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NOTES AND STUDIES

ZECHARIAH xii-xiii 1.

THE book of Zechariah in its several parts, may be compared to a bunch of master keys, inasmuch as it opens the way to the elucidation of what is otherwise obscure not only in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, but even in the New Testament itself. At first sight, indeed, it is not a particularly attractive book. It lacks the literary force which distinguishes many parts of the Old Testament. Its great value lies in the fact that in its component documents, which can be dated with tolerable certainty, we are shewn the contemporary thought, aspirations, and political outlook of men of Judæan birth. The book, which falls into three main divisions, chs. i-viii, ix-xi, xii-xiv, may be assigned with almost absolute certainty to two periods: the first division, chs. i-viii (though in i 2-6 and vii-viii the hand of a later editor is evident), deals with the course of events in Judæa in the reign of Darius Hystaspis, from the early part of the year 519 B.C. to about 514 B.C.: the second and third divisions are concerned with the Maccabean struggle for independence and the events leading up to it.¹

The chapters xii-xiv may be classed with 'apocalyptic' literature in that, as in Daniel viii-xii the author (or authors) has adopted a *past* standpoint from which he ostensibly predicts events which as a matter of fact were past at the time of his writing. By this literary device he was able to bring his anticipations of future peace and happiness into close relation with the unhappy experiences of the past, and to suggest that in the Divine counsels the last mentioned would prove to be the preliminary of the former. At the time of the completion of these chapters not only had the deliverance of Judæa (i. e. the country districts of Judæa) been achieved, but also, though later, that of Jerusalem. This points to a date about 141 B.C.

¹ In justification of the assignment of any portion of the prophetic books to a date later than that of Ecclesiasticus, I would refer to what I have previously published in *The Composition of the Book of Isaiah* (Schweich Lectures, 1909) pp. 78-80; also to the notes on Zechariah in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible* p. 579.

According to our author, Jehovah, the Creator¹ of the world, has ordained that Jerusalem should be a means of bringing sorrow upon the non-Jewish peoples of Palestine.² The thought seems to be that those who have opposed Jerusalem—the writer here thinks of Jerusalem as, rightfully, the place of Jehovah's habitation and the home of righteous Jews—as a punishment for their sins have been infatuated to meet their fate³; just as Ahab, according to Micaiah the son of Imlah, was infatuated to go to his death at Ramoth Gilead (1 Kings xxii). The result of this opposition to Jerusalem, which the non-Jewish Palestinian peoples, in conjunction with the Greeks, have madly attempted, is their discovery that they have undertaken an intolerable burden; so that they give way to uncontrolled lamentation, lacerating themselves in their grief in truly heathenish fashion (the practice is forbidden in connexion with the priests in Leviticus xxi 5). The military equipment ('horses') of the enemies of Israel avails them nothing; for at Jehovah's will the horses are blinded with fright, while the 'house of Judah is enabled to see clearly'.⁴ The chieftains of Judah, i. e. the Hasmonaean leaders, are of opinion that in attacking Jerusalem, and consequently inflicting injury on the city, they are not guilty of any wrong against Jehovah, for Jerusalem, which ought to be Jehovah's holy city, has become the main seat of the Jewish Hellenizers, and the population still remaining there—the loyal adherents of the law having perished or fled from the city—have been rebels against Jehovah their God.⁵ These Jewish chieftains have kindled a great conflagration among the Palestinian peoples, the outcome of which will be that heathenism will be banished, and Jerusalem will again be inhabited by a Jewish population worshipping Jehovah. It is something of a humiliation to Jerusalem—which in recent times has evidently looked down upon the country districts of

¹ The general resemblance which the language of this passage bears to the late insertions in the book of Amos (e. g. Amos iv 13) as well as to passages in the book of Isaiah (e. g. Isa. li 22 f) will be manifest to every one.

² N.B. עַמִּים in these chapters is apparently used of the more immediate neighbours of the Jews, such as the Philistines, Edomites, &c., גֵּוֹיִם of the Greeks and nations farther afield.

³ The text of the last clause of *v.* 2 is corrupt, and emendation is precarious.

⁴ Read בֵּית יְהוּדָה אֶפְקָה עֵינָיו.

