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Zechariah

From Commentary on the Old Testament

C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch

adapted for Grace Notes training by Warren Doud

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Zechariah

Introduction

The Prophet.—*Zechariah*, זְכַרְיָה—i.e., not μνήμη Κυρίου, *memoria Domini*, remembrance of God (Jerome and others), nor God's renown (Fürst), but he whom God remembers (LXX Ζαχαρίας, Vulg. Zacharias)—is a name of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament. Our prophet, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, was of priestly descent,—a son of *Berechiah*, and grandson of Iddo (Zech. 1:1, 7), the chief of one of the priestly families, that returned from exile along with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh. 12:4). He followed his grandfather in that office under the high priest Jehoiakim (Neh. 12:16), from which it has been justly concluded that he returned from Babylon while still a youth, and that his father died young. This also probably serves to explain the fact that Zechariah is called *bar 'Iddo*, the son (grandson) of Iddo, in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14, and that his father is passed over. He commenced his prophetic labours in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, only two months later than his contemporary Haggai, in common with whom he sought to stimulate the building of the temple (Ezra 5:1; 6:14), and that while he was still of youthful age, as we may infer partly from the facts quoted above, and partly from the epithet הַיָּעַר הַלֵּוִי (the young man) in Zech. 2:8 (4), which refers to him. On the other hand, the legends handed down by the fathers, which are at variance with the biblical accounts, to the effect that Zechariah returned from Chaldaeia at an advanced age, that he had previously predicted to Jozadak the birth of his son Joshua, and to Shealtiel the birth of Zerubbabel, and had shown to Cyrus his victory over Croesus and Astyages by means of a miracle (Ps. Dor., Ps. Epiph., Hesych., and others), are not worth noticing. It is impossible to determine how long his prophetic labours lasted. We simply know from Zech. 7:1, that in the fourth year of Darius he announced a further revelation from God to the people, and that his last two oracles (Zech. 9–14) fall within

a still later period. All that the fathers are able to state with regard to the closing portion of his life is, that he died at an advanced age, and was buried near to Haggai; whilst the contradictory statement, in a Cod. of Epiph., to the effect that he was slain under Joash king of Judah, between the temple and the altar, has simply arisen from our prophet being confounded with the Zechariah mentioned in 2 Chron. 24:20–23.

2. The Book of Zechariah contains, besides the brief word of God, which introduces his prophetic labours (Zech. 1:1–6), four longer prophetic announcements: viz., (1) a series of seven visions, which Zechariah saw during the night, on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, in the second year of Darius (Zech. 1:7–6:8), together with a symbolical transaction, which brought the visions to a close (Zech. 6:9–15); (2) the communication to the people of the answer of the Lord to a question addressed to the priests and prophets by certain Judaeans as to their continuing any longer to keep the day appointed for commemorating the burning of the temple and Jerusalem by the Chaldaeans as a fast-day, which took place in the fourth year of Darius (Zech. 7 and 8); (3) a burden, i.e., a prophecy of threatening import, concerning the land of Hadrach, the seat of the ungodly world-power (Zech. 9–11); and (4) a burden concerning Israel (Zech. 12–14). The last two oracles, which are connected together by the common epithet *massâ*, are distinguished from the first two announcements not only by the fact that the headings contain neither notices as to the time, nor the prophet's name, but also by the absence of express allusions to the circumstances of Zechariah's own times, however unmistakeably the circumstances of the covenant nation after the captivity form the historical background of these prophecies also; whilst there is in general such a connection between their contents and the prophetic character of the night-visions, that Zech. 9–14 might be called a prophetic description of the future of the kingdom of God, in its conflict with the kingdoms of the world, as seen in the night-visions. For example, in the night-visions, as a sequel to Haggai, who had predicted two

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months before the overthrow of the might of all the kingdoms of the world and the preservation of Zerubbabel in the midst of that catastrophe (Hag. 2:20–23), the future development of the kingdom of God is unfolded to the prophet in its principal features till its final completion in glory. The *first* vision shows that the shaking of the kingdoms of the world predicted by Haggai will soon occur, notwithstanding the fact that the whole earth is for the time still quiet and at rest, and that Zion will be redeemed from its oppression, and richly blessed (Zech. 1:7–17). The realization of this promise is explained in the following visions: in the *second* (Zech. 2:1–4), the breaking in pieces of the kingdoms of the world, by the four smiths who threw down the horns of the nations; in the *third* (Zech. 2:5–17), the spread of the kingdom of God over the whole earth, through the coming of the Lord to His people; in the *fourth* (Zech. 3), the restoration of the church to favour, through the wiping away of its sins; in the *fifth* (Zech. 4), the glorifying of the church through the communication of the gifts of the Spirit; in the *sixth* (Zech. 5), the sifting out of sinners from the kingdom of God; in the *seventh* (Zech. 6:1–8), the judgment, through which God refines and renews the sinful world; and *lastly*, in the symbolical transaction which closes the visions (Zech. 6:9–15), the completion of the kingdom of God by the Sprout of the Lord, who combines in His own person the dignity of both priest and king. If we compare with these the last two oracles, in Zech. 9–11 we have first of all a picture of the judgment upon the kingdoms of the world, and of the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, through the gathering together of the scattered members of the covenant nation, and their exaltation to victory over the heathen (Zech. 9, 10), and secondly, a more minute description of the attitude of the Lord towards the covenant nation and the heathen world (Zech. 11); and in Zech. 12–14 we have an announcement of the conflict of the nations of the world with Jerusalem, of the conversion of Israel to the Messiah, whom it once rejected and put to death (Zech. 12, 13); and lastly, of the final attack of the heathen

world upon the city of God, with its consequences,—namely, the purification and transfiguration of Jerusalem into a holy dwelling-place of the Lord, as King over the whole earth (Zech. 14); so that in both oracles the development of the Old Testament kingdom of God is predicted until its completion in the kingdom of God, which embraces the whole earth. The revelation from God, which stands between these two principal parts, concerning the continuance of the fast-days (Zech. 7, 8), does indeed divide the two from one another, both chronologically and externally; but substantially it forms the connecting link between the two, inasmuch as this word of God impresses upon the people the condition upon which the attainment of the glorious future set before them in the night-visions depends, and thereby prepares them for the conflicts which Israel will have to sustain according to the announcement in Zech. 9–14, until the completion of the kingdom of God in glory. Thus all the parts of the book hang closely together; and the objection which modern critics have offered to the unity of the book has arisen, not from the nature of the last two longer oracles (Zech. 9–14), but partly from the dogmatic assumption of the rationalistic and naturalistic critics, that the biblical prophecies are nothing more than the productions of natural divination, and partly from the inability of critics, in consequence of this assumption, to penetrate into the depths of the divine revelation, and to grasp either the substance or form of their historical development, so as to appreciate it fully. The current opinion of these critics, that the chapters in question date from the time before the captivity—viz. Zech. 9–11 from a contemporary of Isaiah, and Zech. 12–14 from the last period before the destruction of the kingdom of Judah—is completely overthrown by the circumstance, that even in these oracles the condition of the covenant nation after the captivity forms the historical ground and starting-point for the proclamation and picture of the future development of the kingdom of God. The covenant nation in its two parts, into which it had been divided since the

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severance of the kingdom at the death of Solomon, had been dispersed among the heathen like a flock without a shepherd (Zech. 10:2). It is true that Judah had already partially returned to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; but the daughter Zion had still “prisoners of hope” waiting for release (Zech. 9:11, 12, compared with Zech. 2:10, 11), and the house of Joseph or Ephraim was still to be gathered and saved (Zech. 10:6–10). Moreover, the severance of Judah and Ephraim, which lasted till the destruction of both kingdoms, had ceased. The eye of Jehovah is now fixed upon *all* the tribes of Israel (Zech. 9:1); Judah and Ephraim are strengthened by God for a common victorious conflict with the sons of Javan (Zech. 9:13); the Lord their God grants salvation to His people as a flock (Zech. 9:16 compared with 8:13); the shepherd of the Lord feeds them both as a single flock, and only abolishes the brotherhood between Judah and Israel by the breaking of his second staff (Zech. 11:14). Hence the jealousy between Judah and Ephraim, the cessation of which was expected in the future by the prophets before the captivity (cf. Isa. 11:13; Hos. 2:2; Ezek. 37:15ff.), is extinct; and all that remains of the severance into two kingdoms is the epithet house of Judah or house of Israel, which Zechariah uses not only in Zech. 9–11, but also in the appeal in Zech. 8:13, which no critic has called in question. All the tribes form one nation, which dwells in the presence of the prophet in Jerusalem and Judah. Just as in the first part of our book Israel consists of Judah and Jerusalem (Zech. 1:19, cf. 2:12), so in the second part the burden pronounced upon Israel (Zech. 12:1) falls upon Jerusalem and Judah (Zech. 12:2, 5ff., 14:2, 14); and just as, according to the night-visions, the imperial power has its seat in the land of the north and of the south (Zech. 6:6), so in the last oracles Asshur (the north land) and Egypt (the south land) are types of the heathen world (Zech. 10:10). And when at length the empire of the world which is hostile to God is more precisely defined, it is called Javan,—an epithet taken from Dan. 8:21, which points as clearly as possible to the times after the captivity,

inasmuch as the sons of Javan never appear as enemies of the covenant nation before the captivity, even when the Tyrians and Philistines are threatened with divine retribution for having sold to the Javanites the prisoners of Judah and Jerusalem (Joel 3:6).

On the other hand, the differences which prevail between the first two prophecies of Zechariah and the last two are not of such a character as to point to two or three different prophets. It is true that in Zech. 9–14 there occur no visions, no angels taking an active part, no Satan, no seven eyes of God; but Amos also, for example, has only visions in the second part, and none in the first; whilst the first part of Zechariah contains not only visions, but also, in Zech. 1:1–6, Zech. 7 and 8, simple prophetic addresses, and symbolical actions not only in Zech. 6:9–15, but also in Zech. 11:4–17. The angels and Satan, which appear in the visions, are also absent from Zech. 7 and 8; whereas the angel of Jehovah is mentioned in the last part in Zech. 12:8, and the saints in Zech. 14:5 are angels. The seven eyes of God are only mentioned in two visions (Zech. 3:9 and 4:10); and the providence of God is referred to in Zech. 9:1, 8, under the epithet of the eye of Jehovah. This also applies to the form of description and the language employed in the two parts. The visionary sights are described in simple prose, as the style most appropriate for such descriptions. The prophecies in word are oratorical, and to some extent are rich in gold figures and similes. This diversity in the prophetic modes of presentation was occasioned by the occurrence of peculiar facts and ideas, with the corresponding expressions and words; but it cannot be proved that there is any constant diversity in the way in which the same thing or the same idea is described in the two parts, whereas there are certain unusual expressions, such as *מְעַבֵּר וּמָשֵׁב* (in Zech. 7:14 and 9:8) and *הַמְעַבֵּיר* in the sense of *removere* (in Zech. 3:4 and 13:2), which are common to both parts. Again, the absence of any notice as to the time in the headings in Zech. 9:1 and 12:1 may be explained very simply from the fact, that

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these prophecies of the future of the kingdom are not so directly associated with the prophet's own time as the visions are, the first of which describes the condition of the world in the second year of Darius. The omission of the name of the author from the headings no more disproves the authorship of the Zechariah who lived after the captivity, than the omission of the name from Isa. 15:1; 17:1; 19:1, disproves Isaiah's authorship in the case of the chapters named. All the other arguments that have been brought against the integrity or unity of authorship of the entire book, are founded upon false interpretations and misunderstandings; whereas, on the other hand, the integrity of the whole is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the testimony of tradition, which is to be regarded as of all the greater value in the case of Zechariah, inasmuch as the collection of the prophetic writings, if not of the whole of the Old Testament canon, was completed within even less than a generation after the prophet's death.

