

checked some of my readings from the manuscript itself. I tried to suggest its possible significance for the history of the *Te Deum* text in *J.T.S.* vol. xxxiv no. 135 pp. 250-257.

**** ate pueri dñi laudate nomen dñi te dñm laudamus
 te dñm confitemur / tibi caeli & uniuerse potestates
 te aeternum patrem omnis terra ueneratur tibi omnes an
 hierufin serabin incessabili uoce proclant sc̄s sc̄s
 dñs d̄s sabaoth
 ni sunt caeli & uniuersa terra honore gloriae tuae
 oriosus apostolorum chorus te profetarum lauda
 numerus / rum sc̄a confitetur aeclesia
 art rum candidatus laudat exercitus te per orbem ter
 em immense maiestatis uenerandum tuum/ gl̄e xp̄e
 um unigenitum filium sc̄m quoq̄ paraclitum sp̄m tu rex
 tris sempiternus es filius tu ad liberandum mundum suscip
 orruisti uirginis uterum tu deuicto mortis aculeo aperuisti
 dentibus regna caelorum / uenturus
 dexteram dī sedes in gloria patris (iudex cre)deris esse
 go quessumus nobis tuis famulis subueni quos praetiosos san
 ne redemisti / populum tuum dñe
 rnam fac cum sc̄is gloriam munerari. saluum fac
 nedic hereditati tuae & rege eos & extolle illos usq̄q̄ in saeculū
 gulos dies benedicimus te & laudamus nomen tuum in aeter
 num & in saecula saeculorum amen
 MAURICE FROST.

TWO TREES BECOME ONE : Ezek. xxxvii 16-17.

'AND thou, son of man, take thee one *tree* (עץ) and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another *tree* (עץ), and write upon it, For Joseph, the tree (עץ) of Ephraim and all the house of Israel his companions: and bring them near (וקרב, Piel Imper.) one to another for thee to be one tree (עץ), and they shall become one¹ by thy means' (בִּידֶךָ).

One of the common metaphors of the Hebrew Scriptures is that of a 'tree' to represent a people. In Ezek. xv 2 ff. the vine-tree (עץ הגפן) represents the inhabitants of Jerusalem: in Ezek. xvii 6 ff. and xix 10 the vine is the tribe of Judah or the royal house of Judah. Similarly in

¹ Hebr. 'ones' (!), an impossible usage; s. *Biblica XIX* 182-183 [G. R. D.].

xxx1 3 the cedar represents Assyria, and the rival nations are described as 'all the trees of Eden' (עֵץ עֵדֶן, verse 9). On these analogies we may surely translate עץ in its usual sense as 'tree'. The two houses of Judah and Israel stand apart like two palms standing solitary and apart on the great Euphratean plain, but they are to be brought near to one another by Ezekiel's ministry, and so they will become again as 'one tree'.

This procedure might have been represented as a process of grafting: in that case no translator would have stumbled over the rendering of עץ. But the prophet in verse 17 though he still uses his metaphor of 'tree' is losing grasp of his metaphor when he uses the verb 'bring near' (קָרַב). The rendering 'join them one to another' (A.V.) cannot be justified: the verb describes admirably the approach of a person or a number of persons each to the other, as in Daniel vii 13, 'And they brought him (one like unto a son of man) near before him (the ancient of days)', where the Haphel of the Aramaic is used (הִקְרַבְתִּיהוּ). Here in Ezek. xxxvii 17 the Prophet is charged to bring the two sections of Israel, symbolized by the two trees, into friendly approach. It is not too great a charge for a Prophet. He does not 'join' them together: they, the two peoples, *come together* when they are induced to approach one another.

The rendering 'stick' for עץ (AV = RV) is due to the LXX, λαβὴ σκαυτῶ ῥάβδον. The Greek translators were no doubt misled here by a reminiscence of the two symbolic staves (מַקְלֹת, ῥάβδους) of Zech. xi 7-14, 'Beauty' and 'Bands', with which JEHOVAH shepherded Israel and Judah before they were divided. The rendering 'stick' is equally wrong in 2 Kings vi 6.

