

had been the peculiar possession of the priestly and learned class: henceforward it was to be accessible to every one who would learn an alphabet (Ezra vii 10, 25; Neh. viii, ix). The change was a part, and an important part, of Ezra's scheme for forming a Jewish nation and impressing upon it the worship of the national God. It thus marks a turning-point in the history of religion, and we can easily understand that the tradition of it survived to the days of the Amoraim. There is no positive evidence as to the character in which the Law was written before Ezra's time; but if it was cuneiform, the reason for his work was much stronger than if he merely transcribed from the old-Hebrew or 'Phenician' script, which was after all quite as suitable for the purpose.

Finally, if by עברי (which the Talmud took as 'Phenician') we are to understand cuneiform, it may be possible to explain the two strange terms רעץ (*v.l.* for רעץ) and ליבונאה which are applied to the old writing. The root רעץ means 'to prick' or 'pierce'; and the word may thus denote the 'bristling' characters, or characters 'pricked' with a stylus¹ on soft clay; while ליבונאה may be a corruption of some derivative from לבנה 'a brick', meaning 'tablet-writing'. The appearance of the cuneiform character must have been quite familiar to Jews living in Babylonia in the early centuries of the Christian era.

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THE PARSING OF BĀZĀH IN 2 KINGS

XIX 21 = ISAIAH XXXVII 22.

בָּזָה here is either (1) Qal Pf. sing. 3rd *masc.* of בזה, or (2) Qal Pf. sing. 3rd *fem.* of בזו.

The first alternative involves a false concord. There are, of course, many cases where *masc.* is used in preference to the *fem.* It is specially appropriate where the *fem.* subject has a general reference. In Num. xv 31, e. g. בזה has נפש for its subject. The first two verbs are *masc.* though the subject and demonstrative are *fem.* But a *masc.* here would be very odd. The subject is 'Virgin daughter'; and בזה is closely linked with another verb in proper agreement with the subject.

Yet the Oxford Hebrew Lexicon, along with every other lexicon and concordance I have consulted, assigns the word to בזה and not to בזו.

The second alternative involves an unusual accentuation; for the word is accented as a participle and not as a perfect. The perfect accents the stem syllable, not the affirmative, in ע"ו verbs.

¹ I find that this has already been suggested by Lidzbarski in his article 'Alphabet' in the *Jewish Encyclopaedia*.

But in view of the *metre* of the passage this latter alternative seems right. Gesenius-Kautzsch (§ 72 I) accordingly assign the word to בּוּח and not to בּוּחָ. Hebraists whom I have consulted support this parsing, among them being Dr C. F. Burney, who writes as follows:—‘The form is certainly intended for 3rd fem. sing. perf. Qal of בּוּח. The accentuation בּוּחָ for בּוּחָ is, I have no doubt, adopted for metrical reasons. The metrical scheme of the poem appears to be 3 + 2, the ordinary metrical form of the קִינָה, but also, it seems, used in other poems of measured solemnity and grandeur. Cf. e.g. Isa. lxiii 7 ff. The trochaic opening, which makes the measure move so lightly in many of the lyrics of the Song of Songs,¹ appears to be unsuitable to the קִינָה measure. The rhythm appears to be

Bāzāh l'ḥā lā'āgā l'ḥā [or *lāk*] *ḏ'ūlāl ba! Šiyyōn*

just as in the parallel line

'Aḥ'rēkā rōsh hēnī'āh ba! Y'rūshālēm.

Cf. also most of the other lines in which we can be certain of the text. To have read *Bāzā l'ḥā*, &c., would have ruined the metrical effect.'

The meaning of the verbs בּוּח and בּוּחָ is the same, but בּוּחָ is characteristic of poetry and *Hoḵmā* literature, and is of much less frequent occurrence than בּוּח. It seems fairly certain, however, that two biblical references (2 Kings xix 21 and Isa. xxxvii 22) should be subtracted from בּוּח and added to בּוּחָ.

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EMPHASIS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Oûros in oblique cases.

This pronoun is, in various ways, specially interesting in the above connexion. Partly adjectival in its usage, and partly a demonstrative pronoun, the investigation of it serves, to some extent, to throw light on the emphasis of adjectives. The first question, however, in the study of it was this. Would its *pronominal* uses bear out the principles formulated in the case of the personal pronouns? It is clear, *ab initio*, that the epidictic force of this pronoun naturally renders it peculiarly susceptible of emphatic usage: and, this being so, it seems to afford a strong corroboration of *emphasis by order*, which has been formulated in previous papers in the oblique cases of the personal pronouns. For investigation shews that *oûros*—naturally inclined to emphasis as it is—is found, in the large majority of cases (though not in all) in the emphatic order; that is, before the verb, or even first in the sentence;

¹ Dr Burney instances Song vi 1 ff. See his note in *J.T.S.* July 1909, pp. 584 ff.