limited to the one afternoon and evening of the fourteenth day of the month, but refers to the whole time of the festival, just as *יוֹם* in Gen. 2:4 embraces the seven days of creation. "*עֹלֹת* are the *עֹלָה* and the *חֶלְבֵי־הַלְּבָיִם* (v. 14)" (Berth.); but it by no means follows from that, that "at the passover, besides the regular burnt-offering (Num. 28:4), no burnt-offering would seem to have been offered," but rather that the words have a more general signification, and denote the sacrifices at the passover and Mazzoth festivals.

2 Chronicles 35:17. The duration of the festival. The Israelites who had come kept the passover "at that time (that is, according to v. 1, on the fourteenth day of the first month), and the Mazzoth seven days," i.e., from the 15th to the 21st of the same month.

2 Chronicles 35:18. v. 18 contains the remark that the Israelites had not held such a passover since the days of the prophet Samuel and all the kings; cf. 2 Kings 23:22, where, instead of the days of Samuel, the days of the judges are mentioned. On the points which distinguished this passover above others, see the remarks on 2 Kings 23:22. In the concluding clause we have a rhetorical enumeration of those who participated in the festival, beginning with the king and ending with the inhabitants of Jerusalem. *יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּמְצָא* are the remnant of the kingdom of the ten tribes who had come to the festival; cf. 34:33.—In v. 19 the year of this

passover is mentioned in conclusion. The statement, “in the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah,” refers back to the same date at the beginning of the account of the cultus reform (2 Chronicles 34:8 and 2 Kings 22:3), and indicates that Josiah’s cultus reform culminated in this passover. Now since the passover fell in the middle of the first month of the year, and, according to 2 Chronicles 34 and 2 Kings 22, the book of the law was also found in the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign, many commentators have imagined that the eighteenth year of the king is dated from the autumn; so that all that is narrated in 2 Chronicles, from 34:8–35:19, happened within a period of six months and a half. This might possibly be the case; since the purification and repair of the temple may have been near their completion when the book of the law was found, so that they might hold the passover six months afterwards. But our passage does not require that the years of the king’s reign should be dated from the autumn, and there are not sufficient grounds for believing that such was the case. Neither in our narrative, nor in 2 Kings 22 and 23, is it said that the passover was resolved upon or arranged in consequence of the finding of the book of the law. Josiah may therefore have thought of closing and ratifying the restoration of the Jahve-worship by a solemn passover festival, even before the finding of the book; and the two events need not be widely separated from each other. But from the way in which the account in 2 Kings 22 and 23 is arranged, it is not improbable that the finding of the book of the law may have occurred before the beginning of the eighteenth year of Josiah’s reign, and that date may have been placed at the beginning and end of the narrative, because the cultus reform was completed with the celebration of the passover in his eighteenth year.²⁰

2 Chronicles 35:20–27. *The end of Josiah’s reign; his death in battle against Pharaoh Necho.* Cf. 2 Kings 23:25–30.—The catastrophe in which the pious king found his death is in 2 Kings introduced by the remark, that although Josiah returned unto the Lord with all his heart

and all his soul and all his strength, and walked altogether according to the law, so that there was no king before him, and none arose after him, who was like him, yet the Lord did not turn away from the fierceness of His great wrath against Judah, and resolved to remove Judah also out of His sight, because of the sins of Manasseh. This didactic connecting of the tragical end of the pious king with the task of his reign, which he followed out so zealously, viz., to lead his people back to the Lord, and so turn away the threatened destruction, is not found in the Chronicle. Here the war with Necho, in which Josiah fell, is introduced by the simple formula: After all this, that Josiah had prepared the house, i.e., had restored and ordered the temple worship, Necho the king of Egypt came up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah went out against him. For further information as to Necho and his campaign, see on 2 Kings 23:29.