⁵ For the impossible reading of the Massoretic Text אִמְצָה לִי יִשְׁבִּי I would suggest מָרוּ יִשְׁבִּי הָאֱלֹהִים. The first stage in the corruption would seem to have been the accidental transposition of the הָאֱלֹהִים of הָאֱלֹהִים, thus producing אִמְצָה לִי יִשְׁבִּי which a later scribe erroneously corrected into the present text. On this supposition the sentence will run as follows: 'And the chieftains of Judah will say in their heart, Have not the inhabitants of Jerusalem rebelled against Jehovah of Hosts their God?' This correction gives force to the otherwise pointless אֱלֹהֵיהֶם.

Judaea—that deliverance should have come to Judaea first and to the capital city last; and this humiliation will be a salutary check to the arrogance of ‘the house of David’ and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem’s dark days are over, and the city will in the future attain to the greatest power; so that those who are on the verge of ruin will become as great and powerful as David, and ‘the house of David’ will have an authority like that of ‘the angel of Jehovah’ in the heroic days of old. So entirely will the state of Gentile tyranny be reversed that a war of extermination is to be waged against the former oppressors.¹ And with the breaking of the Gentile power ‘the house of David’ will come to its own: this, however, cannot be effected till there has been a solemn expiation of the guilt in which both ‘the House of David’ and the inhabitants of Jerusalem are involved.

And here it becomes necessary to enquire what is to be understood by the expression ‘the house of David’. According to Wellhausen (*Die Kleinen Propheten* p. 199) ‘the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem’ means simply the government and the people, like *senatus populusque Romanus*. This explanation might well be accepted if we had any reason to believe that the phrase had been current in the days of the Jewish Monarchy; for the late post-exilic writers love to borrow expressions from the older literature, even though they are not strictly accurate. But in the absence of any proof that the phrase was in common use in pre-exilic times, it is better to interpret it according to the natural sense of the words.²

The nature of the offence of ‘the House of David in particular and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem’ is now pretty clearly indicated by the author. They have been guilty not only of ‘uncleanness’ (i. e. heathen abominations, cf. Ezek. xxxvi 17, Ezra ix 11, 2 Chron. xxix 5) but even of murder; and it is this murder especially which must be expiated by solemn fasting and penitence. The guilty ones shall look to him³ whom they have put to death. In the light of chapter xi (which is most naturally understood as referring to Oniah, the good shepherd, and Menelaus, the bad shepherd), the reference here is perhaps to the murder of Oniah at Antioch, which, according to 2 Macc. iv 32 ff, was

¹ Note the strangeness of the expression ‘I will seek’ (שׁוֹכֵן). To the writer the extermination of the hated armies of the Seleucid empire (an empire consisting, as the book of Daniel puts it, ‘of all peoples, nations, and languages’) seemed a task which would tax to the full the power of Jehovah Himself.

² The possibility of this is indeed recognized by Wellhausen *loc. cit.*, footnote.

³ For the ungrammatical אֵלַי we should probably read simply אֵל though it is not impossible that some words have been omitted. It is probable that the reading of the Massoretic Text אֵלַי ‘unto me’ gave rise to the supposition that Zechariah the son of Berechiah was murdered. See the Targum on Lam. ii 20 where he appears as ‘the great priest and faithful prophet’; cf. also St Matt. xxiii 35.

brought about by the machinations of Menelaus, who doubtless in this as in many of his other crimes had the support of other Hellenizing Jews. The expiatory act of penitence must be shared in by the whole population of the land; but four families who are evidently regarded as most deeply implicated are specially mentioned. These are 'the house of David', 'the house of Nathan', 'the house of the Shimeite', and 'the house of Levi'. It is evident that in the author's mind these four families are representative of the aristocracy of Judaea; the identification of them, therefore, if possible, will throw a considerable amount of light on the social and political condition of Judaea about 141 B.C. It is noteworthy that there is no mention of the sons of Tobias whose history is related by Josephus (Ant. xii 4; see also 2 Macc. iii 11) and whom we should suppose from his account to have been the chief people in Judaea. It is not impossible, however, that Tobias, whose genealogy is not given, although he was allied by marriage with a high priest, was a *parvenu*, and that his descendants, for all their wealth, were not accounted as blue-blooded aristocrats.

But if the family of Tobias, which in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes certainly included the wealthiest and, politically, the most powerful people in Judaea is ignored by our author, we may reasonably conclude that the families which he mentions are regarded by him as specially connected with the history or destiny of the Jewish nation. In regard to the house of David indeed this is obvious, and since the phrase is used without qualification we naturally understand it as denoting the lineal descendants of the kings of Judah, that is to say those who traced their genealogy back through Zerubbabel to Jehoiachin and his predecessors.