Zechariah's mode of prophesying presents, therefore, according to the cursory survey just given, a very great variety. Nevertheless, the crowding together of visions is not to be placed to the account of the times after the captivity; nor can any foreign, particularly Babylonian, colouring be detected in the visions or in the prophetic descriptions. The habit of leaning upon the prophecies of predecessors is not greater in his case than in that of many of the prophets before the captivity. The prophetic addresses are to some extent rich in repetitions, especially in Zech. 7 and 8, and tolerably uniform; but in the last two oracles they rise into very bold and most original views and figures, which are evidently the production of a lively and youthful imagination. This abundance of very unusual figures, connected with much harshness of expression and transitions without intermediate links, makes the work of exposition a very difficult one; so that Jerome and the rabbins raise very general, but still greatly exaggerated, lamentations over the obscurity of this prophet. The diction is, on the whole, free from Chaldaisms, and formed

upon the model of good earlier writers. For the proofs of this, as well as for the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, p. 310ff.

Zechariah 1

Introductory Admonition—Ch. 1:1–6

Zechariah 1:1–4. The first word of the Lord was addressed to the prophet Zechariah in the eighth month of the second year of the reign of Darius, and therefore about two months after Haggai's first prophecy and the commencement of the rebuilding of the temple, which that prophecy was intended to promote (compare v. 1 with Hag. 1:1 and 15), and a few weeks after Haggai's prophecy of the great glory which the new temple would receive (Hag. 2:1–9). Just as Haggai encouraged the chiefs and the people of Judah to continue vigorously the building that had been commenced by this announcement of salvation, so Zechariah opens his prophetic labours with the admonition to turn with sincerity to the Lord, and with the warning not to bring the same punishment upon themselves by falling back into the sins of the fathers. This exhortation to repentance, although it was communicated to the prophet in the form of a special revelation from God, is actually only the introduction to the prophecies which follow, requiring thorough repentance as the condition of obtaining the desired salvation, and at the same time setting before the impenitent and ungodly still further heavy judgments. V. 1. *Bachōdesh hasshmīnī* does not mean "on the eighth new moon" (Kimchi, Chr. B. Mich., Koehl.); for *chōdesh* is never used in chronological notices for the new moon, or the first new moon's day (see at Ex. 19:1). The day of the eighth month is left indefinite, because this was of no importance whatever to the contents of this particular address. The word of the Lord was as follows: V. 2. "*Jehovah was angry with wrath concerning your fathers.* V. 3. *And thou shalt say to them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Return ye to me, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, so will I return to you, saith Jehovah of hosts.* V. 4. *Be not like your fathers, to whom the*

former prophets cried, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Turn now from your evil ways, and from your evil actions! But they hearkened not, and paid no attention to me, is the saying of Jehovah."

The statement in v. 2 contains the ground for the summons to turn, which the prophet is to address to the people, and is therefore placed before וְאָמְרָתָּ in v. 3, by which this summons is introduced. Because the Lord was very angry concerning the fathers, those who are living now are to repent with sincerity of heart. The noun *qetseph* is added as the object to the verb, to give it greater force. The nation had experienced the severe anger of God at the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and of Jerusalem and the temple, and also in exile. The statement in v. 15, that Jehovah was angry מְעַט, is not at variance with this; for מְעַט does not refer to the strength of the anger, but to its duration. וְאָמְרָתָּ is the *perf.* with *Vav consec.*, and is used for the imperative, because the summons to repentance follows as a necessary consequence from the fact stated in v. 2 (cf. Ewald, § 342, *b* and *c*). אֲלֵהֶם does not refer to the fathers, which might appear to be grammatically the simplest interpretation, but to the contemporaries of the prophet, addressed in the pronoun *your* fathers, the existing generation of Judah. שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי does not presuppose that the people had just fallen away from the Lord again, or had lost all their pleasure in the continuance of the work of building the temple, but simply that the return to the Lord was not a perfect one, not a thorough conversion of heart. So had Jehovah also turned to the people again, and had not only put an end to the sufferings of exile, but had also promised His aid to those who had returned (compare אָנֹכִי אֶתְקַבֵּם in Hag. 1:13); but the more earnestly and the more thoroughly the people turned to Him, the more faithfully and the more gloriously would He bestow upon them His grace and the promised salvation. This admonition is shown to be extremely important by the threefold "saith the Lord of Zebaoth," and strengthened still further in v. 4

by the negative turn not to do like the fathers, who cast the admonitions of the prophets to the winds. The "earlier prophets" are those before the captivity (cf. Zech. 7:7, 12). The predicate מְרַאשֵׁנִים points to the fact that there was a gap between Zechariah and his predecessors, namely the period of the exile, so that Daniel and Ezekiel, who lived in exile, are overlooked; the former because his prophecies are not admonitions addressed to the people, the latter because the greater part of his ministry fell in the very commencement of the exile. Moreover, when alluding to the admonitions of the earlier prophets, Zechariah has not only such utterances in his mind as those in which the prophets summoned the people to repentance with the words שׁוּבוּ וּגְוִי (e.g., Joel 2:13; Hos. 14:2, 3; Isa. 31:6; Jer. 3:12ff., 7:13, etc.), but the admonitions, threatenings, and reproofs of the earlier prophets generally (compare 2 Kings 17:13ff.). The *chethib* מְעַלְלֵיכֶם is to be read מְעַלְלֵיכֶם, a plural form מְעַלְלִים from מְעַלְלָה, and is to be retained, since the preposition *min* is wanting in the *keri*; and this reading has probably only arisen from the offence taken at the use of the plural form *'ālilīm*, which does not occur elsewhere, in the place of *'ālilōth*, although there are many analogies to such a formation, and feminine forms frequently have plurals in יִם, either instead of those in יָם or in addition to them.

Zechariah 1:5, 6. A reason for the warning not to resist the words of the Lord, like the fathers, is given in vv. 5, 6, by an allusion to the fate which they brought upon themselves through their disobedience. V. 5. "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, can they live for ever? V. 6. Nevertheless my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers, so that they turned and said, As Jehovah purposed to do to us according to our ways and our actions, so has He done to us?" The two questions in v. 5 are meant as denials, and are intended to anticipate the objection which the people might have raised to the admonitions in

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v. 4, to the effect that not only the fathers, but also the earlier prophets, had died long ago; and therefore an allusion to things that had long since passed by could have no force at all for the present generation. Zechariah neutralizes this objection by saying: Your fathers have indeed been long dead, and even the prophets do not, or cannot, live for ever; but notwithstanding this, the words of the earlier prophets were fulfilled in the case of the fathers. The words and decrees of God uttered by the prophets did reach the fathers, so that they were obliged to confess that God had really done to them what He threatened, i.e., had carried out the threatened punishment. חָזַק, only, in the sense of a limitation of the thing stated: yet, nevertheless (cf. Ewald, § 105, d). חָזַק and חָזַק are not the words of v. 4, which call to repentance, but the threats and judicial decrees which the earlier prophets announced in case of impenitence. חָזַק as in Ezek. 12:28, Jer. 39:16. חָזַק, the judicial decrees of God, like *chōq* in Zeph. 2:2. *Hissīg*, to reach, applied to the threatened punishments which pursue the sinner, like messengers sent after him, and overtake him (cf. Deut. 28:15, 45). Biblical proofs that even the fathers themselves did acknowledge that the Lord had fulfilled His threatenings in their experience, are to be found in the mournful psalms written in captivity (though not exactly in Ps. 126 and 137, as Koehler supposes), in Lam. 2:17 (עֲשֵׂה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם, upon which Zechariah seems to play), and in the penitential prayers of Daniel (Dan. 9:4ff.) and of Ezra (Ezra 9:6ff.), so far as they express the feeling which prevailed in the congregation.

I. The Night-Visions—Ch. 1:7–6:15

Zechariah 1:7–6:15. Three months after his call to be a prophet through the first word of God that was addressed to him, Zechariah received a comprehensive revelation concerning the future fate of the people and kingdom of God, in a series of visions, which were given him to behold in a single night, and

were interpreted by an angel. This took place, according to v. 7, “on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, i.e., the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius,” that is to say, exactly five months after the building of the temple had been resumed (Hag. 1:15), with which fact the choice of the day for the divine revelation was evidently connected, and two months after the last promise issued through Haggai to the people, that the Lord would from henceforth bless His nation, and would glorify it in the future (Hag. 2:10–23). To set forth in imagery this blessing and glorification, and to exhibit the leading features of the future conformation of the kingdom of God, was the object of these visions, which are designated in the introduction as “word of Jehovah,” because the pictures seen in the spirit, together with their interpretation, had the significance of verbal revelations, and are to some extent still further explained by the addition of words of God (cf. 1:14ff., 2:10–17). As they were shown to the prophet one after another in a single night, so that in all probability only short pauses intervened between the different views; so did they present a substantially connected picture of the future of Israel, which was linked on to the then existing time, and closed with the prospect of the ultimate completion of the kingdom of God.

