The Form נַרְחָה, Prov. i. 20, viii. 3.

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We read in Prov. 1:

Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the broad places she utters her voice.

What form is נַרְחָה?

Most scholars are inclined to regard the form as the third singular feminine imperfect Qal of נָרַח, 'to call aloud.' Then, however, we should expect נָרָה. Ewald, Hitzig, and Böttcher suppose that the feminine ending has been added in order to differentiate it from the second person masculine which would, likewise, be נָרָה. But this seems hardly probable. The examples adduced in support of this explanation are very few, and when we consider that in hundreds of cases the language did not make use of such means to differentiate the two forms, the suspicion arises that the three cases where this seems to have been done are due to a corruption of the text. An examination of the passages reveals the fact that such is really the case.

In Job 22 we meet with the anomalous form נַרְחָה. We read:

This is commonly translated:

Acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace: thereby good will come unto thee.

The Septuagint, however, followed by the Syriac version and the Targum, reads ν καρπῶις σου, which points to נַרְחָה. Deut. 33

1 See on נַרְחָה Professor Haupt in The Sacred Books of the Old Testament, Proverbs, p. 34, l. 31 f.
2 Lehrbuch d. hebr. Sprache, § 191 c.
3 Commentary on Proverbs, ad loc.
4 Ausführliches Lehrbuch d. hebr. Sprache, § 929.
we should read, with Dillmann, Steuernagel, and Driver, נבגכ instead of the abnormal נבגכ: 8

From the choice fruits of the earth and its fulness,
And the favor of Him that dwelt in the bush—
Let them come (תִּנסָק) upon the head of Joseph,
And upon the crown of him that is prince among his brethren.

In Ezek. 23:9 (18 Qere), again, the Septuagint appears to present the better text, reading the second person καὶ ἐπέθη ἐπὶ τοὺς ἄδαιοις βρῶν ' thou dostest,' instead of the masoretic נבגכ. 7

In like manner, untenable is the supposition that the plural ending נבגכ has been added to differentiate the third person feminine from the second person masculine; nor is it more likely that the third person feminine plural is used for the third person singular. 9 In Ex. 110 we must read, with the Samaritan Pentateuch and all the ancient versions, נבגכ instead of the masoretic נבגכ. 9 נבגכ, Prov. 6:11, is the third person feminine plural of the imperfect, in meaning as well as in form. 10

Some scholars, including Delitzsch, Stade, Wildeboer, and Toy, explain the form as an emphatic form taqulanna. But then we would rather expect taronnananna, corresponding to the Arabic tamuddanna. Moreover, instead of the masoretic נבגכ, Jud. 5:27, to which Delitzsch refers, we should read, with de Dieu, Clericus, Schnurrer, Olshausen, Stade, Gesenius-Kautzsch, König, Bickell, Moore, נבגכ: “Her hand she (Deborah) stretches forth to the pin.” 11 Similarly, in Obadiah, v.13, נבגכ is impossible. We should emend

לא הֶתְשַׁלַּחַת יִדְּוֹ אֱלֹהִים

Do not lay hand on his substance in the day of his calamity. 12

7 Cf. Cornill, Das Buch des Propheten Ezechiel, 1886, ad loc.
8 Olshausen, Lehrbuch, § 226, p. 452.
Likewise, in Job 17:16, לִבְנָה is not an emphatic form, but the third person feminine plural.\(^{13}\)

Could לִבְנָה perhaps be intended as a cohortative? Nowack, Strack, Kautzsch, and Toy answer in the affirmative. The verse, however, has no cohortative meaning; and it seems extremely unlikely that a cohortative should have been employed when the sense does not require it, especially as no other instances can be found. In Isa. 5:19, נְסָדָה and נְסָדָה are cohortatives both as to form and meaning:\(^{14}\)

Woe unto those who draw guilt on themselves with cords of ungodliness, And punishment as with traces of a wain; Who say: Let his work hasten, let it speed, that we may see it, Let the purpose of Israel's Holy One draw nigh and come, that we may perceive it!\(^{16}\)

In Ezek. 23:20\(^{16}\), the seemingly cohortative נְבָרֵד is, as has been pointed out above, due to the corruption of the text.