With whom then are we to identify the family of Nathan? Several people of this name are mentioned besides the prophet of David's time; e. g. in 2 Sam. xxiii 36, 1 Kings iv 5 (in each of these two places, however, it is a son of a Nathan who is the prominent person); 1 Chron. ii 36 (where Nathan occurs not as the founder of a family but simply as one in a genealogical chain); Ezra viii 16, x 39 (where the name only is given without any genealogy); and, lastly, in 2 Sam. v 14, 1 Chron. iii 5, 1 Chron. xiv 4, among the sons of David. Of all these the last is obviously the one with the best claim to be reckoned among the Judæan aristocracy. The list of David's sons, however, as given in 1 Chron. iii 1-8 is certainly incorrect; for since the words of the woman of Tekoa (2 Sam. xiv 5 ff) clearly imply that by the banishment of Absalom, David is left without a son, it follows that at this time Absalom was the sole surviving son, and that Adonijah was born after his death.¹ But though the Chronicler has wrongly excluded Adonijah

¹ There can be little doubt that the last clause of 1 Kings i 6 should run 'and he begat him after the death of Absalom'.

from the list of David's sons who were born in Jerusalem, and it may be questioned whether he is right in assigning to the mother of Solomon *three* other sons (that is two besides the one whose death is related in 2 Sam. xii 15 ff), it is noteworthy that in enumerating David's younger sons he mentions a Nathan before Solomon. That Solomon was not the rightful heir was acknowledged even by himself (see 1 Kings ii 22: 'ask for him the kingdom also; *for he is mine elder brother*'), and he owed his advancement to the throne to the disgraceful intrigue of the prophet Nathan and Bathsheba who took advantage of David's senility.

It is, therefore, quite possible that Solomon had a brother Nathan older than himself but younger than Adonijah, who after the murder of Adonijah, according to the strict right of primogeniture, was the legitimate heir to David's throne. We read of no political activity in connexion with him; and after Solomon had shewn that he would stick at nothing to make good his usurpation, Nathan may have deemed it prudent to avoid any suspicion of seeking to supplant his brother. But royal genealogies are not readily forgotten, and the descendants of Nathan may well have cherished the memory of their royal descent even though they were politically unimportant.

The next family mentioned, that of Levi, obviously comprises the priests, of whom some at least had evidently held office under the usurping Menelaus (who was not of priestly lineage) and had acquiesced in the desecration of the Temple and in its dedication to the worship of Olympian Zeus. The statement of 1 Macc. iv 42 that Judas 'chose blameless priests, such as had pleasure in the law' is sufficient evidence that many priests were by no means blameless.

There remains one other family, that of the Shimeite (or according to the Septuagint, Simeon), and the identification of this family is more difficult. In 2 Sam. v 14, 1 Chron. xiv 4, we find among David's sons a Shammua (שמׁוּא) who in 1 Chron. iii 5 appears as Shimea (שׁמֵיָא). It is *possible*, therefore, that by 'the family of the Shimeite' we should understand yet another family claiming descent from David. The mention of this family however *after* that of Levi makes this improbable, and it is better to seek an explanation elsewhere. In Numbers iii 21 indeed we read of 'the family of the Shimeite' (the expression being identical with that in Zech. xii 13), who were Levites (as distinct from the priests who claimed descent from Aaron), and who regarded as their spiritual if not their physical ancestor the Shimei mentioned in Num. iii 18.¹ If this identification be adopted the

¹ The possibility of another though less probable identification of 'the family of the Shimeite' cannot altogether be ruled out. According to 1 Chron. viii 33 ff the line of Saul continued for several generations; and the fact that Saul's residence is still called Gibeah of Saul as late as the time of Isaiah makes it probable that Saul's