First Vision: The Rider Among the Myrtles—Ch. 1:8–17

Zechariah 1:8–17. V. 8. “I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtles which were in the hollow; and behind him red, speckled, and white horses. V. 9. And I said, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me said to me, I will show thee what these are. V. 10. And the man who stood among the myrtles answered and said, These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to go through the earth. V. 11. And they answered the angel of Jehovah who stood among the myrtles, and said, We have gone through the earth, and, behold, the whole earth sits still, and at rest. V. 12. Then the angel of Jehovah answered and said, Jehovah of hosts, how long

wilt Thou not have compassion upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with whom Thou hast been angry these seventy years? V. 13. And Jehovah answered the angel that talked with me good words, comforting words. V. 14. And the angel that talked with me said to me, Preach, and say, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I have been jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with great jealousy, V. 15) and with great wrath I am angry against the nations at rest: for I had been angry for a little, but they helped for harm. V. 16. Therefore thus saith Jehovah, I turn again to Jerusalem with compassion: my house shall be built in it, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and the measuring line shall be drawn over Jerusalem. V. 17. Preach as yet, and say, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, My cities shall yet swell over with good, and Jehovah will yet comfort Zion, and will yet choose Jerusalem." The prophet sees, during the night of the day described in v. 7 (הַלְלִיָּהּ is the accusative of duration), in an ecstatic vision, not in a dream but in a waking condition, a rider upon a red horse in a myrtle-bush, stopping in a deep hollow, and behind him a number of riders upon red, speckled, and white horses (*sūsīm* are horses with riders, and the reason why the latter are not specially mentioned is that they do not appear during the course of the vision as taking any active part, whilst the colour of their horses is the only significant feature). At the same time he also sees, in direct proximity to himself, an angel who interprets the vision, and farther off (v. 11) the angel of Jehovah also standing or stopping among the myrtle-bushes, and therefore in front of the man upon a red horse, to whom the riders bring a report, that they have gone through the earth by Jehovah's command and have found the whole earth quiet and at rest; whereupon the angel of Jehovah addresses a prayer to Jehovah for pity upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and receives a good consolatory answer, which the interpreting angel conveys to the prophet, and the latter publicly proclaims in vv. 14–17.

The rider upon the red horse is not to be identified with the angel of Jehovah, nor the

latter with the *angelus interpretes*. It is true that the identity of the rider and the angel of Jehovah, which many commentators assume, is apparently favoured by the circumstance that they are both standing among the myrtles (*'ōmēd*, stood; see vv. 8, 10, and 11); but all that follows from this is that the rider stopped at the place where the angel of Jehovah was standing, i.e., in front of him, to present a report to him of the state of the earth, which he had gone through with his retinue. This very circumstance rather favours the diversity of the two, inasmuch as it is evident from this that the rider upon the red horse was simply the front one, or leader of the whole company, who is brought prominently forward as the spokesman and reporter. If the man up[on the red horse had been the angel of Jehovah Himself, and the troop of horsemen had merely come to bring information to the man upon the red horse, the troop of horsemen could not have stood behind him, but would have stood either opposite to him or in front of him. And the different epithets applied to the two furnish a decisive proof that the angel of the Lord and "the angel that talked with me" are not one and the same. The angel, who gives or conveys to the prophet the interpretation of the vision, is constantly called "the angel that talked with me," not only in v. 9, where it is preceded by an address on the part of the prophet to this same angel, but also in vv. 13 and 14, and in the visions which follow (Zech. 2:2, 7; 4:1, 4; 5:5, 10; 6:4), from which it is perfectly obvious that *דִּבֶּר בִּי* denotes the function which this angel performs in these visions (*dibber b*, signifying the speaking of God or of an angel within a man, as in Hos. 1:2, Hab. 2:1, Num. 12:6, 8). His occupation, therefore, was to interpret the visions to the prophet, and convey the divine revelations, so that he was only an *angelus interpretes* or *collocutor*. This angel appears in the other visions in company with other angels, and receives instructions from them (Zech. 2:5–8); and his whole activity is restricted to the duty of conveying higher instructions to the prophet, and giving him an insight into the meaning of the visions, whereas the angel of

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Jehovah stands on an equality with God, being sometimes identified with Jehovah, and at other times distinguished from Him. (Compare the remarks upon this subject in the comm. on Genesis, *Pent.* pp. 118ff.) In the face of these facts, it is impossible to establish the identity of the two by the arguments that have been adduced in support of it. It by no means follows from v. 9, where the prophet addresses the mediator as “my lord,” that the words are addressed to the angel of the Lord; for neither he nor the *angelus interpres* has been mentioned before; and in the visions persons are frequently introduced as speaking, according to their dramatic character, without having been mentioned before, so that it is only from what they say or do that it is possible to discover who they are. Again, the circumstance that in v. 12 the angel of the Lord presents a petition to the Supreme God on behalf of the covenant nation, and that according to v. 13 Jehovah answers the *angelus interpres* in good, comforting words, does not prove that he who receives the answer must be the same person as the intercessor: for it might be stated in reply to this, as it has been by Vitringa, that Zechariah has simply omitted to mention that the answer was first of all addressed to the angel of the Lord, and that it was through him that it reached the mediating angel; or we might assume, as Hengstenberg has done, that “Jehovah addressed the answer directly to the mediating angel, because the angel of the Lord had asked the question, not for his own sake, but simply for the purpose of conveying consolation and hope through the mediator to the prophet, and through him to the nation generally.”

There is no doubt that, in this vision, both the locality in which the rider upon the red horse, with his troop, and the angel of the Lord had taken up their position, and also the colour of the horses, are significant. But they are neither of them easy to interpret. Even the meaning of *mtsullâh* is questionable. Some explain it as signifying a “shady place,” from צל, a shadow; but in that case we should expect the form

mtsillâh. There is more authority for the assumption that *mtsullâh* is only another form for *mtsûlâh*, which is the reading in many codd., and which ordinarily stands for the depth of the sea, just as in Ex. 15:10 *tsâlal* signifies to sink into the deep. The Vulgate adopts this rendering: *in profundo*. Here it signifies, in all probability, a deep hollow, possibly with water in it, as myrtles flourish particularly well in damp soils and by the side of rivers (see Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 112, iv. 124). The article in *bammtsullâh* defines the hollow as the one which the prophet saw in the vision, not the ravine of the fountain of Siloah, as Hofmann supposes (*Weissagung u. Erfüllung*, i. p. 333). The hollow here is not a symbol of the power of the world, or the abyss-like power of the kingdoms of the world (Hengstenberg and M. Baumgarten), as the author of the Chaldee paraphrase in *Babele* evidently thought; for this cannot be proved from such passages as Zech. 10:16, Isa. 44:27, and Ps. 107:24. In the myrtle-bushes, or myrtle grove, we have no doubt a symbol of the theocracy, or of the land of Judah as a land that was dear and lovely in the estimation of the Lord (cf. Dan. 8:9; 11:16), for the myrtle is a lovely ornamental plant. Hence the hollow in which the myrtle grove was situated, can only be a figurative representation of the deep degradation into which the land and people of God had fallen at that time. There is a great diversity of opinion as to the significance of the colour of the horses, although all the commentators agree that the colour is significant, as in Zech. 6:2ff. and Rev. 6:2ff., and that this is the only reason why the horses are described according to their colours, and the riders are not mentioned at all. About two of the colours there is no dispute. דָּוֶדִּים, red, the colour of the blood; and לָבָן, white, brilliant white, the reflection of heavenly and divine glory (Matt. 17:2; 28:3; Acts 1:10), hence the symbol of a glorious victory (Rev. 6:2). The meaning of *sruqqîm* is a disputed one. The LXX have rendered it ψαροὶ καὶ ποικίλοι, like בְּרִדִּים in Zech. 6:3; the Itala and Vulgate, *varii*; the Peshito, *versicolores*. Hence *sûsîm sruqqîm*

would correspond to the ἵππος χλωρός of Rev. 6:8. The word *sruqqim* only occurs again in the Old Testament in Isa. 16:8, where it is applied to the tendrils or branches of the vine, for which *sōrēq* (Isa. 5:2; Jer. 2:21) or *srēqâh* (Gen. 49:11) is used elsewhere. On the other hand, Gesenius (*Thes. s.v.*) and others defend the meaning red, after the Arabic *ašqaru*, the red horse, the fox, from *šaqira*, to be bright red; and Koehler understands by *sūsīm sruqqīm*, bright red, fire-coloured, or bay horses. But this meaning cannot be shown to be in accordance with Hebrew usage: for it is a groundless conjecture that the vine branch is called *sōrēq* from the dark-red grapes (Hitzig on Isa. 5:2); and the incorrectness of it is evident from the fact, that even the Arabic *šaqira* does not denote dark-red, but bright, fiery red. The Arabic translator has therefore rendered the Greek πυρρός by Arab. *ašqaru* in Cant. 5:9; but πυρρός answers to the Hebrew דִּיטָס, and the LXX have expressed *sūsīm ʾāduḡmīm* by ἵπποι πυρροί both here and in Zech. 6:2. If we compare this with Zech. 6:2, where the chariots are drawn by red (*ʾāduḡmīm*, πυρροί), black (*shchōrīm*, μέλανες), white (*lbhānīm*, λευκοί), and speckled (*bruddīm*, ψαροί) horses, and with Rev. 6, where the first rider has a white horse (λευκός), the second a red one (πυρρός), the third a black one (μέλας), the fourth a pale horse (χλωρός), there can be no further doubt that three of the colours of the horses mentioned here occur again in the two passages quoted, and that the black horse is simply added as a fourth; so that the *sruqqim* correspond to the *bruddīm* of Zech. 6:3, and the ἵππος χλωρός of Rev. 6:8, and consequently *sârōq* denotes that starling kind of grey in which the black ground is mixed with white, so that it is not essentially different from *bârōd*, speckled, or black covered with white spots (Gen. 31:10, 12).

By comparing these passages with one another, we obtain so much as certain with regard to the meaning of the different colours,—namely, that the colours neither denote the lands and nations to which the riders had been sent, as

Hävernick, Maurer, Hitzig, Ewald, and others suppose; nor the three imperial kingdoms, as Jerome, Cyril, and others have attempted to prove. For, apart from the fact that there is no foundation whatever for the combination proposed, of the red colour with the south as the place of light, or of the white with the west, the fourth quarter of the heavens would be altogether wanting. Moreover, the riders mentioned here have unquestionably gone through the earth in company, according to vv. 8 and 11, or at any rate there is no intimation whatever of their having gone through the different countries separately, according to the colour of their respective horses; and, according to Zech. 6:6, not only the chariot with the black horses, but that with the white horses also, goes into the land of the south.

