

## ARTICLE VIII.

## THE "KING" OF DEUTERONOMY XVII. 14-20.

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HAPPENING to glance at the Hexapla, I was struck by the fact that in Deuteronomy xvii. 14 *archōn*, "ruler," instead of the natural *basileus*, "king," corresponded to the Hebrew *melek*, "king," in the Septuagintal text. Nobody who knows Greek could regard this as a *translation*. Nor did the Old-Latin translators, for they render by *princeps*. On following up the clue, I found reason to suppose that the form of this law known to the LXX differed slightly, but very materially, from that of the Massoretic text. Various considerations unite to suggest this conclusion. It is true that there are other passages in which *archōn* and its cognates appear to represent *melek* and its cognates, but in each case the Septuagintal text must have been different from our Hebrew. Then, too, some of the variants in the Pentateuch are not at all favorable to the view that this law was originally a law of the kingdom, but distinctly suggest that the text has had a history. Again, the other variants in this passage itself show that there was once a text relating perhaps to rulers, not a single king, in which the throne was unknown and no suggestion of the hereditary character of the office existed.

As the inquiry is necessarily very technical, I propose, for the sake of those readers who may be interested in the Pentateuchal problem and yet do not care to grapple with the minutiae of various Greek and Hebrew readings, to set out a

translation of what I believe the original Septuagintal text to have been, in parallel columns with the ordinary R. V. rendering. For the sake of convenience I italicize the differences. My reasons are given in detail in the following discussion, but everybody can see for himself how different the historical setting of the two versions would be.

## R.V.

14 When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein; and shalt say, I will set *a king* over me, like as all the nations that are round about me;

15 thou shalt in any wise set *him king* over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: *one* from among thy brethren *shalt thou set king over thee*: thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee, which is not thy brother.

16 Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, *to the end that he should multiply horses*: forasmuch as the Lord hath said *unto you*, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold:

18 And *it shall be*, when he sitteth upon *the throne* of his *kingdom*, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites:

## PROBABLE TEXT OF THE LXX.

14 When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein; and shalt say, I will set *a ruler* [variant *rulers*] over me, like as all the nations that are round about me,

15 thou shalt in any wise set over thee a *ruler* whom the Lord thy God shall choose from among thy brethren; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee which is not thy brother.

16 Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt: forasmuch as the Lord hath said, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way.

17 [Identical with the Hebrew.]

18 And when he sitteth upon his *rule* [?], that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites:

19 And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them,

20 that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

19 And it shall be with him the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord thy God, to keep all these commands and these statutes to do,

20 that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandments to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days on his land, he and the children of Israel.

Before plunging into the technical details, certain general observations fall to be made. There are minor differences in verses 15 and 16 where the Septuagintal text is obviously superior to the Massoretic, giving the meaning in clearer phraseology. There are also some insignificant divergences in verse 19 which do not change the meaning. But the outstanding difference between the two texts is a difference of institutions contemplated. The identity in all other matters shows that we are not dealing with mere scribal errors. (In verse 18 it is possible that in the LXX the word "rule" has replaced an original "land," for such a change is attested in verse 20 by all the MSS. in Holmes, with two exceptions, which enable us to get back to the earlier text.) On the whole there can be no doubt that we have to consider divergences in the MS. tradition as distinguished from mere chance errors of Greek scribes. The latter would not lead to the numerous differences now in one touch and now in another, making jointly an entirely different institution from that known to the Massoretic text. The fact that all these little pieces dove-tail into a single pattern proves that that pattern was original and not due to chance.

I turn to the details.

In treating of *archōn* and its cognates as renderings for *melek* and its cognates we may begin with the extra-Pentateuchal cases. The first of these is Isaiah viii. 21. The Massoretic text has rightly וְהָלַךְ בְּמַלְכוּתוֹ וּבְהָלַךְ. This was rendered by Aquila and Theodotion *καὶ καταρὰ ἔσται ἐν τῷ βασιλεῖ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς αὐτοῦ*.<sup>1</sup> The LXX, however, has *κακῶς ἐρεῖτε τὸν ἄρχοντα καὶ τὰ πάτρια*. The reason is not far to seek. Either the translators or their Hebrew original deemed the true text too improper for reproduction and paraphrased it, just as in the present text of 1 Kings xxi. 10, 13, Naboth is accused of *blessing* God and the king, and in 1 Samuel iii. 13 the scribes made Eli's sons curse themselves instead of God.<sup>2</sup>

The next instance is Isaiah x. 8. For the Massoretic כִּי יֵאמַר מְלָכִים יִהְיוּ שָׂרֵי יְהוָה לְהָלַךְ, "For he saith, are not my princes all of them kings," the LXX presents us with the wholly different *καὶ ἐὰν εἴπωσιν αὐτῷ Σὺ μόνος εἶ ἄρχων*, "And if they say to him, Thou alone art ruler." Whatever may be thought of this, it is quite clear that *archōn*, "ruler," does not stand for "kings."