2 Chronicles 35:21. Then he (Pharaoh Necho) sent messengers to him, saying, “What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? Not against thee, thee, (do I come) to-day (now), but against my hereditary enemy; and God has said that I must make haste: cease from God, who is with me, that I destroy thee not.” מֵה־לִּי וְלָךְ, see Judg. 11:12, 2 Sam. 16:10. אֶתָּה is an emphatic repetition of the pronominal suffix; cf. Gesen. *Gr.* § 121. 3. הַיּוֹם, this day, that is, at present. בֵּית מִלְחָמָתִי does not signify, my warlike house, but, the house of my war, i.e., the family with which I wage war, equivalent to “my natural enemy in war, my hereditary enemy.” This signification is clear from 1 Chronicles 18:10 and 2 Sam. 8:10, where “man of the war of Tou” denotes, the man who waged war with Tou.²¹ The God who had commanded Pharaoh to make haste, and whom Josiah was not to go against, is not an Egyptian god, as the Targ. and many commentators think, referring to Herod. ii. 158, but the true God, as is clear from v. 22. Yet we need not suppose, with the older commentators, that God had *sive per somnium sive per prophetam aliquem ad ipsum e Judaea*

missum spoken to Pharaoh, and commanded him to advance quickly to the Euphrates. For even had Pharaoh said so in so many words, we could not here think of a divine message made known to him by a prophet, because God is neither called יהוה nor אֱלֹהִים, but merely אֱלֹהִים, and so it is only the Godhead in general which is spoken of; and Pharaoh only characterizes his resolution as coming from God, or only says: It was God's will that Josiah should not hinder him, and strive against him. This Pharaoh might say without having received any special divine revelation, and after the warning had been confirmed by the unfortunate result for Josiah of his war against Necho; the biblical historian also might represent Necho's words as come from God, or "from the mouth of God."

2 Chronicles 35:22. But Josiah turned not his face from him, i.e., did not abandon his design, "but to make war against him he disguised himself." הִתְחַפֵּשׂ denotes elsewhere to disguise by clothing, to clothe oneself falsely (2 Chronicles 18:29; 1 Kings 20:38; 22:30), and to disfigure oneself (Job 30:18). This signification is suitable here also, where the word is transferred to the mental domain: to disfigure oneself, i.e., to undertake anything which contradicts one's character. During his whole reign, Josiah had endeavoured to carry out the will of God; while in his action against Pharaoh, on the contrary, he had acted in a different way, going into battle against the will of God.²² As to the motive which induced Josiah, notwithstanding Necho's warning, to oppose him by force of arms, see the remark on 2 Kings 23:29f. The author of the Chronicle judges the matter from the religious point of view, from which the undertaking is seen to have been against the will of God, and therefore to have ended in Josiah's destruction, and does not further reflect on the working of divine providence, exhibited in the fact that the pious king was taken away before the judgment, the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, broke over the sinful people. For further information as to the Valley of Megiddo, the place where the battle was fought, and on the death of Josiah,

see 2 Kings 23:29f. The הֵעֲבִירוּנִי, bring me forth (v. 23), is explained in v. 24: his servants took him, mortally wounded by an arrow, from the war-chariot, and placed him in a second chariot which belonged to him, and probably was more comfortable for a wounded man.

2 Chronicles 35:25. The death of the pious king was deeply lamented by his people. The prophet Jeremiah composed a lamentation for Josiah: "and all the singing-men and singing-women spake in their lamentations of Josiah unto this day;" i.e., in the lamentation which they were wont to sing on certain fixed days, they sung also the lamentation for Josiah. "And they made them (these lamentations) an ordinance (a standing custom) in Israel, and they are written in the lamentations," i.e., in a collection of lamentations, in which, among others, that composed by Jeremiah on the death of Josiah was contained. This collection is, however, not to be identified with the Lamentations of Jeremiah over the destruction of Jerusalem and the kingdom of Judah, contained in our canon.—On v. 26f. cf. 2 Kings 23:28. הִסְדִּי as in 32:32. כְּכָתוּב בַּתּוֹרָה, according to that which is written in the law of Moses, cf. 31:3. וְדָבָריו is the continuation of יְתַר דְּבָרָיו (v. 26).