Consequently the colour of the horses can only be connected with the mission which the riders had to perform. This is confirmed by Rev. 6, inasmuch as a great sword is there given to the rider upon the red horse, to take away peace from the earth, that they may kill one another, and a crown to the rider upon the white horse, who goes forth conquering and to conquer (v. 2), whilst the one upon the pale horse receives the name of Death, and has power given to him to slay the fourth part of the earth with sword, famine, and pestilence (v. 8). It is true that no such effects as these are attributed to the riders in the vision before us, but this constitutes no essential difference. To the prophet's question, *mâh-ʾelleh*, what are these? i.e., what do they mean? the *angelus interpretes*, whom he addresses as "my lord" (*ʾādōnī*), answers, "I will show thee what these be;" whereupon the man upon the red horse, as the leader of the company, gives this reply: "These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to go through the earth;" and then proceeds to give the angel of the Lord the report of their mission, viz., "We have been through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and at rest." The man's answer (*vayyaʾan*, v. 10) is not addressed to the prophet or to the *angelus interpretes*, but to the angel of the Lord mentioned in v. 11, to whom the former, with his horsemen (hence the

plural, "they answered," in v. 11), had given a report of the result of their mission. The verb *'ânâh*, to answer, refers not to any definite question, but to the request for an explanation contained in the conversation between the prophet and the interpreting angel. *וְהָאָרָץ*, in vv. 10 and 11, is not the land of Judah, or any other land, but the earth. The answer, that the whole earth sits still and at rest (*יִשְׁבֶּת וְיִשְׁקֶטָהּ*) denotes the peaceful and secure condition of a land and its inhabitants, undisturbed by any foe; cf. Zech. 7:7, 1 Chron. 4:40, and Judg. 18:27), points back to Hag. 2:7, 8, 22, 23. God had there announced that for a little He would shake heaven and earth, the whole world and all nations, that the nations would come and fill His temple with glory. The riders sent out by God now return and report that the earth is by no means shaken and in motion, but the whole world sits quiet and at rest. We must not, indeed, infer from this account that the riders were all sent for the simple and exclusive purpose of obtaining information concerning the state of the earth, and communicating it to the Lord. For it would have been quite superfluous and unmeaning to send out an entire troop, on horses of different colours, for this purpose alone. Their mission was rather to take an active part in the agitation of the nations, if any such existed, and guide it to the divinely appointed end, and that in the manner indicated by the colour of their horses; viz., according to Rev. 6, those upon the red horses by war and bloodshed; those upon the starling-grey, or speckled horses, by famine, pestilence, and other plagues; and lastly, those upon the white horses, by victory and the conquest of the world.

In the second year of Darius there prevailed universal peace; all the nations of the earlier Chaldaean empire were at rest, and lived in undisturbed prosperity. Only Judaea, the home of the nation of God, was still for the most part lying waste, and Jerusalem was still without walls, and exposed in the most defenceless manner to all the insults of the opponents of the Jews. Such a state of things as this necessarily tended to produce great conflicts in the minds

of the more godly men, and to confirm the frivolous in their indifference towards the Lord. As long as the nations of the world enjoyed undisturbed peace, Judah could not expect any essential improvement in its condition. Even though Darius had granted permission for the building of the temple to be continued, the people were still under the bondage of the power of the world, without any prospect of the realization of the glory predicted by the earlier prophets (Jer. 31f.; Isa. 40ff.), which was to dawn upon the nation of God when redeemed from Babylon. Hence the angel of the Lord addresses the intercessory prayer to Jehovah in v. 12: How long wilt Thou not have compassion upon Jerusalem, etc.? For the very fact that the angel of the Lord, through whom Jehovah had formerly led His people and brought them into the promised land and smitten all the enemies before Israel, now appears again, contains in itself one source of consolation. His coming was a sign that Jehovah had not forsaken His people, and His intercession could not fail to remove every doubt as to the fulfilment of the divine promises. The circumstance that the angel of Jehovah addresses an intercessory prayer to Jehovah on behalf of Judah, is no more a disproof of his essential unity with Jehovah, than the intercessory prayer of Christ in John 17 is a disproof of His divinity. The words, "over which Thou hast now been angry for seventy years," do not imply that the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity predicted by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11 and 29:10) were only just drawing to a close. They had already expired in the first year of the reign of Cyrus (2 Chron. 36:22; Ezra 1:1). At the same time, the remark made by Vitringa, Hengstenberg, and others, must not be overlooked,—namely, that these seventy years were completed twice, inasmuch as there were also (not perhaps quite, but nearly) seventy years between the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, and the second year of Darius. Now, since the temple was still lying in ruins in the second year of Darius, notwithstanding the command to rebuild it that had been issued by Cyrus (Hag. 1:4), it might very well appear as though the troubles of the

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captivity would never come to an end. Under such circumstances, the longing for an end to be put to the mournful condition of Judah could not fail to become greater and greater; and the prayer, "Put an end, O Lord, put an end to all our distress," more importunate than ever.

Jehovah replied to the intercession of the angel of the Lord with good and comforting words. *Dbhârîm tōbhîm* are words which promise good, i.e., salvation (cf. Josh. 23:14; Jer. 29:10). So far as they set before the people the prospect of the mitigation of their distress, they are *nichummîm*, consolations. The word *nichummîm* is a substantive, and in apposition to *dbhârîm*. Instead of the form *nichummîm*, the *keri* has the form *nichumîm*, which is grammatically the more correct of the two, and which is written still more accurately *nichûmîm* in some of the codd. in Kennicott. The contents of these words, which are addressed to the interpreting angel either directly or through the medium of the angel of Jehovah, follow in the announcement which the latter orders the prophet to make in vv. 14–17. קָרָא (v. 14) as in Isa. 40:6. The word of the Lord contains two things: (1) the assurance of energetic love on the part of God towards Jerusalem (vv. 14, 15); and (2) the promise that this love will show itself in the restoration and prosperity of Jerusalem (vv. 16, 17). קָנָא, to be jealous, applied to the jealousy of love as in Joel 2:18, Num. 25:11, 13, etc., is strengthened by קָנָאָה גְּדוּלָהּ. Observe, too, the use of the perfect קָנָאתִי, as distinguished from the participle קֹנֵץ. The perfect is not merely used in the sense of "I have become jealous," expressing the fact that Jehovah was inspired with burning jealousy, to take Jerusalem to Himself (Koehler), but includes the thought that God has already manifested this zeal, or begun to put it in action, namely by liberating His people from exile. Zion, namely the mountain of Zion, is mentioned along with Jerusalem as being the site on which the temple stood, so that Jerusalem only comes into consideration as the capital of the kingdom. Jehovah is also angry

with the self-secure and peaceful nations. The participle *qōtsēph* designates the wrath as lasting. *Sha'ānān*, quiet and careless in their confidence in their own power and prosperity, which they regard as secured for ever. The following word, אָשָׁר, *quod*, introduces the reason why God is angry, viz., because, whereas He was only a little angry with Israel, they assisted for evil. מַעַט refers to the duration, not to the greatness of the anger (cf. Isa. 54:8). עָזְרוּ לָרָעָה, they helped, so that evil was the result (הָרָעָה as in Jer. 44:11), i.e., they assisted not only as the instruments of God for the chastisement of Judah, but so that harm arose from it, inasmuch as they endeavoured to destroy Israel altogether (cf. Isa. 47:6). It is no ground of objection to this definition of the meaning of the words, that לָרָעָה in that case does not form an appropriate antithesis to מַעַט, which relates to time (Koehler); for the fact that the anger only lasted a short time, was in itself a proof that God did not intend to destroy His people. To understand עָזְרוּ לָרָעָה as only referring to the prolonged oppression and captivity, does not sufficiently answer to the words. Therefore (*lākhēn*, v. 16), because Jehovah is jealous with love for His people, and very angry with the heathen, He has now turned with compassion towards Jerusalem. The perfect שָׁבַתִּי is not purely prophetic, but describes the event as having already commenced, and as still continuing. This compassion will show itself in the fact that the house of God is to be built in Jerusalem, and the city itself restored, and all the obstacles to this are to be cleared out of the way. The measuring line is drawn over a city, to mark off the space it is to occupy, and the plan upon which it is to be arranged. The *chethib* קוּה, probably to be read קוּה, is the obsolete form, which occurs again in 1 Kings 7:23 and Jer. 31:39, and was displaced by the contracted form קוּ (*keri*). But the compassion of God will not be restricted to this. The prophet is to proclaim still more ("cry yet,"

v. 17, referring to the “cry” in v. 14). The cities of Jehovah, i.e., of the land of the Lord, are still to overflow with good, or with prosperity. *Pûts*, to overflow, as in Prov. 5:16; and תְּפֹצְצָנָה for תְּפֹצְצֵינָה (vid., Ewald, § 196, c). The last two clauses round off the promise. When the Lord shall restore the temple and city, then will Zion and Jerusalem learn that He is comforting her, and has chosen her still. The last thought is repeated in Zech. 2:16 and 3:2.

In this vision it is shown to the prophet, and through him to the people, that although the immediate condition of things presents no prospect of the fulfilment of the promised restoration and glorification of Israel, the Lord has nevertheless already appointed the instruments of His judgment, and sent them out to overthrow the nations of the world, that are still living at rest and in security, and to perfect His Zion. The fulfilment of this consolatory promise is neither to be transferred to the end of the present course of this world, as is supposed by Hofmann (*Weiss. u. Erfüll.* i. 335), who refers to Zech. 14:18, 19 in support of this, nor to be restricted to what was done in the immediate future for the rebuilding of the temple and of the city of Jerusalem. The promise embraces the whole of the future of the kingdom of God; so that whilst the commencement of the fulfilment is to be seen in the fact that the building of the temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, and Jerusalem itself was also restored by Nehemiah in the reign of Artaxerxes, these commencements of the fulfilment simply furnished a pledge that the glorification of the nation and kingdom of God predicted by the earlier prophets would quite as assuredly follow.

Second Vision: The Four Horns and the Four Smiths—Ch. 1:18–21 (Heb. Bib. Ch. 2:1–4)

Zechariah 1:18–21. The second vision is closely connected with the first, and shows how God will discharge the fierceness of His wrath upon the heathen nations in their self-security (Zech. 1:15). V. 18. “*And I lifted up mine eyes,*

and saw, and behold four horns. V. 19. *And I said to the angel that talked with me, What are these? And he said to me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.* V. 20. *And Jehovah showed me four smiths.* V. 21. *And I said, What come these to do? And He spake to me thus: These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no one lifted up his head; these are now come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations which have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.”* The mediating angel interprets the four horns to the prophet first of all as the horns which have scattered Judah; then literally, as the nations which have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it. The horn is a symbol of power (cf. Amos 6:13). The horns therefore symbolize the powers of the world, which rise up in hostility against Judah and hurt it. The number four does not point to the four quarters of the heaven, denoting the heathen foes of Israel in all the countries of the world (Hitzig, Maurer, Koehler, and others). This view cannot be established from v. 10, for there is no reference to any dispersion of Israel to the four winds there. Nor does it follow from the perfect וְיָרִי that only such nations are to be thought of, as had already risen up in hostility to Israel and Judah in the time of Zechariah; for it cannot be shown that there were four such nations. At that time all the nations round about Judah were subject to the Persian empire, as they had been in Nebuchadnezzar’s time to the Babylonian. Both the number four and the perfect *zērū* belong to the sphere of inward intuition, in which the objects are combined together so as to form one complete picture, without any regard to the time of their appearing in historical reality. Just as the prophet in Zech. 6 sees the four chariots all together, although they follow one another in action, so may the four horns which are seen simultaneously represent nations which succeeded one another. This is shown still more clearly by the visions in Dan. 2 and 7, in which not only the colossal image seen in a dream by Nebuchadnezzar (Zech. 2), but also the four beasts which are seen by Daniel to ascend

simultaneously from the sea, symbolize the four empires, which rose up in succession one after the other. It is to these four empires that the four horns of our vision refer, as Jerome, Abarb., Hengstenberg, and others have correctly pointed out, since even the picturing of nations or empires as horns points back to Dan. 7:7, 8, and 8:3–9. Zechariah sees these in all the full development of their power, in which they have oppressed and crushed the people of God (hence the perfect *zērū*), and for which they are to be destroyed themselves. *Zârâh*, to scatter, denotes the dissolution of the united condition and independence of the nation of God. In this sense all four empires destroyed Judah, although the Persian and Grecian empires did not carry Judah out of their own land.

