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Notes.

Should מִנְחָה be Translated "Meal-offering"?

BY PROF. W. J. BEECHER, D.D.

THE translation should be "tribute-offering," or some equivalent term, and not meal-offering, or meat-offering, or food-offering, or any other term of that sort.

First, the word מִנְחָה means tribute, and does not mean meal or food or meat. There is as much reason for translating שלמים flesh-offerings instead of peace-offerings, as for translating מִנְחָה meal-offering.

Secondly, a meal-offering or food-offering is properly an offering of meal or of food. But offerings either of meal or of food were made in several forms, and not in the form of the מִנְחָה exclusively.

Thirdly, the terms meal-offering, or food-offering, do not lend themselves to the other uses of the word מִנְחָה, as a word for sacrifice. The offerings of Cain and Abel, for example, were tribute-offerings, but they were not meal-offerings. It was not as an offering of meal, but as a tribute-offering, that the מִנְחָה of Jehovah was discredited by the conduct of the sons of Eli. The fact that מִנְחָה is used as the generic name of the daily evening sacrifice is to be similarly accounted for.

Fourthly, the term tribute-offering suggests the ethical idea of this form of sacrifice, while the term meal-offering does not.

Note on the Proper Paragraph Division in 1 Chron.

XXIX. 22.

BY PROF. W. J. BEECHER, D.D.

THE English Revised Bible makes a paragraph division at the middle of the first verse of the fourth chapter of 1 Samuel. This is evidently correct, and throws great light on the whole context. An equally evident, and even more important instance of the same kind, though one not recognized in the revision, is to be found in 1 Chron. xxix. 22. The passage is as follows:—

“And David said to all the assembly: ‘Bless ye, pray, Jehovah your God’; and all the assembly blessed Jehovah. . . . And they sacrificed to Jehovah sacrifices, and offered up burnt offerings to Jehovah, to the morrow of that day, . . . and sacrifices abundantly for all Israel. And they ate and drank before Jehovah in that day, with great joy.”

Here the paragraph properly ends, and with it ends the account of what occurred on that occasion. The next sentence begins a fresh narrative, a narrative of something which occurred on some subsequent occasion:—

“And they made Solomon the son of David king a second time, and anointed him for chieftain to Jehovah, and Zadok for priest. And Solomon sat upon the throne of Jehovah for king, instead of David his father, . . . while all the captains and the heroes and also all the sons of the King David gave hand under Solomon the king.”

In the absence of the paragraph division, the impression commonly made is that this second making of Solomon king occurred at the time of the meeting of the great assembly described in the previous verses; the true paragraphing brings out the fact that his being made a second time was on some subsequent occasion, and therefore, that the occasion of the great assembly just described was that of his being made king the first time. Some reasons for paragraphing thus are the following:—

1. Independently of all parallel accounts, this paragraphing makes the best sense. The statement, “And they ate and drank before Jehovah in that day, with great joy” makes a rounded and fitting close for a paragraph. The following statement that they made Solomon king a second time is closely connected with what follows it; and what follows has no necessary connection with the great assembly which has just been described, and the sacrificial feast with which it closed.

2. In other similar accounts, the sacrificial feast is ordinarily mentioned as the last thing, taking place after the important business of the occasion has been transacted. The paragraphing proposed makes this a case under the ordinary rule, instead of a reasonless exception. If it was on this occasion that Solomon was made king the second time, we may be sure that the record of this important business would precede that of the sacrificial eating and drinking.

3. The proposed paragraph division is attended by a sudden change in the linguistic character of the narrative. What precedes, through many verses, is pure Hebrew, carefully written; what follows,

beginning with its first statement, has Lamedh with the accusative, and is otherwise unclassical.

4. The paragraph following the proposed division, telling how Solomon was made king a second time, while Zadok became priest—in some different sense from that in which he had previously been priest—and the captains and the heroes and the sons of David “gave hand under Solomon the king,” is evidently a summary of the account given in the first chapter of 1 Kings. It follows that the anointing of Solomon described in that chapter was his being made king the second time; his being made king the first time was his being proclaimed king at the great assembly described in 1 Chronicles. See especially 1 Chron. xxiii. 1 and xxix. 1. Merely to notice this is to harmonize the accounts in Kings and in Chronicles, for this part of the history, and in many other ways to throw light on the history of the later years of David.

The Revised Version of Dan. ix. 24-27.

BY PROF. FREDERICK GARDINER, D.D.

IN connection with the notes given on some points of the Revision of the Old Testament, attention may be called to another passage. It is well known that according to the traditional and general interpretation of Dan. ix. 24-27, this prophecy of the “Seventy weeks” has been referred to the Messiah, and that the expression in vs. 27, translated in the A.V., “He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,” has been referred to the earthly ministry of Christ and the short period immediately following in which the new covenant was proclaimed only to the chosen people, before the doors of the Church were opened to the Gentiles; and that the phrase, “in the midst of the week,” indicates the time of the death upon the cross, when “the sacrifice and the oblation” was caused to cease through its being supplanted by the one all-sufficient sacrifice. On the other hand, many writers have proposed to interpret the whole passage of Antiochus Epiphanes, and to refer this clause to his profanation of the temple and altar which continued just three and a half years, or “for the half of a week.” The revisers appear to have indicated a preference for the latter interpretation, and in fact it is the almost necessary inter-