2 Chronicles 36

The Last Kings of Judah; The Destruction of Jerusalem; Judah Led Away Captive; and the Babylonian Exile.

2 Chronicles 36. As the kingdom of Judah after Josiah's death advanced with swift steps to its destruction by the Chaldeans, so the author of the Chronicle goes quickly over the reigns of the last kings of Judah, who by their godless conduct hastened the ruin of the kingdom. As to the four kings who reigned between Josiah's death and the destruction of Jerusalem, he gives, besides their ages at their respective accessions, only a short characterization of their conduct towards God, and a statement of the main events which step by step brought

about the ruin of the king and the burning of Jerusalem and the temple.

2 Chronicles 36:1–4. *The reign of Jehoahaz.* Cf. 2 Kings 23:30b35.—After Josiah's death, the people of the land raised his son Jehoahaz (Joahaz), who was then twenty-three years old, to the throne; but he had been king in Jerusalem only three months when the Egyptian king (Necho) deposed him, imposed upon the land a fine of 100 talents of silver and one talent of gold, made his brother Eliakim king under the name Jehoiakim, and carried Jehoahaz, who had been taken prisoner, away captive to Egypt. For further information as to the capture and carrying away of Jehoahaz, and the appointment of Eliakim to be king, see on 2 Kings 23:31–35.

2 Chronicles 36:5–8. *The reign of Jehoiakim.* Cf. 2 Kings 23:36–24:7.—Jehoiakim was at his accession twenty-five years of age, reigned eleven years, and did that which was evil in the eyes of Jahve his God.

2 Chronicles 36:6f. “Against him came Nebuchadnezzar (in inscriptions, Nabucudurriusur, i.e., *Nebo coronam servat*; see on Dan. S. 56) the king of Babylon, and bound him with brazen double fetters to carry him to Babylon.” This campaign, Nebuchadnezzar's first against Judah, is spoken of also in 2 Kings 24 and Dan. 1:1, 2. The capture of Jerusalem, at which Jehoiakim was put in fetters, occurred, as we learn from Dan. 1:1, *col. c.* Jer. 46:2 and 36:7, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign, i.e., in the year 606 B.C.; and with it commence the seventy years of the Chaldean servitude of Judah. Nebuchadnezzar did not carry out his purpose of deporting the captured king Jehoiakim to Babylon, but allowed him to continue to reign at Jerusalem as his servant (vassal). To alter the infin. לְהוֹלִיכוֹ into the perf., or to translate as the perf., is quite arbitrary, as is also the supplying of the words, “and he carried him away to Babylon.” That the author of the Chronicle does not mention the actual carrying away, but rather assumes the contrary, namely, that Jehoiakim continued to reign in Jerusalem until his death, as well known, is

manifest from the way in which, in v. 8, he records his son's accession to the throne. He uses the same formula which he has used in the case of all the kings whom at their death their sons succeeded, according to established custom. Had Nebuchadnezzar dethroned Jehoiakim, as Necho deposed Jehoahaz, the author of the Chronicle would not have left the installation of Jehoiachin by the Chaldean king unmentioned. For the defence of this view against opposing opinions, see the commentary on 2 Kings 24:1 and Dan. 1:1; and in regard to v. 7, see on Dan. 1:2. The Chronicle narrates nothing further as to Jehoiakim's reign, but refers, v. 8, for his other deeds, and especially his abominations, to the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, whence the most important things have been excerpted and incorporated in 2 Kings 24:1–4. תּוֹעֲבוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה Bertheau interprets of images which he caused to be prepared, and הִנֵּמְצָא עָלָיו of his evil deeds; but in both he is incorrect. The passages which Bertheau cites for his interpretation of the first words, Jer. 7:9f. and Ezek. 8:17, prove the contrary; for Jeremiah mentions as תּוֹעֲבוֹת of the people, murder, adultery, false swearing, offering incense to Baal, and going after other gods; and Ezekiel, *loc. cit.*, uses עֲשׂוֹת תּוֹעֲבוֹת of the idolatry of the people indeed, but not of the making of images—only of the worship of idols, the practice of idol-worship. The abominations, consequently, which Jehoiakim committed are both his evil deeds and crimes, e.g., the shedding of innocent blood (2 Kings 24:4), as well as the idolatry which he had practised. הִנֵּמְצָא עָלָיו, “what was found upon him,” is a comprehensive designation of his whole moral and religious conduct and attitude; cf. 19:3. Jehoiakim's revolt from Nebuchadnezzar after three years' servitude (2 Kings 24:1) is passed over by the author of the Chronicle, because the punishment of this crime influenced the fate of the kingdom of Judah only after his death. The punishment fell upon Jehoiachin; for the detachments of Arameans, Moabites, and Ammonites, which were sent by