The striking combination, “Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem,” in which not only the introduction of the name of Israel between Judah and Jerusalem is to be noticed, but also the fact that the *nota acc.* תא is only placed before *Yhūdâh* and *Yisrâ’ēl*, and not before *Yrūshâlaim* also, is not explained on the ground that Israel denotes the kingdom of the ten tribes, Judah the southern kingdom, and Jerusalem the capital of the kingdom (Maurer, Umbreit, and others), for in that case *Israel* would necessarily have been repeated before *Judah*, and *’ēth* before *Yrūshâlaim*. Still less can the name *Israel* denote the rural population of Judah (Hitzig), or the name *Judah* the princely house (Neumann). By the fact that *’ēth* is omitted before *Yrūshâlaim*, and only *Vav* stands before it, Jerusalem is connected with Israel and separated from Judah; and by the repetition of *’ēth* before *Yisrâ’ēl*, as well as before *Yhūdâh*, Israel with Jerusalem is co-ordinated with Judah. Kliefoth infers from this that “the heathen had dispersed on the one hand Judah, and on the other hand Israel together with Jerusalem,” and understands this as signifying that in the nation of God itself a separation is presupposed, like the previous separation into Judah and the kingdom of the ten tribes. “When the Messiah comes,” he says, “a small portion of the Israel

according to the flesh will receive Him, and so constitute the genuine people of God and the true Israel, *the* Judah; whereas the greater part of the Israel according to the flesh will reject the Messiah at first, and harden itself in unbelief, until at the end of time it will also be converted, and join the true Judah of Christendom.” But this explanation, according to which *Judah* would denote the believing portion of the nation of twelve tribes, and *Israel* and *Jerusalem* the unbelieving, is wrecked on the grammatical difficulty that the cop. ו is wanting before אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל. If the names *Judah* and *Israel* were intended to be co-ordinated with one another as two different portions of the covenant nation as a whole, the two parts would necessarily have been connected together by the cop. *Vav*. Moreover, in the two co-ordinated names *Judah* and *Israel*, the one could not possibly stand in the spiritual sense, and the other in the carnal. The co-ordination of *’eth-Yhūdâh* with *’eth-Yisrâ’ēl* without the cop. *Vav* shows that Israel is really equivalent to the *Jerusalem* which is subordinated to it, and does not contain a second member (or part), which is added to it,—in other words, that Israel with Jerusalem is merely an interpretation or more precise definition of *Yhūdâh*; and Hengstenberg has hit upon the correct idea, when he takes Israel as the honourable name of Judah, or, more correctly, as an honourable name for the covenant nation as then existing in Judah. This explanation is not rendered questionable by the objection offered by Koehler: viz., that after the separation of the two kingdoms, the expression Israel always denotes either the kingdom of the ten tribes, or the posterity of Jacob without regard to their being broken up, because this is not the fact. The use of the name Israel for Judah after the separation of the kingdoms is established beyond all question by 2 Chron. 12:1; 15:17; 19:8; 21:2, 4; 23:2; 24:5, etc.

Jehovah then showed the prophet four *chârâshîm*, or workmen, i.e., smiths; and on his putting the question, “What have these come to do?” gave him this reply: “To terrify those,” etc. For the order of the words מָה אֵלֶּה בָּאִים לְעָשׂוֹת

instead of *מָה לְעֵשׂוֹת אֱלֹהִים בְּאֵימִים*, see Gen. 42:12, Neh. 2:12, Judg. 9:48. *הַקֶּרְנוֹת* אֱלֹהִים is not a nominative written absolutely at the head of the sentence in the sense of “these horns,” for that would require *הַקֶּרְנוֹת הָאֵלֹהִים*; but the whole sentence is repeated from v. 2, and to that the statement of the purpose for which the smiths have come is attached in the form of an apodosis: “these are the horns, etc., and they (the smiths) have come.” At the same time, the earlier statement as to the horns is defined more minutely by the additional clause *כְּפִי אֵישׁ וּגִי*, according to the measure, i.e., in such a manner that no man lifted up his head any more, or so that Judah was utterly prostrate. *Hachārīd*, to throw into a state of alarm, as in 2 Sam. 17:2. *Them* (*’ōthām*): this refers *ad sensum* to the nations symbolized by the horns. *Yaddōth*, inf. *piel* of *yādâh*, to cast down, may be explained as referring to the power of the nations symbolized by the horns. *’Erets Yhūdâh* (the land of Judah) stands for the inhabitants of the land. The four smiths, therefore, symbolize the instruments “of the divine omnipotence by which the imperial power in its several historical forms is overthrown” (Kliefoth), or, as Theod. Mops. expresses it, “the powers that serve God and inflict vengeance upon them from many directions.” The vision does not show what powers God will use for this purpose. It is simply designed to show to the people of God, that every hostile power of the world which has risen up against it, or shall rise up, is to be judged and destroyed by the Lord.

Zechariah 2

Third Vision: The Man with the Measuring Line—Ch. 2 (Heb. Ch. 2:5–17)

Zechariah 2:1–5. Whilst the second vision sets forth the destruction of the powers that were hostile to Israel, the third (Zech. 2:1–5) with the prophetic explanation (vv. 6–13) shows the development of the people and kingdom of God till the time of its final glory. The vision itself appears very simple, only a few of the principal features being indicated; but in this very

brevity it presents many difficulties so far as the exposition is concerned. It is as follows: V. 1. “And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold a man, and in his hand a measuring line. V. 2. Then I said, Whither goest thou? And he said to me, To measure Jerusalem, to see how great its breadth, and how great its length. V. 3. And, behold, the angel that talked with me went out, and another angel went out to meet him. V. 4. And he said to him, Run, speak to his young man thus: Jerusalem shall lie as an open land for the multitude of men and cattle in the midst of it. V. 5. And I shall be to it, is the saying of Jehovah, a fiery wall round about; and I shall be for glory in the midst of it.” The man with the measuring line in his hand is not the interpreting angel (C. B. Mich., Ros., Maurer, etc.); for it was not his duty to place the events upon the stage, but simply to explain to the prophet the things which he saw. Moreover, this angel is clearly distinguished from the man, inasmuch as he does not go out (v. 3) till after the latter has gone to measure Jerusalem (v. 2). At the same time, we cannot regard the measuring man as merely “a figure in the vision,” since all the persons occurring in these visions are significant; but we agree with those who conjecture that he is the angel of Jehovah, although this conjecture cannot be distinctly proved. The task which he is preparing to perform—namely, to measure Jerusalem—leads unquestionably to the conclusion that he is something more than a figure. The measuring of the breadth and length of Jerusalem presupposes that the city is already in existence; and this expression must not be identified with the phrase, to draw the measure over Jerusalem, in Zech. 1:15. Drawing the measure over a place is done for the purpose of sketching a plan for its general arrangement or the rebuilding of it. But the length and breadth of a city can only be measured when it is already in existence; and the object of the measuring is not to see how long and how broad it is to be, but what the length and breadth actually are. It is true that it by no means follows from this that the city to be measured was the Jerusalem of that time; on the contrary, the vision shows the future

Jerusalem, but it exhibits it as a city in actual existence, and visible to the spiritual eye. While the man goes away to measure the city, the interpreting angel goes out: not out of the myrtle thicket, for this only occurs in the first vision; but he goes away from the presence of the prophet, where we have to think of him as his interpreter, in the direction of the man with the measuring line, to find out what he is going to do, and bring back word to the prophet. At the very same time another angel comes out to meet *him*, viz., the *angelus interpretes*, not the man with the measuring line. For one person can only come to meet another when the latter is going in the direction from which the former comes. Having come to meet him, he (the second angel) says to him (the *angelus interpretes*), "Run, say to this young man," etc. The subject to *יְהוָה אֱמַר* can only be the second angel; for if, on grammatical grounds, the *angelus interpretes* might be regarded as speaking to the young man, such an assumption is proved to be untenable, by the fact that it was no part of the office of the *angelus interpretes* to give orders or commissions to another angel. On the other hand, there is nothing at all to preclude another angel from revealing a decree of God to the *angelus interpretes* for him to communicate to the prophet; inasmuch as this does not bring the *angelus interpretes* into action any further than his function requires, so that there is no ground for the objection that this is at variance with his standing elsewhere (Kliefoth). But the other angel could not give the instructions mentioned in v. 4 to the *angelus interpretes*, unless he were either himself a superior angel, viz., the angel of Jehovah, or had been directed to do so by the man with the measuring line, in which case this "man" would be the angel of Jehovah. Of these two possibilities we prefer the latter on two grounds: (1) because it is impossible to think of any reason why the "other angel" should not be simply called *מַלְאֲכֵי יְהוָה*, if he really were the angel of the Lord; and (2) because, according to the analogy of Ezek. 40:3, the man with the measuring line most probably was the angel of

