

*SPECIMEN OF A NEW TRANSLATION OF THE
PROPHETS.*

AN ideal translation of the Bible should possess, I suppose, four leading characteristics: it should be idiomatic, dignified, accurate, and clear. There are English versions of the Old Testament which possess undeniably the first two of these characteristics: there is none, unhappily (except for particular books), which possesses, as completely as it should do, the last two. Hence, unquestionable as is the superiority of the Revised Version to the Authorized Version, and greatly as it is to be desired that it may before long come generally to supersede it in the public services of the Church, there still seems room for a version which, even though made by a private hand, may nevertheless reproduce, more exactly than was found possible in the Revised Version, but at the same time without doing any violence to the English language, and in the same general literary style with which English Bible-readers have long been familiar, the meaning and force of the original. In such a version, the first two characteristics mentioned above, idiom and dignity, would be naturally secured by adhering as closely as possible to the language of the Authorized Version; in fact, this would be deviated from only when it was necessary in the interests of the third and fourth of the same characteristics, accuracy and clearness. By accuracy, I mean the representation of the force of the original as faithfully as grammar, and philology, and the study of the same word as it occurs in other passages, enable us to ascertain it, but without any such attempt to

reproduce grammatical or lexical minutiae as would result in unnatural English, or amount to pedantry. By clearness, I mean consistency and intelligibility in the sequence of tenses, the avoidance of ambiguous expressions, and especially the avoidance of words which, however familiar in the sixteenth century, are now either unknown, or have so changed their meaning as to be by the great majority of readers misunderstood.¹ The Bible, if it is not too bold to say so, should, I think, be accessible to English readers in a translation—not indeed “modernized” (in the sense in which this term is commonly understood), but—clear and accurate, and free from needless and misleading archaisms.²

Passages not unfrequently occur, especially in the poetical and prophetic books, which, sometimes from the nature of the allusions contained in them, sometimes from abrupt changes in the speakers, or in the line of thought, and sometimes also from other causes, an average reader finds it difficult to understand. It appears to me, I must own, that a plain and clear rendering of the Hebrew does much in many cases to alleviate this difficulty. At the same time, there remain undoubtedly passages where it does not remove it entirely; and where, for instance, brief headings, indicating the line of thought in the following paragraph, the use of inverted commas showing where words spoken begin and end, and a

¹ See the notes below on ii. 9, 32, 36 (footnote). “Strange” and “stranger” are, for instance, often used, even in R.V., in the sense of *foreign*, *foreigner*,—a sense which practically no one now would think of attributing to them. See also the note on *excellent*, and *excellency*, in Glossary I. of my *Parallel Psalter*, or, more fully, in *Joel and Amos*, p. 238, or *Daniel*, p. 33 f., in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*. Words which are at all of a technical character should also, if it can possibly be done, be represented consistently by the same English word: for examples of the confusion arising from the neglect to do this, sometimes even in R.V., and in words of some importance, see the articles on *Creeping things* (notice especially the confusion in Lev. xi.), *Offering*, *Plain River*, *Stranger*, *Vale*, *Weights and Measures* (note at end), in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*; and the note on *sprinkle* in the *Speaker's Commentary* on Leviticus, p. 499b.

² Archaisms which are *not* misleading should certainly be retained.

