

undying faith which is indeed branded into the hymns of the French Reformed Church—branded by years of bitter persecution and steady repression. It is not of such vital importance as the spirit of complete self-abandoning trust before God which could enable the Church of sorrows to sing :

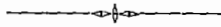
Lord, Thou hast loved me ! E'en before the light
 Gleamed o'er the world created by Thy voice,
 Before the day-star soared into sight,
 And set life's pulses throbbing after night,
 Lord, Thou hast loved me !

Lord, Thou hast loved me ! E'en when cross of shame
 Took Jesu's body in its cruel arms,
 And when, to save me from undying flame,
 Thy Son bore sin that crushed my nerveless frame,
 Lord, Thou hast loved me !

Lord, Thou hast loved me ! Yes, dear Paraclete ;
 When Thou, Lifegiver, visited my soul,
 Quick'ning dead hands and stirring tired feet,
 And I, poor sinner, might with saints compete,
 Lord, Thou hast loved me !

Lord, Thou wilt love me always ! Satan, fly !
 God's gifts can ne'er be stayed by such as thou ;
 Though evil come, yet grace is ever nigh ;
 To Thy love, Father, let my own reply—
 Who lov'st me always !

W. A. PURTON.



ART. VI.—THE SEVENTY WEEKS OF DANIEL AND PERSIAN CHRONOLOGY.

ONE would naturally think that a prophecy like that of the seventy weeks (heptades) of Daniel—known to have been fulfilled—would admit of easy proof and explanation ; but so far is this from being the case, that (as Professor Stuart justly remarks) “it would require a volume of considerable magnitude to give a history of the ever-varying and contradictory opinions of critics respecting this *locus vexatissimus*, and perhaps a still larger one to establish an exegesis that would stand.” Professor Stuart is of opinion that “no interpretation as yet published will stand the test of thorough grammatico-historical criticism, and that a candid, searching, and thorough critique here is still a desideratum.”

In the first place, commentators cannot agree as to the *terminus a quo*, which must evidently be some decree or order “to restore and build Jerusalem.” “Know therefore and

¹ F. Chavannes.

understand," says the prophecy, "that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the prince," etc.

There are four different edicts from which the 490 years might be dated: (1) One issued in the first year of Cyrus, B.C. 536 of the ordinary chronology; (2) one given in the third (or fourth) year of Darius Hystaspis, B.C. 518; (3) the commission given to Ezra by Artaxerxes Longimanus in the seventh year of his reign, B.C. 457; and (4) that given to Nehemiah by the same king in the twentieth year of his reign, B.C. 444. But of these it may be observed that the decree of Darius merely confirms that of Cyrus, whilst that of Artaxerxes in his twentieth year is but a renewal of the decree issued in his seventh year; so that one would think that there were but two to choose between.

To give some idea, however, of the difficulty which commentators have found in expounding the prophecy, and making it tally with the received chronology, the subjoined list of explanations is given:

1. The decree of the first year of Cyrus has been selected as the starting-point by Calvin, Broughton, Beroaldus (*apud Broughton*), and the Geneva Bible. Both Calvin and Beroaldus see that the difficulty lies in settling the duration of the Persian dynasty.

2. Hans Wood, Hales, and Mede commence from the fourth year of Darius Nothus, B.C. 420, when Nehemiah's reform was completed, and end with the destruction of Jerusalem, A.D. 70. But Mede confounded Darius Nothus with Darius Hystaspis, "in the second year of whose reign (and not in that of Darius Nothus) the whole temple, after a long interruption, began to revive."

3. Prideaux, Stackhouse, Cresswell, Kett, Pusey, and most modern commentators, commence from the seventh of Artaxerxes Longimanus, B.C. 457, and end with the crucifixion of our Lord, A.D. 33.

4. A numerous class of commentators, Petavius, Africanus, Lyranus, Zonaras, Ussher, and some moderns, take the twentieth of Artaxerxes as their starting-point, B.C. 444; but many of them reckon by lunar years, consisting of 354 days and a fraction over.

5. Eusebius commences from the sixth year of Darius Hystaspis, and ends the sixty-nine weeks three and a half years after Christ's baptism; but he takes the last heptade for the whole period that must elapse till the end of the world.

6. Tertullian, by beginning in the first year of Darius, counts 490 years to the destruction of Jerusalem. The late Duke of Manchester also selected the first year of Darius, son

of Ahasuerus, *anno* Nabonass. 325, B.C. 424, and ended with A.D. 66.

7. As far as the *terminus a quo* is concerned, Burnet, Hippolytus, Apollinaris, Ecolampadius, Melancthon, Myers, Willet, Wintle, Barnes, Boyle, Gregg, Clemens Alexandrinus, Theodoret, etc., agree with one or other of the above, but differ widely in the details of their interpretation.