Jehovah, with whose dignity it would be quite in keeping that he should explain his purpose to the *angelus interpretes* through the medium of another (inferior) angel. And if this be established, so far as the brevity of the account will allow, we cannot understand by the "young man" the man with the measuring line, as Hitzig, Maurer, and Kliefoth do. The only way in which such an assumption as this could be rendered tenable or in harmony with the rest, would be by supposing that the design of the message was to tell the man with the measuring line that "he might desist from his useless enterprise" (Hitzig), as Jerusalem could not be measured at all, on account of the number of its inhabitants and its vast size (Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Ewald, Umbreit, etc.); but Kliefoth has very justly replied to this, that "if a city be ever so great, inasmuch as it is a city, it can always be measured, and also have walls." If, then, the symbolical act of measuring, as Kliefoth also admits, expresses the question how large and how broad Jerusalem will eventually be, and if the words of vv. 4, 5 contain the answer to this question, viz., Jerusalem will in the first place (v. 4) contain such a multitude of men and cattle that it will dwell like *prâzôth*; this answer, which gives the meaning of the measuring, must be addressed not to the measuring man, but simply to the prophet, that he may announce to the people the future magnitude and glory of the city. The measuring man was able to satisfy himself of this by the measuring itself. We must therefore follow the majority of both the earlier and later expositors, and take the "young man" as being the prophet himself, who is so designated on account of his youthful age, and without any allusion whatever to "human inexperience and dim short-sightedness" (Hengstenberg), since such an allusion would be very remote from the context, and even old men of experience could not possibly know anything concerning the future glory of Jerusalem without a revelation from above. *Hallâz*, as in Judg. 6:20 and 2 Kings 4:25, is a contraction of *hallâzeh*, and formed from *lâzeh*, there, thither, and the article *hal*, in the sense of the (young man) there, or that

young man (cf. Ewald, § 103, *a*, and 183, *b*; Ges. § 34, Anm. 1). He is to make haste and bring this message, because it is good news, the realization of which will soon commence. The message contains a double and most joyful promise. (1) Jerusalem will in future dwell, i.e., to be built, as *prâzôth*. This word means neither "without walls," nor *loca aperta*, but strictly speaking the *plains*, and is only used in the plural to denote the open, level ground, as contrasted with the fortified cities surrounded by walls: thus *'ârê prâzôth*, cities of the plain, in Esth. 9:19, as distinguished from the capital Susa; and *'erets prâzôth* in Ezek. 38:11, the land where men dwell "without walls, bolts, and gates;" hence *prâzî*, inhabitant of the plain, in contrast with the inhabitants of fortified cities with high walls (Deut. 3:5; 1 Sam. 6:18). The thought is therefore the following: Jerusalem is in future to resemble an open country covered with unwallied cities and villages; it will no longer be a city closely encircled with walls; hence it will be extraordinarily enlarged, on account of the multitude of men and cattle with which it will be blessed (cf. Isa. 49:19, 20; Ezek. 38:11). Moreover, (2) Jerusalem will then have no protecting wall surrounding it, because it will enjoy a superior protection. Jehovah will be to it a wall of fire round about, that is to say, a defence of fire which will consume every one who ventures to attack it (cf. Isa. 4:5; Deut. 4:24). Jehovah will also be the glory in the midst of Jerusalem, that is to say, will fill the city with His glory (cf. Isa. 60:19). This promise is explained in the following prophetic words which are uttered by the angel of Jehovah, as vv. 8, 9, and 11 clearly show. According to these verses, for example, the speaker is sent by Jehovah, and according to v. 8 to the nations which have plundered Israel, "after glory," i.e., to smite these nations and make them servants to the Israelites. From this shall Israel learn that Jehovah has sent him. The fact that, according to vv. 3, 4, another angel speaks to the prophet, may be easily reconciled with this. For since this angel, as we have seen above, was sent by the angel of Jehovah, he speaks according to his instructions, and that in such a manner that his

words pass imperceptibly into the words of the sender, just as we very frequently find the words of a prophet passing suddenly into the words of God, and carried on as such. For the purpose of escaping from this simple conclusion, Koehler has forcibly broken up this continuous address, and has separated the words of vv. 8, 9, and 11, in which the angel says that Jehovah has sent him, from the words of Jehovah proclaimed by the angel, as being interpolations, but without succeeding in explaining them either simply or naturally.

Zechariah 2:6-9. The prophecy commences thus in vv. 6-9: V. 6. "*Ho, ho, flee out of the land of the north, is the saying of Jehovah; for I spread you out as the four winds of heaven, is the saying of Jehovah.*" V. 7. "*Ho, Zion, save thyself; thou that dwellest with the daughter Babel.*" V. 8. "*For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, After glory hath he sent me to the nations that have plundered you; for whoever toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye.*" V. 9. "*For, behold, I swing my hand over them, and they become a spoil to those who served them; and ye will see that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me.*" The summons to flee out of Babylon, in vv. 6 and 7, is addressed to the Israelites, who are all included in the one name Zion in v. 7; and shows that the address which follows is not a simple continuation of the promise in vv. 4 and 5, but is intended both to explain it, and to assign the reason for it. The summons contains so far a reason for it, that the Israelites are directed to flee out of Babylon, because the judgment is about to burst upon this oppressor of the people of God. The words *nūsū*, flee, and *himmâltî*, save thyself or escape, both point to the judgment, and in v. 9 the judgment itself is clearly spoken of. the land of the north is Babylon (cf. Jer. 1:14; 6:22; 10:22; and for the fact itself, Isa. 48:20). The reason for the exclamation "Flee" is first of all given in the clause, "for like the four winds have I spread you out," not "dispersed you" (Vulg., C. B. Mich., Koehler). For apart from the fact that *pērēs* almost always means to spread out, and has the meaning to disperse at the most in Ps. 68:15 and Ezek. 17:21, this meaning is altogether unsuitable here. For if Israel had been scattered

like the four winds, it would of necessity have been summoned to return, not only from the north, but from all quarters of the globe (Hitzig, Kliefoth). Moreover, we should then have לְאַרְבַּע, into the four winds; and the method suggested by Koehler for reconciling כְּאַרְבַּע with his view, viz., by assuming that “like the four winds” is equivalent to “as chaff is pounded and driven away from its place by the four winds,” according to which the winds would be mentioned in the place of the chaff, will hardly meet with approval. The explanation is rather that the perfect *pērastī* is used prophetically to denote the purpose of God, which had already been formed, even if its realization was still in the future. To spread out like the four winds is the same as to spread out just as the four winds spread out to all quarters of the globe. Because God has resolved upon spreading out His people in this manner, they are to flee out of Babel, that they may not suffer the fate of Babel. That this thought lies at the foundation of the motive assigned, is evident from the further reasons assigned for the summons in vv. 8 and 9.

Zion stands for the inhabitants of Zion, namely the people of God, who are for the time being still *yōshebheheth bath Bâbel*, dwelling with the daughter Babel. As *Zion* does not mean the city or fortress of Jerusalem, but the inhabitants, so the “daughter Babel” is not the city of Babylon or country of Babylonia personified, but the inhabitants of Babel; and יָשָׁב is construed with the *accusative* of the person, as in Ps. 22:4 and 2 Sam. 6:2. What Jehovah states in explanation of the twofold call to flee out of Babel, does not commence with v. 9 (Ewald), or with כִּי הִנְגִּיעַ in v. 8b (Koehler), but with אָחַר כְּבוֹד וְגו'. The incorrectness of the two former explanations is seen first of all in the fact that כִּי only introduces a speech in the same manner as οὐ, when it follows directly upon the introductory formula; but not, as is here assumed, when a long parenthesis is inserted between, without the introduction being resumed by לְאַמַּר. And

secondly, neither of these explanations furnishes a suitable meaning. If the words of God only followed in v. 9, עָלֵיהֶם in the first clause would be left without any noun to which to refer; and if they commenced with כִּי הִנְגִּיעַ (for he that toucheth), the thought “he that toucheth you,” etc., would assign no reason for the call to flee and save themselves. For if Israel is defended or valued by God as a pupil of the eye, there can be no necessity for it to flee. And lastly, it is impossible to see what can be the meaning or object of the parenthesis, “After glory hath He sent me,” etc. If it treated “of the execution of the threat of punishment upon the heathen” (Koehler), it would be inserted in an unsuitable place, since the threat of punishment would not follow till afterwards. All these difficulties vanish if Jehovah’s words commence with *'achar kâbhōd* (after glory), in which case *shlâchanī* (He hath sent me) may be very simply explained from the fact that the address is introduced, not in a direct form, but indirectly: Jehovah says, He has sent me after glory. The sender is Jehovah, and the person sent is not the prophet, but the angel of the Lord. *Achar kâbhōd*: behind glory, after glory; not however “after the glory of success” (Hitzig, Ewald, etc.), still less “with a glorious commission,” but to get glory upon the heathen, i.e., to display the glory of God upon the heathen through the judgment by which their power is broken, and the heathen world is made to serve the people of God. The manner in which the next two clauses, commencing with *kī* (for), are attached, is the following: The first assigns the subjective motive; that is to say, states the reason why God has sent him to the heathen, namely, because they have plundered His people, and have thereby touched the apple of His eye. בְּבַת עֵינַי, the apple of the eye (lit., the gate, the opening in which the eye is placed, or more probably the pupil of the eye, *pupilla*, as being the object most carefully preserved), is a figure used to denote the dearest possession or good, and in this sense is applied to the nation of Israel as early as Deut. 32:10. The second explanatory clause in v. 9 adds the practical

ground for this sending after glory. The speaker is still the angel of the Lord; and his acting is identical with the acting of God. Like Jehovah, he swings his hand over the heathen nations which plundered Israel (cf. Isa. 11:15; 19:16), and they become (יִרְיָוֹ expressing the consequence), i.e., so that they become, booty to the Israelites, who had previously been obliged to serve them (cf. Isa. 14:2). In what way the heathen would serve Israel is stated in v. 11. By the execution of this judgment Israel would learn that Jehovah had sent His angel, namely to execute upon the heathen His saving purposes for Israel. This is the meaning of these words, not only here and in v. 11, but also in Zech. 4:9 and 6:15, where this formula is repeated, not however in the sense imagined by Koehler, namely that he had spoken these words in consequence of a command from Jehovah, and not of his own accord, by which the "sending" is changed into "speaking."

Zechariah 2:10–13. The daughter Zion is to rejoice at this sending of the angel of the Lord. V. 10. *"Exult and rejoice, O daughter Zion: for, behold, I come, and dwell in the midst of thee, is the saying of Jehovah.* V. 11. *And many nations will attach themselves to Jehovah in that day, and become a people to me: and I dwell in the midst of thee; and thou wilt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to thee.*" The daughter Zion, or the church of the Lord, delivered out of Babel, is to rejoice with joy, because her glorification is commencing now. The Lord comes to her in His angel, in whom are His name (Ex. 23:21), and His face (Ex. 33:14), i.e., the angel of His face (Isa. 63:9), who reveals His nature, to dwell in the midst of her. This dwelling of Jehovah, or of His angel, in the midst of Zion, is essentially different from the dwelling of Jehovah in the Most Holy Place of His temple. It commences with the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and is completed by His return in glory (John 1:14 and Rev. 21:3). Then will many, or powerful, nations, attach themselves to Jehovah, and become His people (cf. Zech. 8:20, 21; Isa. 14:1). This kingdom of God, which has hitherto been restricted to

Israel, will be spread out and glorified by the reception of the heathen nations which are seeking God (Mic. 4:2). The repetition of the expression, "I dwell in the midst of thee," merely serves as a stronger asseveration of this brilliant promise; and the same remark applies to the repetition of וְיָדַעְתָּ וְגַרְ (and thou shalt now): see at v. 13. Jerusalem will thereby receive the expansion shown to the prophet in v. 4; and through the dwelling of God in the midst of her, the promise in v. 5 will also be fulfilled. The next verse refers to this.