Nebuchadnezzar to punish the rebels, did not accomplish much.

2 Chronicles 36:9, 10. *The reign of Jehoiachin.* Cf. 2 Kings 24:8–17.—Jehoiachin’s age at his accession is here given as eight years, while in 2 Kings 24:8 it is eighteen. It is so also in the LXX and Vulg.; but a few Hebr. codd., Syr., and Arab., and many manuscripts of the LXX, have eighteen years in the Chronicle also. The number eight is clearly an orthographical error, as Thenius also acknowledges. Bertheau, on the contrary, regards the eight of our text as the original, and the number eighteen in 2 Kings as an alteration occasioned by the idea that eighteen years appeared a more fitting age for a king than eight years, and gives as his reason, “that the king’s mother is named along with him, and manifestly with design, 2 Kings 24:12, 15, and Jer. 22:26, whence we must conclude that she had the guardianship of the young king.” A perfectly worthless reason. In the books of Kings the name of the mother is given in the case of all the kings after their accession has been mentioned, without any reference to the age of the kings, because the queen-mother occupied a conspicuous position in the kingdom. It is so in the case of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin, 2 Kings 23:36 and 24:8. On account of her high position, the queen-mother is mentioned in 2 Kings 24:12 and 15, and in Jeremiah, among those who submitted to Nebuchadnezzar and were carried away to Babylon. The correctness of the number eighteen is, however, placed beyond doubt by Ezek. 19:5–9, where the prophet portrays Jehoiachin as a young lion, which devoured men, and knew widows, and wasted cities. The knowing of widows cannot apply to a boy of eight, but might well be said of a young man of eighteen. Jehoiachin ruled only three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and did evil in the eyes of Jahve. At the turn of the year, i.e., in spring, when campaigns were usually opened (cf. 1 Kings 20:22; 2 Sam. 11:1), Nebuchadnezzar sent his generals (2 Kings 24:10), and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly vessels of the house of Jahve, and made his (father’s) brother Zedekiah king in Judah. In

these few words the end of Jehoiachin’s short reign is recorded. From 2 Kings 24:10–16 we learn more as to this second campaign of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem, and its issues for Judah; see the commentary on that passage. Zidkiyah (Zedekiah) was, according to 2 Kings 24:17, not a brother, but זיד, uncle or father’s brother, of Jehoiachin, and was called Mattaniah, a son of Josiah and Hamutal, like Jehoahaz (2 Kings 24:18, cf. 23:31), and is consequently *his* full brother, and a step-brother of Jehoiakim. At his appointment to the kingdom by Nebuchadnezzar he received the name Zidkiyah (Zedekiah). זידקיה, in v. 10, is accordingly to be taken in its wider signification of blood-relation.