minimum of explanatory notes, referring to parallel passages or otherwise explaining allusions, the sense of which is not fairly apparent, would be of great assistance to the reader. In the passage which I have taken as a specimen,—and which presented itself to me simply because I have been recently reading this part of Jeremiah in my lectures,—I have accordingly added helps of this kind. In other respects I have followed generally, *mutatis mutandis*, the method adopted in my *Parallel Psalter*. I have naturally not been able to adhere throughout to the Massoretic text. That this text does not represent throughout the autographs of the Biblical writers, that more original readings are often preserved by the ancient Versions, particularly by the LXX., and that sometimes it is even necessary to emend it by conjecture are positions now so generally accepted by scholars, that there is no occasion to support them here by further argument. In the *application* of these principles there is indeed, and probably always will be, differences of opinion: scholars approach the problem from different points of view, and with different prepossessions, and cannot therefore be expected to agree uniformly in their results: the principle which, I venture to think, will most generally commend itself is that of giving the Hebrew text the general preference, and of deviating from it only where the grounds are cogent, and the advantage gained is unmistakable and clear. In the translation which follows, where the reading adopted implies any deviation from the Massoretic text, the reader has always been apprised of the fact: some readings of the Versions, which, though worthy of note, and very possibly original, I nevertheless, for one reason or another, hesitated to take definitely into the text, I have mentioned in the footnotes. In difficult and uncertain passages, upon the interpretation of which different views may reasonably be held, it seems to me proper to give the alternative rendering on the margin: on the other

band, alternative renderings, which possess only an antiquarian interest, I have excluded as unnecessary, and likely only to perplex a reader.

JEREMIAH II. 1-IV. 2.

The Verdict on Israel's History.

The Devotion and Happiness of Israel's Youth.

II.¹ And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,² Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith Yahweh : I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, how thou didst follow after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.

³ Israel was holiness unto Yahweh, the firstfruits of his produce : * all that devoured him were held guilty ; evil came upon them, saith Yahweh.

Israel's Ingratitude and Defection.

⁴ Hear ye the word of Yahweh, O house of Jacob, and all the families of the house of Israel : ⁵ Thus saith Yahweh, What unrighteousness did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and followed after vanity,† and became vain ? ⁶ Neither said they, ' Where is Yahweh, who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, who led us through the wilderness, through a land of steppes and of pits, through a land of drought and of the shadow of death, through a land that none passed through, and where no man dwelt ? ' ⁷ And I brought you into a garden-land, to eat the fruit thereof and the goodness thereof ; but when ye entered in, ye defiled my land, and made mine heritage an abomination. ⁸ The priests said not, ' Where is Yahweh ? ' and they that handle the law knew me not : the rulers † also transgressed § against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. || ⁹ Wherefore I will still contend with you, saith Yahweh, and with your children's children will I contend. ¹⁰ For cross over to the isles of the Kitians ¶ and see ; and send unto Kedar, ** and consider diligently ; and see if there hath been such a thing. ¹¹ Hath a nation changed its gods, which yet are no gods ? but my

* His firstfruits from the field of the world, sacred to Him (Exod. 23. 19), and consequently not to be touched with impunity.

† I.e. vain gods (Deut. 32. 21). Cp. the same words in 2 Kings 17. 15.

‡ Heb. *shepherds*. See 3. 15, 23. 1, 2, 4.

§ Properly *rebelled*. So always.

|| Cp. 1 Sam. 12. 21.

¶ I.e. the people of Kition, a town in Cyprus (now *Larnaka*).

** A tribe dwelling at some distance from Palestine on the east.

people hath changed its glory for that which doth not profit. ¹² Be appalled, O ye heavens, at this; and shudder, yea, be very desolate,* saith Yahweh. ¹³ For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living † waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

The bitter Consequences of Israel's Unfaithfulness.

¹⁴ Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born (slave)? why is he become a prey? ¹⁵ The young lions roared upon him and yelled, ‡ and they made his land waste: his cities have been burned up without inhabitant. § ¹⁶ The children also of Noph and Tahpanhes ¶ do feed on ¶ the crown of thy head. ¹⁷ Hath not thy forsaking of Yahweh thy God, when he led thee by the way, procured ** this unto thee? ¹⁸ And now what hast thou to do with the way to Egypt, to drink the waters of the Shihor? †† or what hast thou to do with the way to Assyria, to drink the waters of the River? ††† ¹⁹ Thine own wickedness shall chastise thee, and thy backturnings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken Yahweh thy God, and that no awe of me came unto thee, saith the Lord, Yahweh of hosts.

Israel's inveterate Propensity to Idolatry.