8. Besides all these there are a host of German Rationalists and other anti-Messianic critics, abundantly refuted in Dr. Pusey's "Lectures on Daniel," who think that the prophecy had reference to Antiochus Epiphanes, the deposition of Onias III., etc.

Most of the commentators have rejected the decree of Cyrus for the commencement of the 490 years, because the extract from it given by Ezra does not contain any order to *build the city*, but only the temple. The document, however, is given in full by Josephus (*Antiq.* xi.) in the shape of a letter from "King Cyrus to Sisinnes and Sathrabuzanes," the Tatnai and Shetharboznai of Ezra (in 1 Esdras vii. 1 the names are the same as in Josephus), and there we find an explicit order to rebuild the city: "I have given leave" (writes King Cyrus) "to as many of the Jews that dwell in my country as please, to return to their own country, and to rebuild their city, and to build the temple of God at Jerusalem, on the same place where it was before," etc.

This preliminary objection being removed, it may be proved conclusively that this is the decree, or word, or order, referred to in the prophecy. In the first place, a literal rendering of the opening words admits of no other supposition. Hales translates: "From the going forth of the oracle to restore [*Thy people*], and to rebuild Jerusalem," etc. Calvin: "From the going forth of the edict, or a word, concerning the *bringing back of the people*," etc. Gregg: "Week seven and week sixty-two; *the people shall return*, and be built street and trench," etc.

The "going forth of a word concerning the bringing back of the people, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem," can be explained by reference to no other document than the letter of Cyrus just quoted. And if Jerusalem had not been rebuilt in compliance with some order or permission from Cyrus, then the prophecy in Isa. xlv. 28 would manifestly have been unfulfilled, and we should have another difficulty on our hands worse than the first, and another triumph for the Rationalists. There we read: "That saith of Cyrus, he is My shepherd, and shall perform all My pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, *Thou shalt be built.*"

Here, then, beyond all cavil, is the *terminus a quo* of the

490 years; but the difficulty is this, that the ordinary chronology gives us from the first of Cyrus to the birth of Christ 536 years, and to the crucifixion 569—a difficulty which will be examined by-and-by.

In addition to the reasons already mentioned for rejecting any other starting-point than this, there is the following fatal objection to the seventh or twentieth of Artaxerxes: A reference to the proceedings consequent upon the decrees of this king establishes conclusively the fact that it was *not* the city, but merely *the outer wall*, or fortifications, that they were then engaged in rebuilding. Nehemiah, chap. iii., gives us “the names and order of them that *builded the wall.*” There we read how Meremoth built or repaired the wall “from the door of the *house* of Eliashib even to the end of the *house* of Eliashib”; how Benjamin and Hashub repaired the wall “over against their *house*”; and so on right through the chapter, such and such persons being detailed to repair or build the wall opposite such and such houses. Now, how could this be if the *houses* were not yet rebuilt? Beyond all question, when Artaxerxes gave these orders *the city was already rebuilt*, and it must have been done in consequence of some previous edict; but there was no previous edict except that of Cyrus. The prophecy regarding Cyrus was therefore fulfilled; and we arrive at the same conclusion—viz., that the 490 years must date from the first of Cyrus, and we have therefore to reduce the 569 years of the common chronology to the requisite 490. It is scarcely necessary to remark that all the data for the ordinary chronology are derived from the Bible, except for the time occupied by the Persian dynasty, to ascertain the duration of which recourse has been had to other sources, the scattered dates in Ezra and Nehemiah not being sufficient for the purpose. And here a mistake has been made, arising from the well-known fact that a Persian king was in the habit of selecting his own successor from amongst his sons or other relations, in order to prevent disputes after his death; and that son so selected during his father’s lifetime was also styled king, and when his father died the son reckoned the years of his reign, not from the date of his father’s death, but from the time when he was nominated to succeed him, so that several years have been reckoned twice over, just as would have been the case had George IV. counted his ten years as regent as part of his own reign without deducting them from that of his father. As an instance of this, it may be mentioned that, if we compare Nehemiah with Josephus, we shall find that the *twentieth* year of the reign of Artaxerxes corresponded with the *twenty-fifth* of Xerxes:

NEHEMIAH ii. 1-11.

"It came to pass in the month Nisan, in the *twentieth* year of Artaxerxes the king. . . I came to Jerusalem."

JOSEPHUS, ANTIQ. xi. 6.

"Now, when he (Nehemiah) was come to Babylon . . . he came to Jerusalem in the *twenty-fifth* year of the reign of Xerxes."