writer of Zechariah xii mentions two lay and two clerical families as prominent in Judah : of the latter the one belonging to the priesthood proper, the other to the non-priestly *personnel* of the Temple : the two former claiming descent from David, one through the whole line of Jewish kings and Zerubbabel, the other from Nathan who had at least as good a claim as Solomon to be regarded as heir of David. But whether we conclude that about 141 B.C. there were in or near Jerusalem two prominent families claiming descent from David or only one, it is at any rate clear that there were at this time descendants of David, recognized as such, with whom hopes for the restoration of the line of David would naturally be connected. It is true that we look in vain in the books of Maccabees for any hint of their existence ; but since these books are the work of partisans of the Hasmonaean high-priestly kings this omission is not surprising. In the Old Testament, however, if once a date in the Maccabean period be conceded for portions of the prophetic books and for the Psalms as we now have them,¹ the situation in Judaea at the time when Jewish independence seemed to be in sight is perfectly clear. Those who were familiar with the Law could not forget that it had been predicted that the sceptre should not depart from Judah (Gen. xlix 10) ; and to people whose history contained no tradition of national independence except under a king, the restoration of a monarchy would naturally be hoped for. Probably there were some who looked for a Jewish king who should be of the line of David. Thus the author of Psalm lxxii prays for and expects the restoration of *an hereditary Jewish monarchy*, but does not state that this monarchy must belong to the Davidic line. Similarly Zech. ix 9 expresses the hope that the king who is expected—the author has no definite person in view—will come from the ranks of the *lowly* or *poor*,² and gives no hint that he is likely to be of royal descent.³

Inasmuch, however, as the dynasty of David had held the throne of Judah till the exile, and after its downfall Jeremiah had expressed the hope that a scion of the Davidic tree might again flourish, it was inevitable that the thought of national independence should at once suggest to many in Judah the expectation of the revival of the Davidic descendants held land at Gibeah in the latter part of the eighth century B.C. We read of a Shimei ' of the family of the house of Saul ' in 2 Sam. xvi 5 ff, and ' the family of the Shimeites ' may denote his descendants.

¹ For this view of the date of the Psalter see *Encyclopaedia Britannica* 11th ed., art. Psalms.—R.H.K.

² יָדָע as in Ps. x 2, 9, xiv 6, &c.

³ It is noteworthy that the author has in mind the blessing of Judah in Gen. xlix. The apparently unnecessary elaboration in the description of the beast of burden—for was there ever an ass which was not the offspring of a she-ass!—is due to the author's quotation of Gen. xlix 11. The author means that at last the description of Gen. xlix is to be realized.

monarchy. In 519 B. C. indeed it had seemed likely that Zerubbabel would realize the hope expressed in Jeremiah xxiii 5 ff (cf. Zech. iii 8, vi 10 ff *corrected text*); but Zerubbabel probably roused the suspicions of the Persian government, and in Nehemiah's age the political situation was such that it would doubtless have been dangerous to suggest for Judah a native king. But three centuries later those who had groaned under the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes, and had turned to the writings of the prophets for comfort in their tribulation, must have found in Jeremiah xxiii 5 ff an anchor of their soul in the sea of affliction which threatened to sweep them away. In the past Jehovah had shewn His 'sure mercies' to David, in that, whereas in the Kingdom of Israel there was no lasting dynasty, in Judah the throne was occupied to the end by a member of the house of David. The Divine favour to the house of David, it seemed, was too definitely marked¹ (in spite of the unworthiness of some of those who had sat on David's throne), ever to be withdrawn. Had not the prophet Haggai expected that what had been foretold of Jehoiakim (Jer. xxii 24) would be reversed in Zerubbabel (Hag. ii 23)? and though the fulfilment of Haggai's vision had tarried, its delay could not be for ever. If we can put ourselves in the place of those who had suffered for conscience' sake, and had fought for freedom to worship God; if we can imagine—and the recollection of the time of distress 1914–1918 ought to help our imagination—in what frame of mind the scriptures were ransacked for messages of comfort, we shall understand how many of those who found themselves being emancipated from the heavy yoke of a heathen king and from the persecution and exactions of apostates among their own countrymen believed that at last there would be revealed the shoot from the stump of the cut down tree of David and that under his beneficent rule peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety, would be established among the Jews for all generations. That Jer. xxiii 5 f was a favourite passage of scripture is shewn by the *imitation* of it in Isaiah xi 1 ff. It is remarkable that in Psalm cxxii which seems to express the thoughts of those who went up to the great feasts at Jerusalem after the rededication of the Temple, the glory of Jerusalem consists as much in its being the seat of the house of David as in its possession of the Temple. In Ps. lxxxix (which with the five preceding Psalms forms an appendix to the second collection of Psalms contained in the Psalter, and of which the latter part, vv. 38 ff is perhaps a slightly later addition) the author shews clearly that in his opinion the house of David has deeply sinned, but, like the author of Zech. xiii 1, he believes that this sin can be expiated. Clearly when Ps. lxxxix 38–51 was written there seemed no immediate prospect of

¹ Cf. Isa. lv 3 f.

the family of David coming to their own ; moreover it is noteworthy that the Lord's anointed one is the object of bitter reproaches.