2 Chronicles 36:11–21. *The reign of Zedekiah; the destruction of Jerusalem, and Judah carried away into exile.* Cf. 2 Kings 24:18–25:21.—Zedekiah, made king at the age of twenty-one years, reigned eleven years, and filled up the measure of sins, so that the Lord was compelled to give the kingdom of Judah up to destruction by the Chaldeans. To that Zedekiah brought it by the two main sins of his evil reign,—namely, by not humbling himself before the prophet Jeremiah, from the mouth of Jahve (v. 12); and by rebelling against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had caused him to swear by God, and by so hardening his neck (being stiff-necked), and making stout his heart, that he did not return to Jahve the God of Israel. Zedekiah’s stiffness of neck and hardness of heart showed itself in his refusing to hearken to the words which Jeremiah spoke to him from the mouth of God, and his breaking the oath he had sworn to Nebuchadnezzar by God. The words, “he humbled himself not before Jeremiah,” recall Jer. 37:2, and the events narrated in Jer. 37 and 38, and 21:4–22:9, which show how the chief of the people ill-treated the prophet because of his prophecies, while Zedekiah was too weak and languid to protect him against them. The rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he had sworn a vassal’s oath of fidelity, is mentioned in 2 Kings 24:30, and Ezek. 17:13ff. also, as a great crime on the part of Zedekiah

and the chief of the people; see the commentary on both passages. In consequence of this rebellion, Nebuchadnezzar marched against Judah with a powerful army; and after the capture of the fenced cities of the land, he advanced to the siege of Jerusalem, which ended in its capture and destruction, 2 Kings 25:1–10. Without further noticing these results of this breach of faith, the author of the Chronicle proceeds to depict the sins of the king and of the people. In the first place, he again brings forward, in v. 13*b*, the stiffness of neck and obduracy of the king, which manifested itself in the acts just mentioned: he made hard his neck, etc. Bertheau would interpret the words וַיִּקְשׁ וגו', according to Deut. 2:30, thus: "Then did God make him stiff-necked and hardened his heart; so that he did not return to Jahve the God of Israel, notwithstanding the exhortations of the prophets." But although hardening is not seldom represented as inflicted by God, there is here no ground for supposing that with וַיִּקְשׁ the subject is changed, while the bringing forward of the hardening as an act of God does not at all suit the context. And, moreover, הַקְשָׁה עֲרֵךְ, making hard the neck, is nowhere ascribed to God, it is only said of men; cf. 2 Kings 17:14, Deut. 10:16, Jer. 19:15, etc. To God only אֶת־לֵב אֶת־לֵב or אֶת־רוּחַ is attributed, Ex. 7:3, Deut. 2:30.

2 Chronicles 36:14. "And all princes of the priests and the people increased faithless transgressions, like to all the abominations of the heathen, and defiled the house of the Lord which He had consecrated in Jerusalem." Bertheau would refer this censure of their idolatry and the profanation of the temple to the guilt incurred by the whole people, especially in the time of Manasseh, because, from all we know from the book of Jeremiah, the reproach of idolatry did not at all, or at least did not specially, attach to the princes of the priests and the people in the time of Zedekiah. But this reason is neither tenable nor correct; for from Ezek. 8 it is perfectly manifest that under Zedekiah, not only the people, but also

the priesthood, were deeply sunk in idolatry, and that even the courts of the temple were defiled by it. And even though that idolatry did not take its rise under Zedekiah, but had been much practised under Jehoiakim, and was merely a revival and continuation of the idolatrous conduct of Manasseh and Amon, yet the reference of our verse to the time of Manasseh is excluded by the context; for here only that which was done under Zedekiah is spoken of, without any reference to earlier times.

Meanwhile God did not leave them without exhortation, warning, and threatening.—V. 15*f*. Jahve sent to them by His messengers, from early morning onwards continually, for He spared His people and His dwelling-place; but they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets. וְשָׁלַח בְּיָד, to send a message by any one, to make a sending. The object is to be supplied from the verb. הִשְׁבִּיחַ וְשָׁלַח exactly as in Jer. 26:5; 29:19. For He spared His people, etc., viz., by this, that He, in long-suffering, again and again called upon the people by prophets to repent and return, and was not willing at once to destroy His people and His holy place. מְלַעְבִּיבִים is ἀπ. λεγ., in Syr. it signifies *subsannavit*; the Hithp. also, מִתְעַתְעִים (from תַּעַע), occurs only here as an intensive: to launch out in mockery. The distinction drawn between מְלַאֲכָיִם (messengers) and נְבִיאִים (prophets) is rhetorical, for by the messengers of God it is chiefly prophets who are meant; but the expression is not to be confined to prophets in the narrower sense of the word, for it embraces all the men of God who, by word and deed, censured and punished the godless conduct of the idolaters. The statement in these two verses is certainly so very general, that it may apply to all the times of gradually increasing defection of the people from the Lord their God; but the author of the Chronicle had primarily in view only the time of Zedekiah, in which the defection reached its highest point. It should scarcely be objected that in the time of