Nor does the sense of the passage allow us to see in נְבָרֵד a form like the Arabic contracted form of the jussive of the *verba media geminata*, where the second radical throws back its vowel upon the first, and combines with the third, in which case the doubled consonant takes a supplemental vowel, e.g. *jamudda* instead of *jamudud*.\(^{10}\)

It is more probable that the form is intended by the Masorites as the third person feminine plural, representing a form נְבָרֵד; cf. Arabic *tamudto*; *jaquirna* for *jaqirna*. The objection that we should require a form נְבָרֵד, just as we have נְבָרֵד, 'they surrounded,' is not valid. This formation, based on the analogy of *verba media* (originally verbs נְבָרֵד), occurs but three times in the Old Testament (in the first two instances in close proximity to the correspond-

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\(^{14}\) Cf. Marti, *Das Buch Jesaja*, 1900, p. 58.

\(^{15}\) Cheyne's translation in *The Polyglot Bible*.

\(^{16}\) Cf. Wright-de Goeje, *Arabic Grammar*\(^3\), Cambridge, 1896, I. §§ 121, 125.

ing forms of verbs הָלַל, viz. Gen. 37 הָלַל; Gen. 41 הָלַל; and 1 Sam. 31 הָלַל. Four times we meet with the form הָלַל where the doubling of the first radical appears to be due to the analogy of verbs הָלַל, viz.: 2 Ki. 21, Jer. 19 הָלַל; Gen. 30 הָלַל; and Ezek. 6 הָלַל. But twice also the organic form is found, viz. in Zech. 14, where we have the third plur. Niph'al of הָלַל: "their eyes will be consumed in their sockets"; and in Ps. 71 הָלַל "My lips shall shout for joy for Thee." Here we have the third feminine plural of the Pi'el. That this formation does not occur in the Qal—beside the form in question—may be due to accident. It may, however, safely be concluded that both the organic and the analogical formations existed side by side, just as in Arabic.

Now, however, the question arises: did the author of the verse intend a form הָלַל; i.e. the third person feminine plural imperfect of הָלַל 'to shout'? This seems doubtful. The form occurs again at the close of Prov. 8 where we read (1-3):

Did not wisdom call? and understanding utter her voice?
At the head of the thoroughfares, on the road, in the streets she takes her stand.
Beside the gateways, at the portal of the city, at the entrance of the gates she cries aloud.

It seems strange that the author of the mashal, Prov. 1, should have begun by putting the predicate in the plural, and then should

17 Cf. Smend, Des Prophet Ezekiel, 1880, p. 38; Cornill, Ezekiel, p. 208; Stade, Lehrb., § 536 d; Ges.-Kautzsch, § 67 p, rem. 2; Bertholet, Ezekiel in Marti's Kurzgefasster Hand-Commentar, 1897, p. 35; Kraetzschmar, Ezekiel in the Nowack series of commentaries, p. 66.
22 Cf. Wright-de Goeje, I. § 120 c.
23 The masoretic הָלַל is a scribal error. See Toy's Proverbs, 1899, ad loc.
24 So with the Vulgate juxta portus civitatis. The Hebrew text has הָלַל.
have continued in the singular. In Prov. 8, on the other hand, the section commences with the predicate in the singular, and closes with the plural. So far as I can see, no reason can be assigned for this phenomenon, especially as it is not required by the rhythm of the passages.

Some scholars, including Heidenheim, Oort, and others, read the verse: "Wisdom יבשות רפיה וברוחביה בהזנה," This reading secures parallelism in the nouns, הוצאה: תכרות, the plural ה橥ד, being, moreover, supported by the Septuagint, the Peshitta, and the version of Symmachus. It loses it, however, as Toy remarks (op. cit.), in the verbs.

It has been suggested by J. D. Michaelis and others that we might have here a byform יבשות just as we have יבשות and יבשות 'to cease,' יבשות and יבשות 'to be quiet'; יבשות and יבשות 'to sigh'; יבשות and יבשות 'to be favorably disposed'; יבשות and יבשות 'to turn'; יבשות and יבשות 'to despise'; יבשות and יבשות 'to err'; יבשות and יבשות 'to bow down'; יבשות and יבשות 'to plunder,' etc. Now, we actually find the byform יבשות in Job 39, where we read:

The quiver rattles against him, the flashing spear and the javelin.

It seems best, therefore, to point יבשות instead of the masoretic יבשות.

In the same manner, we should emend in Prov. 8.

25 Supplem. ad Lexica Hebr., Gottingen, 1792, VI. p. 2254.