In verse 10 of the same chapter we have כַּבְשֵׁל יְדֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ כַּמֶּלֶךְ לְהָלַךְ, "As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the idols," exactly rendered by Theodotion, *καθάπερ εὗρεν ἡ χεὶρ μου εἰς βασιλείας τοῦ εἰδώλου*. There are here two readings — *δὴ τρόπον ταύτας ἔλαβον καὶ πάσας τὰς ἀρχὰς* [so B. *χώρας*, K. A, and the original text of Q: and this is recognized as the reading of *alia exemplaria* in Field] *λήμφομαι*, "As I took

<sup>1</sup> Symmachus renders *καὶ καταρᾶσται βασιλεῖα αὐτοῦ καὶ πάτρια αὐτοῦ*.

<sup>2</sup> Some suppose that the LXX originally read *παταρη* or *παταρα*, which is thought to be a transliteration of a Syriac word meaning "idols." This may be so, but does not affect the question of the king.

these, I will take also all the dominions [variant, "countries"].” Here again it is clear that the LXX had a reading which, even if *archas* is correct, deviated widely from our present Hebrew; and it cannot fairly be claimed that it read לממלכת.

The last passage in Isaiah is x. 12. The Hebrew has אפקד על פרי גרל לבב מלך אשור, “I will punish the fruit of the greatness of the heart of the king of Assyria.” On this, Duhm *ad loc.* writes the following: “Das Ungethüm: die Frucht der Grösse des Herzens des Königs Assyriens, passt trefflich in die Grammatiken als Beispiel davon was alles möglich ist, aber nicht in eine beschwingte Prophetenrede.”

This is as unanswerable as it is vigorous. Such a collection of genitives is impossible for the prophet, and is indeed a monstrosity. But B reads, ἐπάξει ἐπὶ τὸν νοῦν τὸν μέγαν ἐπὶ (this is omitted by א A Q Γ) τὸν ἀρχοντα τῶν Ἀσσυρίων, “He will visit the greatness of heart, the ruler of the Assyrians.”

It will be noticed that פרי, “fruit,” is missing here, while *ton archonta* occupies the place of the Hebrew *melek*. It is submitted that the LXX is here translating על פרע אשור (compare its rendering of Deut. xxxii. 42). פרע, a rare poetical word of uncertain meaning, was glossed, and ultimately relegated to the margin by מלך, and then taken into the text in the corrupt form פרי. The existence of this word פרע, meaning “ruler” or “noble,” is guaranteed by the identical Arabic root as well as by the Septuagintal rendering of Deuteronomy xxxii. 42 and one of the Septuagintal renderings of Judges v. 2.

There remain only some passages in Ezekiel. In xxviii. 12, the Massoretic מלך צור, “king of Tyre,” has τὸν ἀρχοντα Τύρου as its equivalent. In view of verse 2, where לנייר צ is rendered

by τῷ ἄρχοντι T., it seems probable that the LXX found דני in this passage also. It is interesting to note that Field has the entry οἱ Γ. ἐπὶ τὸν βασιλέα ("The three [i. e. Aquila Symmachus, Theodotion] the king"). They, at any rate, did not regard *archōn* as a possible rendering of *melek*.

In xxxvii. 22, M. T. read וְאֶחָד יִהְיֶה לְכֻלָּם לְמֶלֶךְ, "And one king shall be to them all for a king." The LXX has καὶ ἄρχων εἰς ἔσται αὐτῶν [*alia exempl.* add πάντων Field] —εἰς βασιλέα, "for a king," being added under an asterisk — "and there shall be one ruler of them."

In verse 24, M. T., וְעַבְדִּי דָוִד מֶלֶךְ עֲלֵיהֶם, "and my servant David shall be king over them," is represented by καὶ ὁ δούλος μου Δαυεὶδ ἄρχων ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν, i.e. "ruler in their midst." On the former verse, Kraetzschmar notes that only in these passages is the future ruler designated "king" by Ezekiel. It will be remarked that, apart from the rendering of the word *melek*, and the exception to Ezekiel's invariable usage furnished by the Massoretic text, there are other *indicia* of corruption. In verse 24, ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν must represent not עֲלֵיהֶם, "over them," but בתוכם, "in their midst," and the phrase is obviously נָשִׂיא בְּתוֹכָם, as in xii. 12. Then too the addition מֶלֶךְ in the earlier verse is clearly a gloss on a text which had some other expression for מֶלֶךְ in the earlier phrase. For these reasons it is submitted that the LXX found נָשִׂיא, "prince" (frequently rendered by *archōn*), and not *melek* in these passages.