Zedekiah only Jeremiah is known as a prophet of the Lord, since Ezekiel lived and wrought among the exiles. For, in the first place, it does not hence certainly follow that Jeremiah and Ezekiel were the only prophets of that time; then, secondly, Jeremiah does not speak as an individual prophet, but holds up to the people the witness of all the earlier prophets (cf. e.g., 26:4, 5), so that by him all the former prophets of God spoke to the people; and consequently the plural, His messengers, His prophets, is perfectly true even for the time of Zedekiah, if we always keep in mind the rhetorical character of the style. עַד עֲלוֹת וְגוֹ, until the anger of Jahve rose upon His people, so that there was no healing (deliverance) more.

2 Chronicles 36:17ff. When the moral corruption had reached this height, judgment broke upon the incorrigible race. As in vv. 12–16 the transgressions of the king and people are not described according to their historical progression, but are portrayed in rhetorical gradation; so, too, in vv. 17–21 the judgment upon the sinful people and kingdom is not represented in its historical details, but only rhetorically in its great general outlines. “Then brought He upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in their sanctuary, and spared not the youth and the maiden, the old man and the grey-headed; he gave everything into his hand.” Prophetic utterances form the basis of this description of the fearful judgment, e.g., Jer. 15:1–9; 32:3f., Ezek. 9:6; and these, again, rest upon Deut. 32:25. The subject in the first and last clause of the verse is Jahve. Bertheau therefore assumes that He is also the subject of the intermediate sentence: “and God slew their young men in the sanctuary;” but this can hardly be correct. As in the expansion of the last clause, “he gave everything into his hand,” which follows in v. 18, not Jahve but the king of Babylon is the subject; so also in the expansion of the first clause, which וַיְהִי־גוֹ introduces, the king of the Chaldeans is the subject, as most commentators have rightly recognised. By בְּבֵית

מִקְדָּשָׁם the judgment is brought into definite relationship to the crime: because they had profaned the sanctuary by idolatry (v. 14), they themselves were slain in the sanctuary. On הַכֹּל בְּ, cf. Jer. 27:6; 32:3, 4. הַכֹּל includes things and persons, and is specialized in vv. 18–20.

2 Chronicles 36:18. All the vessels of the house of God, the treasures of the temple, and of the palace of the king and of the princes, all he brought to Babylon.

2 Chronicles 36:19. They burnt the house of God; they pulled down the walls of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces of the city with fire, and all the costly vessels were devoted to destruction. On לְהַשְׁחִית, cf. 12:12.

2 Chronicles 36:20, 21. He who remained from the sword, i.e., who had not been slain by the sword, had not fallen and died in war, Nebuchadnezzar carried away to Babylon into captivity; so that they became servants to him and to his sons, as Jeremiah (Jer. 27:7) prophesied, until the rise of the kingdom of the Persians. These last words also are an historical interpretation of the prophecy, Jer. 27:7. All this was done (v. 21) to fulfil מְלֵא (instead of מְלֵא, as in 1 Chronicles 29:5), that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, he having prophesied (Jer. 25:11f., 29:10) the seventy years' duration of Judah's desolation and the Babylonian captivity, while the king and people had not regarded his words (v. 12). This period, which according to v. 20 came to an end with the rise of the kingdom of the Persians, is characterized by the clause עַד וַיָּצֵתָהּ as a time of expiation of the wrong which had been done the land by the non-observance of the sabbath-years, upon the basis of the threatening (Lev. 26:34), in which the wasting of the land during the dispersion of the unrepentant people among the heathen was represented as a compensation for the neglected sabbaths. From this passage in the law the words are taken, to show how the Lord had inflicted the punishment with which the disobedient people had been threatened as