Zechariah 2:12. *"And Jehovah will take possession of Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will yet choose Jerusalem.* V. 13. *Be still, all flesh, before Jehovah; for He has risen up out of His holy habitation.*" The first hemistich of v. 12 rests upon Deut. 32:9, where Israel, as the chosen nation, is called the *chēleq* and *nachālâh* of Jehovah. This appointment of Israel to be the possession of Jehovah will become perfect truth and reality in the future, through the coming of the Lord. *Yhūdâh* is Judah as delivered, i.e., the remnant of the whole of the covenant nation. This remnant, after being gathered out of Babel, will dwell upon holy ground, or in a holy land, as the possession of the Lord. The holy land is the land of Jehovah (Hos. 9:3); but this is not to be set down without reserve as identical with Palestine. On the contrary, every place where Jehovah may be is holy ground (cf. Ex. 3:5); so that even Palestine is only holy when the Lord dwells there. And we must not limit the idea of the holy land in this passage to Palestine, because the idea of the people of God will be so expanded by the addition of nation nations, that it will not have room enough within the limits of Palestine; and according to v. 4, even Jerusalem will no longer be a city with limited boundaries. The holy land reaches just as far as the nations, which have become the people of Jehovah by attaching themselves to Judah, spread themselves out over the surface of the earth. The words "choose Jerusalem again" round off the promise, just as in Zech. 1:17; but in v. 13 the admonition is added, to wait in reverential silence for the coming of the Lord to

judgment, after Hab. 2:20; and the reason assigned is, that the judgment will soon begin. נָעוּר, *niph'al* of עוּר (compare Ewald, § 140, *a*; Ges. § 72, Anm. 9), to wake up, or rise up from His rest (cf. Ps. 44:24). מְעוֹן קֹדֶשׁוֹ, the holy habitation of God, is heaven, as in Deut. 26:15, Jer. 25:30. The judgment upon the heathen world-power began to burst in a very short time. When Babylon revolted against the king of Persia, under the reign of Darius, a great massacre took place within the city after its re-capture, and its walls were destroyed, so that the city could not rise again to its ancient grandeur and importance. Compare with this the remark made in the comm. on Haggai (p. 487), concerning the overthrow of the Persian empire and those which followed it. We have already shown, at p. 488, note, what a groundless hypothesis the opinion is, that the fulfilment was interrupted in consequence of Israel's guilt; and that as the result of this, the completion of it has been deferred for centuries, or even thousands of years.

Zechariah 3

The Fourth Vision: The High Priest Joshua in the Presence of the Angel of the Lord

Zechariah 3:1-5. In this and the following visions the prophet is shown the future glorification of the church of the Lord. V. 1. *“And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan stood at his right hand to oppose him. V. 2. And Jehovah said to Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; and Jehovah who chooseth Jerusalem rebuke thee. Is not this a brand saved out of the fire? V. 3. And Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. V. 4. And he answered and spake to those who stood before him thus: Take away the filthy garments from him. And he said to him, Behold, I have taken away thy guilt from thee, and clothe thee in festal raiment. V. 5. And I said, Let them put a clean mitre upon his head. Then they put the clean mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of Jehovah stood by.”* The subject to וַיִּרְאֵנִי

is Jehovah, and not the mediating angel, for his work was to explain the visions to the prophet, and not to introduce them; nor the angel of Jehovah, because he appears in the course of the vision, although in these visions he is sometimes identified with Jehovah, and sometimes distinguished from Him. The scene is the following: Joshua stands as high priest before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stands at his (Joshua's) right hand as accuser. Satan (*hassâtân*) is the evil spirit so well known from the book of Job, and the constant accuser of men before God (Rev. 12:10), and not Sanballat and his comrades (Kimchi, Drus., Ewald). He comes forward here as the enemy and accuser of Joshua, to accuse him in his capacity of high priest. The scene is therefore a judicial one, and the high priest is not in the sanctuary, the building of which had commenced, or engaged in supplicating the mercy of the angel of the Lord for himself and the people, as Theodoret and Hengstenberg suppose. The expression עָמַד

לְפָנַי furnishes no tenable proof of this, since it cannot be shown that this expression would be an inappropriate one to denote the standing of an accused person before the judge, or that the Hebrew language had any other expression for this. Satan stands on the right side of Joshua, because the accuser was accustomed to stand at the right hand of the accused (cf. Ps. 109:6). Joshua is opposed by Satan, however, not on account of any personal offences either in his private or his domestic life, but in his official capacity as high priest, and for sins which were connected with his office, or for offences which would involve the nation (Lev. 4:3); though not as the bearer of the sins of the people before the Lord, but as laden with his own and his people's sins. The dirty clothes, which he had on, point to this (v. 3).

But Jehovah, i.e., the angel of Jehovah, repels the accuser with the words, “Jehovah rebuke thee; ... Jehovah who chooseth Jerusalem.” The words are repeated for the sake of emphasis, and with the repetition the motive which led Jehovah to reject the accuser is added. Because Jehovah has chosen Jerusalem, and maintains His choice

in its integrity (this is implied in the participle *bōchēr*). He must rebuke Satan, who hopes that his accusation will have the effect of repealing the choice of Jerusalem, by deposing the high priest. For if any sin of the high priest, which inculcated the nation, had been sufficient to secure his removal or deposition, the office of high priest would have ceased altogether, because no man is without sin. נָגַד, to rebuke, does not mean merely to nonsuit, but to reprove for a thing; and when used of God, to reprove by action, signifying to sweep both him and his accusation entirely away. The motive for the repulse of the accuser is strengthened by the clause which follows: Is he (Joshua) not a brand plucked out of the fire? i.e., one who has narrowly escaped the threatening destruction (for the figure, see Amos 4:11). These words, again, we must not take as referring to the high priest as an individual; nor must we restrict their meaning to the fact that Joshua had been brought back from captivity, and reinstated in the office of high priest. Just as the accusation does not apply to the individual, but to the office which Joshua filled, so do these words also apply to the supporter of the official dignity. The fire, out of which Joshua had been rescued as a brand, was neither the evil which had come upon Joshua through neglecting the building of the temple (Koehler), nor the guilt of allowing his sons to marry foreign wives (Targ., Jerome, Rashi, Kimchi): for in the former case the accusation would have come too late, since the building of the temple had been resumed five months before (Hag. 1:15, compared with Zech. 1:7); and in the latter it would have been much too early, since these misalliances did not take place till fifty years afterwards. And, in general, guilt which might possibly lead to ruin could not be called a fire; still less could the cessation or removal of this sin be called deliverance out of the fire. Fire is a figurative expression for punishment, not for sin. The fire out of which Joshua had been saved like a brand was the captivity, in which both Joshua and the nation had been brought to the verge of destruction. Out of this fire Joshua the high priest had been rescued. But, as Kliefoth

has aptly observed, “the priesthood of Israel was concentrated in the high priest, just as the character of Israel as the holy nation was concentrated in the priesthood. The high priest represented the holiness and priestliness of Israel, and that not merely in certain official acts and functions, but so that as a particular Levite and Aaronite, and as the head for the time being of the house of Aaron, he represented in his own person that character of holiness and priestliness which had been graciously bestowed by God upon the nation of Israel.” This serves to explain how the hope that God must rebuke the accuser could be made to rest upon the election of Jerusalem, i.e., upon the love of the Lord to the whole of His nation. The pardon and the promise do not apply to Joshua personally any more than the accusation; but they refer to him in his official position, and to the whole nation, and that with regard to the special attributes set forth in the high priesthood—namely, its priestliness and holiness. We cannot, therefore, find any better words with which to explain the meaning of this vision than those of Kliefoth. “The character of Israel,” he says, “as the holy and priestly nation of God, was violated—violated by the general sin and guilt of the nation, which God had been obliged to punish with exile. This guilt of the nation, which neutralized the priestliness and holiness of Israel, is pleaded by Satan in the accusation which he brings before the *Maleach* of Jehovah against the high priest, who was its representative. A nation so guilty and so punished could no longer be the holy and priestly nation: its priests could no longer be priests; nor could its high priests be high priests any more. But the *Maleach* of Jehovah sweeps away the accusation with the assurance that Jehovah, from His grace, and for the sake of its election, will still give validity to Israel’s priesthood, and has already practically manifested this purpose of His by bringing it out of its penal condition of exile.”

After the repulse of the accuser, Joshua is cleansed from the guilt attaching to him. When he stood before the angel of the Lord he had dirty clothes on. The dirty clothes are not the

costume of an accused person (Drus., Ewald); for this Roman custom (Lev. 2:54; 6:20) was unknown to the Hebrews. Dirt is a figurative representation of sin; so that dirty clothes represent defilement with sin and guilt (cf. Isa. 64:5; 4:4; Prov. 30:12; Rev. 3:4; 7:14). The Lord had indeed refined His nation in its exile, and in His grace had preserved it from destruction; but its sin was not thereby wiped away. The place of grosser idolatry had been taken by the more refined idolatry of self-righteousness, selfishness, and conformity to the world. And the representative of the nation before the Lord was affected with the dirt of these sins, which gave Satan a handle for his accusation. But the Lord would cleanse His chosen people from this, and make it a holy and glorious nation. This is symbolized by what takes place in vv. 4 and 5. The angel of the Lord commands those who stand before Him, i.e., the angels who serve Him, to take off the dirty clothes from the high priest, and put on festal clothing; and then adds, by way of explanation to Joshua, Behold, I have caused thy guilt to pass away from thee, that is to say, I have forgiven thy sin, and justified thee (cf. 2 Sam. 12:13; 24:10), and clothe thee with festal raiment. The inf. abs. *halbēsh* stands, as it frequently does, for the finite verb, and has its norm in *הִעֲבֵרְתִי* (see at Hag. 1:6). The last words are either spoken to the attendant angels as well, or else, what is more likely, they are simply passed over in the command given to them, and mentioned for the first time here. *Machālsōth*, costly clothes, which were only worn on festal occasions (see at Isa. 3:22); They are not symbols of innocence and righteousness (Chald.), which are symbolized by clean or white raiment (Rev. 3:4; 7:9); nor are they figurative representations of joy (Koehler), but are rather symbolical of glory. The high priest, and the nation in him, are not only to be cleansed from sin, and justified, but to be sanctified and glorified as well.