It remains only to consider Ezekiel xxix. 14. f., וְהָיוּ שָׁם 14 מַמְלָכֹת 15 שְׂמֵלָה מִן הַמַּמְלָכוֹת, "and they shall be there a kingdom base beyond the kingdoms." The LXX has 14 καὶ ἔσται ἄρχῃ 15 ταπεινῇ παρὰ πάσας τὰς ἀρχάς, "and it shall be a dominion base beyond all dominions."

Field's Hexapla notes on verse 14 that the LXX had καὶ

ἔσται ἐκεῖ ἀρχή, of which ἐκεῖ had been added by Origen under an asterisk, while the three other Greek translators had (καὶ ἔσται) ἐκεῖ βασιλεῖα again with ἐκεῖ under an asterisk. On verse 15 he has LXX παρὰ πάσας τὰς ἀρχάς Theodotion παρὰ τὰς βασιλείας. Here again it would seem that Ezekiel had a text giving Egypt a lower rank than that of kingdom, and that a gloss made in the interests of historical explanation has supplanted the original.

These are all the extra-Pentateuchal passages that can be adduced to prove that מלך and its cognates could ever have been rendered by *archōn* and its cognates. It is submitted that in every case the LXX had a different text,—generally better, but sometimes worse,—and that many of the changes in the text have brought prophetic utterances into more prosaically phrased accord with the actual course of history.

Turning to the Pentateuch we find that in four passages outside the law under consideration the equivalent of מלך in the Greek text is *archōn*, but in three of these the plural is used, while in the fourth A, supported by 82 and 129 of Holmes, omits the word altogether. The passages are Genesis xlix. 20; Numbers xxiii. 21; Deuteronomy xxviii. 36; xxxiii. 5. In Genesis xlix. 20, מערני מלך, "luxuries of a king," is represented by τρυφήν ἀρχου σιν, "luxury for rulers." Clearly the Septuagintal text was different and knew nothing of *melek*. Owing to the number of different words that can be rendered by *archōn*, no certain inference is possible as to its original. In Numbers xxiii. 21 we find τὰ ἔνδοξα ἀρχόντων ἐν αὐτοῖς. Again the underlying text is difficult to divine, but again it is obvious that we have something quite different from the Massoretic ותרעת מלך בו. Field records the fact that Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion all had other renderings which corresponded to our present Hebrew. In Deu-

teronomy xxviii. 36, the LXX has *καὶ τοὺς ἄρχοντάς σου οὓς ἐὰν* (so B. *ἀν* AF) *καταστήσης*, "and thy rulers whom thou shalt set," which cannot be the equivalent of *וְאֵת מְלֶכְךָ אֲשֶׁר יָבִי*, "thy king whom," etc. Once more, the other three translators render *καὶ τὸν βασιλέα σου*, "and thy king." The suggestion lies near at hand that some plural word has undergone corruption (as in some of the other cases we have noticed) in the interests of historical accuracy. It is not credible that any Jewish scribe finding *מְלֶכְךָ* should have glossed it by the Septuagintal text: but the converse hypothesis is intrinsically probable, and is supported by what we have seen in other cases. It is important to note that in all the Pentateuchal instances we have examined, the "king" of the Hebrew text appears to have been an alternative to *plural* words. The remaining case need not keep us long, for it is full of difficulty. In xxxiii. 5, for *וַיְהִי בִישׁרֹן מֶלֶךְ*, "and he was in Jeshurun king," the ordinary Septuagintal text is *καὶ ἔσται* (which does not render *וַיְהִי*) *ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ἄρχων*, "and he shall be ruler in the loved." This is supported by the entry in Field, but A and 82 and 129 of Holmes omit *archōn*, "ruler." Another MS. (108) has in the margin *ἐν τῷ εὐθεῖ βασιλεύς*, supplying the usual protest against the possibility of treating *archōn* as a rendering of *melek*. What may be at the bottom of A's divergence is not clear. There are other variants recorded in Holmes, and possibly the larger Cambridge Septuagint may throw light on the passage when it reaches Deuteronomy. In any case it is submitted that as *וְאֵת*, two words later, is rendered by *archontōn*, it is inconceivable that *archōn* (if it be really the original text of the LXX) can here represent a Hebrew *melek*.

That exhausts the passages outside our own where a Masoretic *melek* is represented by a Septuagintal *archōn*. It is



submitted that in no single instance did the LXX have the same reading, and that the Hexaplar variants all tend to prove that nobody ever believed that *melek* could be translated by *archōn*.