²⁰ For of old time thou §§ didst break thy yoke and burst thy thongs and thou saidst, 'I will not serve'; for upon every high hill and under every spreading tree thou didst bow thyself, playing the harlot. ||| ²¹ Yet I had planted thee as a choice vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate shoots ¶¶ of a foreign vine unto me? ²² For though thou wash thee with soda, and take thee much alkali,*** yet thine iniquity is ingrained before me, saith the Lord Yahweh. ²³ How canst thou say, 'I am not defiled, I have not gone

* Read perhaps, after LXX., and shudder exceedingly.

† I.e. running, fresh. See Lev. 13. 5, 50 (R.V.).

‡ Heb. gave out their voice.

§ Alluding probably to the destruction of the Northern Kingdom.

¶ Two cities of Egypt (see Jer. 44. 1).

¶¶ Or, with other points, do break.

** So with a slight change. The Heb. text has, *Doth not . . . procure . . . ?*

†† I.e. the Nile. Cp. Isa. 23. 3.

††† I.e. the Euphrates. See Exod. 23. 31 (R.V.).

§§ So LXX. Vulg. and virtually all moderns. The Heb. text, as pointed, has I

||| Cp. Hos. 4. 13, 2 Kings 16. 4.

¶¶ The word rendered 'degenerate shoots' is doubtful.

*** The 'burnt' ashes of certain plants, which, mixed with water, were used by the ancients for washing purposes.

after the Baals' ? see thy way in the Valley,* know what thou hast done: (thou art) a swift young she-camel, coursing hither and thither; †²⁴ as a wild ass ‡ used to the wilderness, she snuffeth up the wind in her desire; who can turn back her mating-time? none of them that seek her need weary themselves; in her month they can find her.²⁵ Withhold thy foot from being unshod, and thy throat from thirst: § but thou saidst, 'There is no hope: no; for I have loved strange (gods), || and after them I will go.'

These gods will give no help in time of need.

²⁶ As a thief is ashamed when he is found, so shall the house of Israel shew shame; they, their kings, their princes, and their priests, and their prophets; ²⁷ which say to a stock, 'Thou art my father' and to a stone, 'Thou hast brought me forth': for they have turned their back unto me, and not their face: but in the time of their trouble they will say, 'Arise and save us.' ²⁸ But where are thy gods that thou hast made thee? let them arise, if they can save thee in the time of thy trouble: for according to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah.

Israel's persistent Refusal to listen to her Prophets.

²⁹ Wherefore do ye complain unto me? ye have all transgressed against me, saith Yahweh. ³⁰ In vain have I smitten your children; they received no correction: your own sword hath devoured your prophets, like a destroying lion. ³¹ O generation, see ye the word of Yahweh: Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? or a land of thick darkness? ¶ wherefore say my people, 'We roam at large; we will come no more unto thee?' ³² Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her sash? yet my people have forgotten me days without number. ³³ How well thou directest thy way to seek love! therefore even the wicked women hast thou taught thy ways.** ³⁴ Also in thy skirts †† is found the blood of the souls of the innocent poor: I have not found

* I.e. the Valley of the son of Hinnom: see 7. 31.

† Heb. *twisting her ways*.

‡ A wild, uncontrollable animal (Job 39. 5-8).

§ I.e. Do not run with such shameless haste after strange gods.

|| Cp. Deut. 32. 16.

¶ Heb. *darkness of Yah*, i.e. darkness so intense as to be regarded as specially sent by Yah: cf. Cant. 8. 6, R.V. But the expression is strange, when Yahweh is Himself the speaker; and perhaps a letter should be dropped, and *darkness* (alone) read.

** Or, *therefore hast thou trained thy ways even unto wickednesses*.

†† LXX. *in thy hands*. Cf. Isa. 1. 15, 59. 3.

it at the place of breaking in,* but upon all these (garments).† ³⁵ Yet thou saidst, 'I am innocent; surely his anger is turned from me.' Behold, I will enter into judgment with thee, because thou sayest, 'I have not sinned.' ³⁶ Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou shalt be put to shame by‡ Egypt also, as thou wast put to shame by Assyria. ³⁷ Thou shalt go forth from him also, with thine hands upon thine head: § for Yahweh hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.