early as in the time of Moses. עַד רַצְתָּהּ is not to be translated, "until the land had made up its years of rest;" that signification רַצָּה has not; but, "until the land had enjoyed its sabbath-years," i.e., until it had enjoyed the rest of which it had been deprived by the non-observance of the sabbaths and the sabbath-years, contrary to the will of its Creator; see on Lev. 26:34. That this is the thought is placed beyond doubt by the succeeding circumstantial clause, taken word for word from Lev. 26:34: "all days (i.e., the whole time) of its desolation did it hold it" (שָׁבַתָהּ, it kept sabbath). "To make full the seventy years;" which Jeremiah, *ll. cc.*, had prophesied.

This connecting of Jeremiah's prophecy with the declaration in Lev. 26:34 does not justify us in supposing that the celebration of the sabbath-year had been neglected seventy times, or that for a period of 490 years the sabbath-year had not been observed. Bertheau, holding this view, fixes upon 1000 B.C., i.e., the time of Solomon, or, as we cannot expect any very great chronological exactitude, the beginning of the kingly government in Israel, as the period after which the rest-years ceased to be regarded. He is further of opinion that 2 Chronicles 35:18 harmonizes with this view; according to which passage the passover was not celebrated in accordance with the prescription of the law until the end of the period of the judges. According to this chronological calculation, the beginning of this neglect of the observance of the sabbath-year would fall in the beginning of the judgeship of Samuel.²³ But this is itself unlikely; and still more unlikely is it, that in the time of the judges the sabbath-year had been regularly observed until Samuel; and that during the reigns of the kings David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, this celebration remained wholly in abeyance. But even apart from that, the words, that the land, to make full the seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah, kept the whole time of the desolation holy, or enjoyed a sabbath rest such as Moses had proclaimed in Lev. 26:34, do not necessarily involve that the land had been

deprived of its sabbath rest seventy times in succession, or during a period of 490 years, by the sin of the people. The connection between the prophecy of Jeremiah and the provision of the law is to be understood theologically, and does not purport to be calculated chronologically. The thought is this: By the infliction of the punishment threatened against the transgressors of the law by the carrying of the people away captive into Babylon, the land will obtain the rest which the sinful people had deprived it of by their neglect of the sabbath observance commanded them. By causing it to remain uncultivated for seventy years, God gave to the land a time of rest and refreshment, which its inhabitants, so long as they possessed it, had not given it. But that does not mean that the time for which this rest was granted corresponded to the number of the sabbath-years which had not been observed. From these theological reflections we cannot calculate how often in the course of the centuries, from the time of Joshua onwards till the exile, the sabbath-year had not been observed; and still less the time after which the observation of the sabbath-year was continuously neglected. The passage 35:8 has no bearing on this question, because it neither states that the passover had been held according to the precepts of the law till towards the end of the time of the judges, nor that it was no longer celebrated in accordance with the precept from that time until Josiah; it only contains the thought that such a passover as that in Josiah's reign had not been held since the time of the judges: see on the passage.

2 Chronicles 36:22, 23. To point out still further how exactly God had fulfilled His word by the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah, it is in conclusion briefly mentioned that God, in the first year of Coresh king of Persia, stirred up the spirit of this king to cause a command to go forth in all his kingdom, that Jahve, the God of heaven, who had given him all the kingdoms of the earth, had commanded him to build again His temple in Jerusalem, and that whoever belonged to the people of God might go up to Jerusalem. With this comforting prospect for

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the future, the author of the Chronicle closes his consideration of the prae-exilic history of the people of God without completely communicating the contents of the royal edict of Cyrus, since he purposed to narrate the history of the restoration of Judah to their own land in a separate work. This we have in the book of Ezra, which commences by giving us the whole of the edict of Cyrus the king of the

Persians (Ezra 1:1-3), and then narrates the return of a great part of the people to Jerusalem and Judah, the rebuilding of the temple, and the re-settlement in the land of their fathers of those who had returned.