In the following section Josephus goes on to say that Nehemiah "also went about the compass of the city by night, being never discouraged, neither about the work itself, nor about his own diet and sleep, for he made no use of those things for his pleasure but out of necessity; for in so long time *was the wall built*, in the *twenty-eighth* year of the reign of Xerxes, in the ninth month."

It is quite evident, therefore, that Xerxes and Artaxerxes were on the throne at the same time for twenty years. (The Chronological Institute of London, "Hebrew Chronology," p. 162, etc., maintain that Artaxerxes was only another name for Xerxes, the prefix *Arta* signifying *Great*.) We learn also from Herodotus (vii. 2-4) that four years after the battle of Marathon Darius declared Xerxes to be his heir and successor, having at the same time raised him to the throne—*ἀποδέξας βασιλῆα Πέρσῃσι Δαρείου Ξέρξεα*. We thus get rid of the separate reign of Xerxes altogether, and possibly Broughton's statement of the number of years from Cyrus to Xerxes may be correct¹:

THE TRUE ACCOUNT.				THE FALSE ACCOUNT.			
		years.				years.	
Cyrus, after Babylon was con-			Cyrus reigned	...	...	...	30
quered, reigned	...	3	Cambyses	...	...	...	7
Cambyses, seven in all, but alone	...	5	Asuerus.	...	...	...	12
Asuerus, or D. Hystaspis	...	12	Xerxes	...	...	...	10
Xerxes alone	...	0					—
		20					59

Now, the date of the battle of Marathon is generally set down as B.C. 490. If Xerxes began to reign four years after this, B.C. 486, and Herodotus and Broughton are correct, we reduce the chronology almost within the requisite limits. The first year of Cyrus would thus be B.C. 506 instead of B.C. 536, the ordinary date assigned to this year. That the chronology of this period is very uncertain is an acknowledged fact, and it need not therefore excite surprise that commentators find such difficulty in hitting upon a satisfactory explanation of this celebrated prophecy, which, being genuine, naturally and necessarily refuses to be reconciled to a system of chronology evidently inaccurate. The first requisite is to fix the duration of the whole Persian dynasty, when the difficulty will vanish, the number of years from the death of Alexander the Great

¹ Broughton, p. 255.

to the birth of Christ being accurately known. Some of the numerous readers of the CHURCHMAN may perhaps have both the ability and the will to unravel this difficulty, and thus show a satisfactory solution of the prophecy, dating the commencement of the 490 years from the decree of Cyrus, which is clearly the proper *terminus a quo*.

JOHN MILNER.

Notes on Bible Words.

No. II.—“TRUST.”

THE student who with regard to the word “trust,” verb and noun, examines an English Concordance, will see that the word is rare in the New Testament as compared with the Old. On the other hand, he will see that “believe,” with the noun “faith,” is comparatively rare in the Old Testament.

Again, the student who uses the Revised Version will note that in several places of the N.T. “hope” is given instead of “trust.” Thus Eph. i. 12: “Who first trusted”; “before hoped”: in verse 13 “*trusted*” is not found. 1 Tim. iv. 10: “We trust”; “we have our hope set.” John v. 45: “Moses, in whom ye trust”; “on whom ye have set your hope.” Again, Rom. xv. 24: “I trust to see you”; “I hope.” 2 John 12. *Hope*, in such passages, is the proper rendering.¹

The student who has some knowledge of Greek and Hebrew will be able, with his Lexicons, to trace the thoughts of “trust.”

To *believe* is πιστεύειν, and *faith* is πίστις. In connexion with “trust” see passages like Matt. viii. 10: “Such great faith” (confidence); and xviii. 6: “Believe on Me.” 2 Tim. i. 12: “I know whom I have believed,” “in whom I have trusted.” (Give one’s self up to; commit one’s self to.)

To be *persuaded*, to be induced to believe, to yield to, is πείθειν (Pass. and Midd.). Rom. viii. 38: “I am persuaded.” Πέποιθα²: to be *confident*, have trust. 2 Cor. i. 9: “Should not trust in ourselves”; in verse 10 it is ἠλπικαμεν, set our hope, *not* “trust,” as in A.V. In x. 7: “Trust to himself that he is Christ’s,” “trusteth in himself.” Compare Matt. xxvii. 43. Heb. ii. 13: “I will put my trust in Him,” ἔσομαι πεποιθὼς. “I will *have* my trust” (Dr. Moulton); continuous confidence. Rom. ii. 19: “Art confident” Sometimes with dative of person [or thing] on whom confidence reposes (see Prov. xiv. 16; Isa. xxviii. 17). Phil. i. 14: “trusting in my bonds.”

¹ ἔλπιζω. One meaning of the English verb “trust” is to expect, to hope. “I trust it will grow” (Shakespeare). The primary idea, of course, is to place confidence in, to rely upon.

² Sept., as a rule, for *batach* and *chasah*.