Judah compared to a faithless Wife, whose Promises of Amendment are but as empty Words.

III. ¹ [And the word of Yahweh came to me],|| saying, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, can he return unto her again? ¶ will not that land** be polluted? but thou hast played the harlot [with] many lovers; and (thinkest thou) to return unto me? saith Yahweh. ² Lift up thine eyes unto the bare heights, and see, where hast thou not been ravished? By the ways hast thou sat for them, as an Arabian in the wilderness; †† and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredom and with thy wickedness. ³ And the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no spring rain; †† yet thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be abashed. ⁴ Hast thou not from but now cried unto me, 'My father, thou art the companion of my youth.' ⁵ Will he retain (his anger) for ever? will he keep it to the end? '§§ Behold, thou hast spoken (thus); but thou hast done evil things, and hast had thy way. |||

* In which case the shedding of blood might have been excusable. See Exod. 22. 2. *Breaking in* is properly *Digging in*: cf. Matt. 6., 19 R.V.m.

† Or (as moderns generally prefer), *thou didst not find them* (the poor) *breaking in* (Exod. 22. 2), *but because of all these things* (because of all this idolatry, thou hast committed such murders: see 19. 4-5).

‡ I.e. be disappointed of (viz. by the expected help failing). See the writer's *Parallel Psalter*, Glossary I., s.v. *ashamed, to be*.

§ I.e. thou wilt retire, repulsed and disappointed, from his presence-chamber.

|| These, or other similar words, have evidently accidentally fallen out here.

¶ See Deut. 24. 1-4.

** The land in which such adultery has taken place: cp. *vv. 2 end, 19. LXX.*, however, followed by many moderns, has *that woman* for *that land*.

†† I.e. as eagerly as a Bedawi freebooter lying in wait for travellers.

‡‡ Which fell as a rule in March-April, and was necessary for maturing the crops.

§§ Alluding to the superficial amendment and unreal words of penitence, which had followed the reformation of Josiah (cf. 3. 10).

||| Heb. *hast been able* (or *hast prevailed*).

Judah contrasted unfavourably with Israel.

*⁶ And Yahweh said unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backturning Israel did? she went up upon every high mountain and under every spreading tree, and there played † the harlot. ‡ ⁷ And I said, After she hath done all these things, she will return unto me. But she returned not. And her faithless sister Judah saw,⁸ yea, saw § that, for the whole cause that backturning Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorcement; || and yet faithless Judah her sister feared not, but she also went and played the harlot. ⁹ And it came to pass that through the lightness of her whoredom she polluted the land, ¶ and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. ¹⁰ And yet for all this faithless Judah ** hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith Yahweh.

An Offer of Pardon and Restoration, addressed to Israel.

¹¹ And Yahweh said unto me, Backturning Israel hath justified herself †† more than faithless Judah. ¹² Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backturning Israel, saith Yahweh; I will not look in anger †† upon you: for I am merciful, saith Yahweh, I will not keep (anger) for ever. ¹³ Only acknowledge §§ thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against Yahweh thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to strange (gods) under every spreading tree, and ye have not hearkened unto my voice, saith Yahweh, ¹⁴ Return, O backturning children, saith 'Yahweh; for I am a husband unto you: and I will take you one from a city, and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion: ¹⁵ and I will

* *Vv.* 6-18 (in which Judah and Israel are *contrasted*) seem to introduce a thought foreign both to 2. 1-3. 5, and to 3. 19-4. 2; and have probably been introduced here from a different context.

† So, with a slight change. The Hebrew text has *thou* (fem.) *playedst*.

‡ Cf. Hos. 4. 13.

§ So Pesh., and most moderns. The Heb. text has, *and I saw* (one letter different).

|| See Deut. 24. 1, 3.

¶ So Targ. Pesh. Vulg. The Hebrew text, as pointed, can only be rendered, *was polluted with the land*.