It should, however, be mentioned that there is one argument which could possibly be pressed into service in support of the theory that *archōn*="king." It is used for the Hebrew Moloch in Leviticus xviii. 21 — where the three other translators substitute Moloch — and xx. 1-5. Yet here again the LXX uses the plural in the last-mentioned verse, which makes the rendering very doubtful; and, moreover, the Greek representation of the name of a heathen god would be influenced by theological considerations, as indeed is the pointing of the Hebrew text (giving *Moloch* for *Melech*). Just as we saw reason to suppose that in Isaiah the translators shirked speaking of cursing in connection with the words "god and the king," so they may probably have avoided calling a heathen deity by a Divine title — if indeed the use of the plural does not point to a different Hebrew word altogether. For this reason it does not appear to me that the fact should affect our view of the Deuteronomic text. That cannot have been influenced by such a notion, and moreover the other variants in the passage point in the same direction. That exhausts the other passages we have to consider. Elsewhere "king" alike in the Pentateuch and the other parts of the Bible, is rendered by the natural *basileus*.

The details as to Deuteronomy xvii. itself are as follows:—

Ver. 14: "I will set over me a ruler [according to A and one of the Old-Latin copies, "rulers"] for "I will set over me a king."

Ver. 15: תשים עיר מלך, "thou shalt set over thee a king," in its second occurrence is omitted by one MS. of Holmes

(44). Examination of the text shows that it is due to dit-tography, and is not original.

Ver. 16: Lucian and some other MSS. rightly omit לסוף הרכבות סוף, "to the end that he should multiply horses."

Ver. 18: "The throne" is not an original part of the Sep-tuagintal text.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 19: Six cursives of Holmes omit "and read in it all." These words merely explain the context, and it is therefore immaterial whether they are retained or not. They are prob-ably not original.

Ver. 20: For "on his kingdom" there are three variants. The ordinary reading is, ἐπὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς, "on his rule." Aquila is recorded to have read "kingdom" with our present He-brew. But one MS. of Holmes (128) reads ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, "on the land," and another (18) has the obviously conflate ἐπὶ ἀρχῆς τῆς γῆς, "on the rule of the land."

For "his children in the midst of Israel" one Septuagintal MS. (16) reads "the children of Israel." This is supported by other variants, the ordinary reading being "he and his children in the midst of the children of Israel." That is ob-viously conflate, resulting from the combination of the pres-ent Hebrew with the text of 16. There is, however, another reading. Some MSS. have "he and his children the children of Israel." This is clearly an intermediate text, pointing back to the reading of 16 as the original.

The resulting text has already been given above. It re-mains to review the historical considerations.

Speaking of the narrative of 1 Samuel vii. 2-17; viii.; x. 17-27a; xii., Dr. Driver writes as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that in verse 20 the Samaritan inserts "throne of" before "kingdom," showing how easily such a gloss could creep in.

"This narrative, now, shows no indications of the law of Dt. having been known in *fact*, either to Samuel, or to the people who demanded of him a king: had such been the case, it is incredible either that Samuel should have resisted the application of the people as he is represented as doing, or — if *per impossibile* he did this — that the people should not have appealed to the law, as a sufficient justification of their request." (Deuteronomy, p. 213.)

In the hands of Dr. Driver this of course becomes an argument for the late dating of Deuteronomy; yet if we look at our law again we shall see that it is fatal to such a theory. Dr. Green's arguments on this point are unanswerable:—

"And how can a code belong to the time of Josiah, which, while it contemplates the possible selection of a king in the future (Deut. xvii 14 ff), nowhere implies an actual regal government . . . which lays special stress on the requirements that the king must be a native and not a foreigner (xvii 15), when the undisputed line of succession had for ages been fixed in the family of David, and that he must not 'cause the people to return to Egypt' (ver. 16), as they seemed ready to do on every grievance in the days of Moses (Nu. xiv 4), but which no one ever dreamed of doing after they were fairly established in Canaan?" (Moses and the Prophets, pp. 63-64.)

These arguments are really unanswerable.

It is urged that the horses, the wives, the silver and gold, are reminiscences of Solomon; but in truth there is nothing distinctive about such traits. They were obvious dangers such as must have been familiar to Moses from contemporary history. The dangers of a foreigner's rule can also be explained from Egyptian history, which is rich in such episodes, but not from the annals of the Hebrew monarchy. On the other hand, the Septuagintal text enables us, while giving due weight to these considerations, to suppose that the law of a *kingdom* was unknown to Samuel, who would only have been acquainted with the earlier text referring to a non-hereditary ruler such as he himself was. It must be remem-

bered that (apart from the appointment of Joshua and this law) the Pentateuch makes no provision at all for a permanent central executive. Nevertheless the subject must have been present to the lawgiver's mind, though tribal jealousies and other reasons may have made it impracticable to take any definite step towards erecting such an authority. For the conquest it was clearly necessary to vest supreme executive power in the best general.

It remains to notice that Ezekiel in his picture of the future uniformly avoids the term "king." May we not suppose the reason to have been that he, too, knew a text of Deuteronomy in which, as in the LXX, the law did not employ this term?