The Targumist also was misled, probably by the command to 'write' on the עץ. Men write on a 'tablet': hence the Targum in verse 16 has אַתָּה לְךָ לִוְחָא חַדָּא, 'take thee one tablet'. But two venerable versions remain faithful to the Hebrew. The Peshitta has אַתָּה לְךָ לִוְחָא חַדָּא, 'take thee one tree', and the Vulgate, 'sume tibi *lignum* unum'. It is true that in the plural in Mark xiv 48 the word may be rendered 'staves' (ξύλων), but *lignum* is usually 'tree', as in Gen. ii 9, iii 1-3; Ezek. xxxi 5, 9, 14, 15; *et passim*.

If it be objected that בִּידְךָ, literally 'in thy hand', suits the rendering 'stick', let it be remembered that בִּידְךָ need not be understood literally. In 1 Sam. xvi 2 the LORD says to Samuel, 'Take an heifer בִּידְךָ' and in Mal. i 1 we read, 'The *word* of JEHOVAH . . . by the *hand* of my messenger (בִּידְךָ)',—not 'by the *mouth*'.

Ezekiel is an obscure writer, and not least in his use of metaphors. Surely his lapse from a consistent use of the metaphor throughout

verses 16, 17 need not drive us from the obvious rendering of עץ. If Ezekiel's meaning was 'stick' or 'staff', he could have used מקל (Ezek. xxxix 9), or מטה (iv. 16; v. 16), or even משענת (xxix. 6).

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LINGUISTIC AND TEXTUAL PROBLEMS: MINOR PROPHETS. III.

ZEPHANIAH.

I 17: וְשָׂפוּ דָמָם כְּעָפָר וְלֶחֶמָם כְּבִגְדִים. First, Nowack's objection to the figure in the first clause that *der Vergleich des ausgeschütteten Blutes mit dem Staub passt nicht*¹ is hypercritical; the picture is that of casting aside something of little value like earth. In fact, pouring out earth in digging trenches, filling holes or building ramps, was common in the ancient East, and there is extant a letter dated in the *šanat epir*² *Sipparim* (KI) *iššapku* 'the year in which the soil of Sippar was poured out' (from some famous operation carried out in it); and Palestinian writers must have been almost equally familiar with the process. Second, the Massorettes have vocalized לֶחֶמָם as a pass. participle meaning 'their eaten stuff'³ to fit the sense to that of כְּבִגְדִים. The LXX, Pesh., and Arab. V., however, all translate it 'their flesh', which well suits the parallel דָמָם; and the Arab. لَحْمٌ 'flesh' supports this rendering (as many renderings of the LXX are justified by Arabic roots, which are thus seen to be far older than the classical language in which alone they are otherwise known to us). Ought not then לֶחֶמָם to be restored, on the assumption that לֶחֶם was originally a general term for 'food',⁴ whether 'flesh' or 'bread', though afterwards restricted to 'bread', while לֶחֶם was always restricted to 'flesh'? If, then, it is a word denoting flesh as what is eaten, i.e. animal flesh, its application here to human beings must be intended contemptuously (just as 'hide' and 'carcass' are sometimes so used in English parlance). Nor is the figure of pouring out flesh any too strange, being exactly illustrated by *kal širīšu*⁵ *šapik* 'all his flesh is poured out' in an Assyrian medical text⁶. Thus the R.V.'s 'and their blood shall be poured out as dust and their flesh as dung' may be accepted as a justifiable translation of the M.T.

I 18: בְּהֵלָה אֶף בְּהֵלָה 'an end, yea one hastily brought about'. This

¹ In *Kleine Propheten*³ 296.

² Sum. *IŠ* = Acc. *epirum*^m (Heb. עֵפָר); s. Muss-Arnolt *C.D.A.S.* 1081-1082 for numerous examples.

³ Cp. Deut. xxxii 24.

⁴ The $\sqrt{\text{liem}}$ 'to eat' is old, as the Acc. *liemu* 'to eat, be satisfied' shows.

⁵ Sum. *UZU* = Acc. *širu*^m (Heb. שָׂאֵר).

⁶ Thompson *A.M.T.* 41 i 34.