** So LXX. The Heb. text has, *her faithless sister Judah*.

†† Comp., in illustration of the relative sense of this expression, Ezek. 16. 51, 52; also Gen. 38. 26.

‡‡ Heb. *cause my countenance to fall*.

§§ Heb. *know*.

give you shepherds according to mine heart, which shall feed you* with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith Yahweh, they shall say no more, 'The ark of the covenant of Yahweh'; neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. †

The future Glory of Jerusalem, in which Judah, as well as Israel, is ultimately to share.

¹⁷ At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Yahweh; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, ‡ because of the name of Yahweh, to Jerusalem: † neither shall they walk any more after the stubbornness of their evil heart. ¹⁸ In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I gave for an inheritance unto your fathers.

How Yahweh's gracious Purpose towards His People had been frustrated.

¹⁹ Yet § I had said, How (gladly) will I put thee among children, and give thee a pleasant land, the most beauteous heritage of the nations: || and I said, Ye will call me, 'My father,' and will not turn back from following me. ²⁰ But truly, (as) a woman departeth faithlessly from her lover, ¶ so have ye dealt faithlessly against me, O house of Israel, saith Yahweh.

*The Prophet pictures Judah's** future Penitence and Confession.*

²¹ A voice is heard upon the bare heights, the weeping of the supplications of the children of Israel: because they have perverted their way, they have forgotten Yahweh their God. ²² Return, O backturning children, I will heal your backturnings. 'Behold, we are come unto thee; for thou art Yahweh our God. ²³ Truly in vain is

* Lit. *shall shepherd you.*

† A visible symbol of Yahweh's presence, such as the ark, will not then be needed.

‡ LXX. omit these words. Pesh. omits 'to Jerusalem' alone.

§ Introducing a thought antithetic to 3. 1-5 (cf. 2. 21 after 2. 20; Am. 2. 9 after 2. 6-8), of which this verse, it seems, was once the immediate sequel.

|| Cp. Ezek. 20. 6, 15 ('the beauty of all lands').

¶ Heb. *friend*. So v. 1.

** Jeremiah addresses Judah here by the national name of 'Israel': cp. 2. 26, 5. 15, 18. 6.

the sound] upon* the hills, the tumult † on the mountains; ‡ truly in Yahweh our God is the salvation of Israel. ²⁴ But the shameful thing § hath devoured the labour of our fathers from our youth; their flocks and their herds, their sons and their daughters. ²⁵ Let us lie down in our shame, and let our confusion cover us: for we have sinned against Yahweh our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even unto this day; and we have not hearkened unto the voice of Yahweh our God.'

The Spectacle of Judah's future Loyalty will lead the heathen Nations of the Earth to own Yahweh as their God.

IV. ¹ If thou returnest, O Israel, saith Yahweh, yea, returnest unto me; and if thou puttest away thy detestable things || out of my sight, and dost not wander; ¶ ² and if thou swearest, 'As Yahweh liveth,' in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; ** then the nations shall bless themselves by him, †† and in him shall they glory.

NOTES EXPLANATORY OF SOME OF THE RENDERINGS ADOPTED.

ii. 3. *produce*. תבואה denotes properly 'in-come,' used primarily of that which *comes in* annually in kind from the fields. In Leviticus 25. 15, 16 R.V., well rendered by *crops*; elsewhere by *increase*, sometimes also by *fruit(s)* or *revenue(s)*.

6. *steppes*. See PLAIN, § 6, in Hastings' *D.B.*

8. *rebelled*. The idea in נשׂב is not that of transgression against a law, but that of defection or revolt against a person. See 2 Kings 1. 1, 3, 5, 8, 22.

9. *Plead* has become a misleading rendering; for (unless it is used in a palpably forensic connexion) it suggests inevitably to a modern reader the idea of *entreat*, *intercede*. It is true, it always in A.V.

* Some word appears to have dropped out here, which is supplied by conjecture. The Heb. has simply *in vain from*.