Psalms cxxxii, which is perhaps a little earlier than the latter part of Ps. lxxxix, expresses a similar hope for the house of David—a hope indeed not yet realized, though not as yet disappointed—and it is noteworthy that the psalmist mentions as equal sharers in the coming victory and peace, the family of David, the priests and the Hasidim ('saints' v. 16). This aspiration was natural enough to one who was a student of Ezekiel (see for example Ezek. xxxiv 22 ff, xxxvii 24, xlii-xlvi); but it ignored the ambition of the Hasmonaeans, who having been recognized by the Greek kings of Syria as military governors had induced the same authorities to recognize them as high priests also. There was not room in Jerusalem for a King of the house of David and such a high priest as Simon aspired to be; and the partisans of Simon in support of his claims appealed to the precedent of Melchizedek, who, being priest of the Most High God, had also been king of Jerusalem (Ps. cx). It is not difficult to imagine on what grounds the claims of the house of David were brushed aside when independence had been won. Both Ps. lxxxix and Zech. xii-xiii 1 make clear the guilt of the house of David and more than hint that this guilt is apostasy. Doubtless the partisans of the Hasmonaeans exploited this guilt to the uttermost, so that, although descendants of David still remained and were recognized as such, thereafter they were reduced to poverty and insignificance.

We have seen that about 141 B.C. there were probably two families deriving their descent from David, the one through Solomon, the other through Nathan. It is not impossible, though here we can only conjecture, that when the claims of the descendants of Solomon were set aside by the Hasmonaeans, the party—chiefly the Hasidim—who expected the restoration of the Davidic monarchy tried to put forward the claims of the family of Nathan. If so, the argument which could be used against the one could doubtless be used against the other: so that the family of Nathan sank into an obscurity like that of the descendants of Solomon. But a family which had once been 'in the running' for the kingship would not readily forget its pedigree, and both branches of the Davidic family, viz. that which traced its descent through Solomon and that which carried its genealogy through Nathan, would proudly remember that they had David to their father. Certainly during the high-priesthood of Hyrcanus 63-40 B.C. (to which period the so-called Psalms of Solomon may be assigned) the hope of the restoration of the line of David was revived; and we may certainly suppose that those who then looked for a Son of David were well aware that there were descendants of David to fulfil the hope.

It is not improbable that the branch of the family which traced descent through Zerubbabel and the long line of kings of Judah was more exposed to the jealousy of the Hasmonaeans than the family of Nathan; and it may well be that they deemed it politic to settle outside Judaea. We have no certain *data* to go upon, and can only consider what would be likely to happen, the political circumstances being as they were. If, however, we may suppose—and there is no great improbability in the supposition—that in the first century after Christ there were living in Palestine *two* families claiming descent from David through Solomon and Nathan respectively, we have ready to hand a simple explanation of the discrepancy between the first and third Gospels in the lineage of Joseph. The first evangelist, or the source which he followed, assumed that Joseph was the heir of David through the Solomonic line; the third evangelist, who may be supposed to have had access to a genealogy of the descendants of David through Nathan, assumed, or was informed, that it was to this branch that Joseph belonged. This indeed is mere conjecture, but conjecture which takes account of whatever *data* are available need not be lightly set aside. Certainly in the Apostolic age more was known about the descendants of David than a casual reading of the Old Testament would lead us to expect. If ‘the family of Nathan’ remained in Judaea, it may perhaps have perished in the troubles of the siege of Jerusalem; and after A. D. 70 ‘the family of David’ who traced descent through Solomon may well have been the sole surviving hope of those who still looked for the restoration of David’s rule.

R. H. KENNETT.

MARCAN USAGE: NOTES, CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL, ON THE SECOND GOSPEL

VII. *Particles (continued)*

(2) Ὅτι *recitative (after λέγειν or similar verbs).*

MUCH more common in St Mark than the odd use of ὅτι interrogative, discussed in the number of this JOURNAL for October 1925 (xxvii 58–62), is the idiom of a superfluous ὅτι after the verb ‘to say’ or the like, introducing not the *oratio obliqua*, as we should expect, but the *oratio recta*. In the large majority of cases, as will be seen, Matthew and (where a parallel is extant) Luke, drop the particle.

I proceed to catalogue some forty instances.

I. i 14, 15 κηρύσσω τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ [καὶ] λέγων ὅτι Πεπλήρωται