† Or, *the throng*. The allusion is to the noisy orgies accompanying the idolatrous cults celebrated on the mountains (Hos. 4. 13, Ezek. 6. 13): cf. 1 Kings 18. 26-29.

‡ So with a change of one point. The Heb. text, as pointed, has, *the tumult the mountains*.

§ I.e. Baal. See 11. 13, Hos. 9. 10.

|| I.e. false gods, their rites, images, etc. Cp. Ezek. 5. 11, 7. 20; also (the Heb. being the same) 1 Kings 11. 5, 7, Jer. 7. 30, Zech. 9. 7.

¶ LXX., followed by Ew., Hitz., Cheyne, read, *and if thou puttest away thy detestable things out of thy mouth* [Zech. 9. 7], *and dost not wander from before me*.

** Contrast 5. 2, Isa. 48. 1.

†† See Isa. 65. 16.

means 'to argue for or against a cause' (Hastings, *s.v.*); but who is to know this, unless he happens to have been a student of Old English? A.V. itself has sometimes 'contend' (as Isa. 49. 25, 50. 8); and the American revisers have very reasonably preferred this in many cases where the English revisers have left 'plead' (see the App. to the R.V. of O.T., 'Classes of passages,' VII.). Cf. Hosea 2. 2.

12. חָרְבֵי, '*be waste or desolate*,' addressed to the heavens, is strange; but הִרְגָה מֵאֵד (suggested by LXX.) is rather prosaic.

16. The mixture of metaphors is strange (a depastured, or devastated, country—for רָעָה=*feed on*, cf. Mic. 5. 6 [Heb. 5] R.V. m., where however, the use of the word is evidently determined by the 'shepherds' of the preceding verse), Jer. 6. 3 where the 'shepherds' must be fig. of foes—and a shaven head [cf. Isa. 7. 20]; though in the Heb., it may be observed, the 'crown of the head' is at least not the direct obj. of the verb, the more exact rend. being, 'depasture thee as to (or on) the crown of the head' (construction as Ps. 3. 8): and Duhm even calls *feed on* 'absurd.' However, Gesenius, Ewald, and Graf all accepted it; the last-named scholar urging against the alternative vocalization יִרְעִיךָ, 'break thee' (Ps. 2. 9) 'on the crown of thy head,' that this would assert the absolute ruin of Judah (Ps. 68. 22), and consequently imply too much (especially as the tense used denotes properly 'keep breaking'). Hitzig on the other hand considered it clear that 'break' was the idea intended. The passage is evidently one of those on which the best authorities may differ widely. Duhm would adopt either יִרְעִיךָ, 'break,' or יִעָרֵךְ, '*lay bare*, i.e. *shave*, the crown of thy head'; but we at least do not know whether עָרָה would have been used of laying bare the head, or whether, if it were so used, that it would, standing by itself, have denoted specifically the removal of the hair.

17. תַּעֲשֶׂה. Read with Giesebrecht עֲשֶׂה (the ת dittographed).

when he led thee by the way. The Heb. (lit. 'in the time of one leading thee by the way') is very peculiar (*Tenses*, § 135. 6, *Obs.* 2): perhaps the perf. הוֹלִיכֶךָ should be read. Duhm suggests that בעַת מוֹלִיכֶךָ may be a corrupt anticipation of לָךְ לָרֶדֶךָ. * The suggestion is a clever and attractive one; but the omission of these words makes the verse rather short and abrupt.

21. I should read (assuming סוֹרֵי to be correct) either לִי לְסוֹרֵי or לְסוֹרֵי.

22. 'Alkali' (Arab.) means properly 'that which is burnt' (the same word *kali* in Heb. [קָלִי] signifies '*parched* [corn]'). That the renderings 'soda' and 'alkali' are correct has been long known: see

* Comp. the very similar corrupt doublets in the recently recovered Heb. text of Ecclesiasticus (e.g. 31. 12).

Smith's *D.B.* s.v. *Soap*; Payne Smith in the *Speaker's Commentary*; or Plumptre in *Bp. Ellicott's Commentary, ad loc.* 'Lye' is a word which few now understand.

23. *twisting*. See the Targ. of Eccles. 1. 15 (נבר רי סריכן אוררתיה) paraphr. of (כִּשְׁוֹת); also 10. 3, Lam. 3. 59.

24. תִּאָּנָה. From אָּנָה to *bring at the right time*=*to cause to meet* (Exod. 21. 13): hence properly, *right* or *opportune meeting*. With a different nuance, תִּאָּנָה (Judg. 14. 4)=*opportunity*.

29. *complain unto*. So, for the same word רִיב, Judg. 21. 22, A.V., R.V. American Revision, *contend with* (cf. on v. 9).

31. *roam at large*. The meaning is established by the Arabic. See Lane's *Arab. Lex.* p. 1183 f.

32. *attire* (A.V., R.V.) means here, as generally in Old English, *headband* (see Dr. Aldis Wright's *Bible Word-Book*): cf. the same English word in Ezek. 23. 15, and the verb in Lev. 16. 4. The Heb. word however means more probably something *bound on* like a 'sash' (so Isa. 3. 20, R.V.): notice the use of the cognate verb in Isa. 49. 18 (R.V. *gird*). As may be inferred from this passage and Isa. 49. 18, it was something worn specially by a bride.

34. LXX. *hands*. *I.e.* כַּנְפֵיךָ for כַּפֵּיךָ. A decision between the two readings is difficult: comp. Giesebrecht's note.

I have not found it, etc. This rendering leaves less to be understood, and postulates an easier antithesis to 'not at the place of breaking in,' than that given in the footnote.

36. *gaddest thou about*. It is true, אָזַל (which is the usual Aramaic word for *to go*) in the four other passages in which it occurs in the Hebrew of the Old Testament means *to go away* rather than *to go about*; but it is doubtful whether this constitutes a sufficient ground for holding that it might not (like הִלַּךְ) have the more general sense of *go, go about*. Giesebrecht and Duhm (after LXX. *κατεφρόνησας*) vocalize אָזַלְתִּי, 'how greatly thou *makest light* of changing thy way!' i.e. how easily thou turnest from Assyria to Egypt!; but אָזַלְתִּי, in the only other place in which it occurs in Hebrew (Lam. 1. 8), means specifically *to make light of* in the sense of *to treat as common, despise** (so also the Syr. *Afel* אָזַל), not *to make light of* in the sense of *to do easily*. However, אָזַלְתִּי (אָזַלְתִּי) combines both ideas (2 Kings 3. 18; Gen. 16. 4, 5); so it is possible that אָזַלְתִּי may have done the same. Still, we do not *know* that it did so. There are uncertainties on both sides; but those on the side of אָזַלְתִּי appear to me to preponderate.

* Comp. אָזַלְתִּי in Jer. 15. 19, Lam. 1. 11 (in both which passages 'vile' of A.V. R.V. is very misleading to a modern reader; for what is meant is 'vile' = Lat. *vilis*, *common*, *looked down upon*, not 'vile' as used in modern English. Cf. the unfortunate use of the same word in the Authorized Version of a more important passage, Phil. 3. 21).

37. Notice מֵאֵת ('from *with*,' implying a *person*: Exod. 5. 20), not simply מִן (מִן־הָ). Egypt is personified in its ruler.

iii. 1. Read וְנִיחַ אֶת for וְנִיחַ.

6-18. Stade's view of this passage still seems to me to be the most probable. The contradiction which Giesebrecht finds between 3. 1-5 and 3. 19-4. 2 seems to me to be sufficiently explained by the fact that 3. 1-5 describes the *actual* unreal penitence of the present, while 3. 19-4. 2 is an *ideal* description of the sincere repentance of the future.

6. *backturning*. The play on the two senses of שׁוּב, to *turn back* from Yahweh, and to *turn back* (or *return*) from false gods to Him, which runs through all this passage (as far as 4. 1) is lost by the rend. 'backsliding.' Moreover, 'backsliding' does not suggest with sufficient clearness that the face is turned *from* Yahweh.

is gone up, etc. As the reference is obviously to the Northern Kingdom, which had ceased to exist a century before Jeremiah's time, the rendering *is gone up . . . and hath played*, suggesting something recent and even present, yields an incorrect sense.

10. LXX. has simply *faithless Judah* in *vv.* 7, 8, 10. Perhaps indeed this was the original reading in each verse: in *v.* 10 it is distinctly preferable; for in 'her faithless sister Judah,' the pronoun would naturally be understood by a reader to refer to the subject of *v.* 9, which however is incorrect, as of course Judah is there meant. The omission of 'her sister' in *v.* 10 removes an element of confusion in the verse, while not in the least altering the general sense.

13. *hearkened unto*. More graphic, and also more faithful to the original, than 'obeyed'; and moreover often used elsewhere in A.V., R.V., for the same Hebrew. It is true, 'obeyed' is etymologically 'hearkened to,' but the sense has by long usage become obscured, and few English readers realize the fact, while many, it is certain, do not know it at all: in the Hebrew the meaning 'hearkened to' is apparent at once.

17. *because of*, etc. See Josh. 9. 9, Heb. and Engl.

20. The pregnant construction, 'is faithless from,' is of course fully justifiable in Hebrew; but LXX. have εἰς, exactly as in clause *b*; and it is quite possible that בְּרַעָה should be read for מְרַעָה (on the frequent confusion of כ and מ in one stage of the Heb. script, as evidenced by the versions, see my *Notes on Samuel*, p. lxxviii.)*

22. This—with כ for מ (see the last note)—seems the simplest correction, though naturally we have no guarantee that it is the right

* Where by no means all the examples are given which might be quoted: add, for instance, Deut. 1. 44, Obad. 21, Hab. 2. 4, Ezek. 16. 6, and esp. 48. 29 (where LXX. בְּנַחֲלָה is certainly right for the meaningless מְנַחֲלָה, and indeed virtually underlies A.V., R.V., 'for').

one. Giesebr. and Duhm, following the LXX., read, 'Truly in vain are the hills,' etc. (with ה for כ); but Heb. idiom would surely not say absolutely that 'the hills' were in vain, but would specify what it was in connexion with them that was in vain.

iv. 1. *wander* (i.e. wander aimlessly from Yahweh). It has been objected to this rendering that נָדַד (of Cain, Gen. 4. 12 ['fugitive']; of a bird, Prov. 26. 2; of fugitives from a captured country or city, Jer. 49. 30, 50. 3, 8) does not express the idea of wilful wandering about, but rather of being driven out; but, in view of the rarity with which the word occurs in Heb., it may be doubted whether this negative position can be sustained (note also Prov. 26. 2, of the aimless flittings of a bird). At any rate, if a doubt should be felt whether, standing alone, the word would have a moral connotation, the reading of LXX., 'and dost not wander from before me' (מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא תִנְוֹד), quoted in the footnote, would go far to remove it; and the very slight alteration of תִּנְוֹד to תִּרְוֹד, 'and dost not roam at large'—the rare word used by Jeremiah himself in 2. 31—would remove it altogether.

detestable things. On this rend. of שְׂקוּצִים see the art. *Abomination* in Hastings' *D.B.*

S. R. DRIVER.

THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN CERTAINTY.¹

THE ground of certainty in religion is a subject which has of late received very close attention from the thinking minds of Europe; and in our own country more works than one of a high order have been devoted to its elucidation. In countries like Germany and France, where Protestantism is confronted by Roman Catholicism, the disposition to raise this question is stimulated by the challenge of the Romish Church to Protestantism to produce its credentials, but the necessity lies far deeper: thoughtful and earnest minds cannot but ask, How can we be sure that our religion is true? It is only shallowness or recklessness that can long refrain from asking this question. The more

¹ Inaugural Lecture of the Chair of Church History and Opening Lecture of the Session at the United Free College of Aberdeen, October 15, 1902.