Zechariah 3:5. At this moment the prophet feels compelled to utter the prayer that they may also put a clean mitre upon Joshua's head, which prayer is immediately granted. The

prayer appears at first to be superfluous, inasmuch as the mitre would certainly not be forgotten when the dirty clothes were taken away and the festal dress was put on. Nevertheless, the fact that it is granted shows that it was not superfluous. The meaning of the prayer was hardly that the high priest might be newly attired from head to foot, as Hengstenberg supposes, but is rather connected with the significance of the mitre. *Tsânîph* is not a turban, such as might be worn by anybody (Koehler), but the headdress of princely persons and kings (Job 29:14; Isa. 62:3), and is synonymous with *mitsnepheth*, the technical word for the tiara prescribed for the high priest in the law (Ex. and Lev.), as we may see from Ezek. 21:31, where the regal diadem, which is called *tsânîph* in Isa. 62:3, is spoken of under the name of *mitsnepheth*. The turban of the high priest was that portion of his dress in which he carried his office, so to speak, upon his forehead; and the clean turban was the substratum for the golden plate that was fastened upon it, and by which he was described as holy to the Lord, and called to bear the guilt of the children of Israel (Ex. 28:38). The prayer for a clean mitre to be put upon his head, may therefore be accounted for from the wish that Joshua should not only be splendidly decorated, but should be shown to be holy, and qualified to accomplish the expiation of the people. Purity, as the earthly type of holiness, forms the foundation for glory. In the actual performance of the matter, therefore, the putting on of the clean mitre is mentioned first, and then the clothing with festal robes. This took place in the presence of the angel of the Lord. That is the meaning of the circumstantial clause, "and the angel of the Lord stood" (*ritum tanquam herus imperans, probans et praesentia sua ornans*, C. B. Mich.), and not merely that the angel of the Lord, who had hitherto been sitting in the judge's seat, rose up from his seat for the purpose of speaking while the robing was going on (Hofmann, Koehler). *עָמַד* does not mean to stand up, but simply to remain standing.

Zechariah 3:6–10. In these verses there follows a prophetic address, in which the angel of the Lord describes the symbolical action of the re-clothing of the high priest, according to its typical significance in relation to the continuance and the future of the kingdom of God. V. 6. *“And the angel of the Lord testified to Joshua, and said, V. 7. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, If thou shalt walk in my ways, and keep my charge, thou shalt both judge my house and keep my courts, and I will give thee ways among these standing here. V. 8. Hear then, thou high priest Joshua, thou, and thy comrades who sit before thee: yea, men of wonder are they: for, behold, I bring my servant Zemach (Sprout). V. 9. For behold the stone which I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone are seven eyes: behold I engrave its carving, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and I clear away the iniquity of this land in one day. V. 10. In that day, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, ye will invite one another under the vine and under the fig-tree.”* In v. 7 not only is the high priest confirmed in his office, but the perpetuation and glorification of his official labours are promised. As Joshua appears in this vision as the supporter of the office, this promise does not apply to Joshua himself so much as to the office, the continuance of which is indeed bound up with the fidelity of those who sustain it. The promise in v. 7 therefore begins by giving prominence to this condition: If thou wilt walk in my ways, etc. Walking in the ways of the Lord refers to the personal attitude of the priests towards the Lord, or to fidelity in their personal relation to God; and keeping the charge of Jehovah, to the faithful performance of their official duties (*shâmar mishmartî*, noticing what has to be observed in relation to Jehovah; see at Lev. 8:35). The apodosis begins with וְגַם אֶתֶּהּ, and not with וְנִתְּתִי. This is required not only by the emphatic *’attâh*, but also by the clauses commencing with *vgam*; whereas the circumstance, that the tense only changes with *vnâthattî*, and that *tâdîn* and *tishmôr* are still imperfects, has its simple explanation in the fact, that on account of the *gam*, the verbs could not be linked together with *Vav*, and placed at the head of the clauses.

Taken by themselves, the clauses *vgam tâdîn* and *vgam tishmôr* might express a duty of the high priest quite as well as a privilege. If they were taken as apodoses, they would express an obligation; but in that case they would appear somewhat superfluous, because the obligations of the high priest are fully explained in the two previous clauses. If, on the other hand, the apodosis commences with them, they contain, in the form of a promise, a privilege which is set before the high priest as awaiting him in the future—namely, the privilege of still further attending to the service of the house of God, which had been called in question by Satan’s accusation. דִּין אֶת־בְּיִתִי, to judge the house of God, i.e., to administer right in relation to the house of God, namely, in relation to the duties devolving upon the high priest in the sanctuary as such; hence the right administration of the service in the holy place and the holy of holies. This limitation is obvious from the parallel clause, to keep the courts, in which the care of the ordinary performance of worship in the courts, and the keeping of everything of an idolatrous nature from the house of God, are transferred to him. And to this a new and important promise is added in the last clause (וְנִתְּתִי וגו׳). The meaning of this depends upon the explanation given to the word מְהַלְכִים. Many commentators regard this as a Chaldaic form of the *hiphil* participle (after Dan. 3:25; 4:34), and take it either in the intransitive sense of “those walking” (LXX, Pesh., Vulg., Luth., Hofm., etc.), or in the transitive sense of those conducting the leaders (Ges., Hengst., etc.). But apart from the fact that the *hiphil* of הִלֵּךְ in Hebrew is always written either הוֹלִיךְ or הִלְיִךְ, and has never anything but a transitive meaning, this view is precluded by the בְּיָן, for which we should expect מְבַיֵּן or מְנִי, since the meaning could only be, “I give thee walkers or leaders between those standing here,” i.e., such as walk to and fro between those standing here (Hofmann), or, “I will give thee leaders among (from) these angels who are standing here” (Hengstenberg). In the former case, the high

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priest would receive a promise that he should always have angels to go to and fro between himself and Jehovah, to carry up his prayers, and bring down revelations from God, and supplies of help (John 1:52; Hofmann). This thought would be quite a suitable one; but it is not contained in the words, "since the angels, even if they walk between the standing angels and in the midst of them, do not go to and fro between Jehovah and Joshua" (Kliefoth). In the latter case the high priest would merely receive a general assurance of the assistance of superior angels; and for such a thought as this the expression would be an extremely marvellous one, and the **בְּיָז** would be used incorrectly. We must therefore follow Calvin and others, who take **מִהַלְכִים** as a substantive, from a singular **מִהַלֵּךְ**, formed after **מִהַצֵּב**, **מִסְמֵר**, **מִזְלֵג**, or else as a plural of **מִהַלֵּךְ**, to be pointed **מִהַלְכִים** (Ros., Hitzig, Kliefoth). The words then add to the promise, which ensured to the people the continuance of the priesthood and of the blessings which it conveyed, this new feature, that the high priest would also receive a free access to God, which had not yet been conferred upon him by his office. This points to a time when the restrictions of the Old Testament will be swept away. The further address, in vv. 8 and 9, announces how God will bring about this new time or future.

To show the importance of what follows, Joshua is called upon to "hear." It is doubtful where what he is to hear commences; for the idea, that after the summons to attend, the successive, chain-like explanation of the reason for this summons passes imperceptibly into that to which he is to give heed, is hardly admissible, and has only been adopted because it was found difficult to discover the true commencement of the address. The earlier theologians (Chald., Jerome, Theod. Mops., Theodoret, and Calvin), and even Hitzig and Ewald, take **כִּי הִנְנִי מְבִיא** (for behold I will bring forth). But these words are evidently explanatory of **הַמְּוֹפֵת הַמְּאֲשִׁי** (men of wonder,

etc.). Nor can it commence with *ūmashtī* (and I remove), as Hofmann supposes (*Weiss. u. Erfüll.* i. 339), or with v. 9, "for behold the stone," as he also maintains in his *Schriftbeweis* (ii. 1, pp. 292–3, 508–9). The first of these is precluded not only by the fact that the address would be cut far too short, but also by the cop. *Vav* before *mashṭī*; and the second by the fact that the words, "for behold the stone," etc., in v. 9, are unmistakably a continuation and further explanation of the words, "for behold I will bring forth my servant Zemach," in v. 9. The address begins with "thou and thy fellows," since the priests could not be called upon to hear, inasmuch as they were not present. Joshua's comrades who sit before him are the priests who sat in the priestly meetings in front of the high priest, the president of the assembly, so that *yōshēbh liphnē* corresponds to our "assessors." The following *kī* introduces the substance of the address; and when the subject is placed at the head absolutely, it is used in the sense of an asseveration, "yea, truly" (cf. Gen. 18:20; Ps. 118:10–12; 128:2; and Ewald, § 330, b). *ʿAnshē mōphēth*, men of miracle, or of a miraculous sign, as *mōphēth*, τὸ τέρας, *portentum*, *miraculum*, embraces the idea of **תְּוֹאֵ**, **σημεῖον** (cf. Isa. 8:18), are men who attract attention to themselves by something striking, and are types of what is to come, so that *mōphēth* really corresponds to **τύπος τῶν μελλόντων** (see at Ex. 4:21, Isa. 8:18). **הַמְּוֹפֵת** stands for **אֲנָשִׁים**, the words passing over from the second person to the third on the resuming of the subject, which is placed at the head absolutely, just as in Zeph. 2:12, and refers not only to **אֲנָשִׁים**, but to Joshua and his comrades. They are men of typical sign, but not simply on account of the office which they hold, viz., because their mediatorial priesthood points to the mediatorial office and atoning work of the Messiah, as most of the commentators assume. For "this applies, in the first place, not only to Joshua and his priests, but to the Old Testament priesthood generally; and secondly, there was nothing miraculous in this mediatorial work of the priesthood, which must have been the case

if they were to be *mōphēth*. The miracle, which is to be seen in Joshua and his priests, consists rather in the fact that the priesthood of Israel is laden with guilt, but by the grace of God it has been absolved, and accepted by God again, as the deliverance from exile shows,” and Joshua and his priests are therefore brands plucked by the omnipotence of grace from the fire of merited judgment (Kliefoth). This miracle of grace which has been wrought for them, points beyond itself to an incomparably greater and better act of the sin-absolving grace of God, which is still in the future.

This is the way in which the next clause, “for I bring my servant *Zemach*,” which is explanatory of *’anshē mōphēth* (men of miracle), attaches itself. The word *Tsemach* is used by Zechariah simply as a proper name of the Messiah; and the combination *’abhdī Tsemach* (my servant *Tsemach*) is precisely the same as *’abhdī Dâvid* (my servant David) in Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, or “my servant Job” in Job 1:8; 2:3, etc. The objection raised by Koehler—namely, that if *tsemach*, as a more precise definition of *’abhdī* (my servant), or as an announcement what servant of Jehovah is intended, were used as a proper name, it would either be construed with the article (הַצֶּמַח), or else we should have עֶבְדִּי צֶמַח שְׁמוֹ as in Zech. 6:12—is quite groundless. For “if poets or prophets form new proper names at pleasure, such names, even when deprived of the article, easily assume the distinguishing sign of most proper names, like *bâgōdâh* and *mshūbhâh* in Jer. 3” (Ewald, § 277, c). It is different with שְׁמוֹ in Zech. 6:12; there *shmō* is needed for the sake of the sense, as in 1 Sam. 1:1 and Job 1:1, and does not serve to designate the preceding word as a proper name, but simply to define the person spoken of more precisely by mentioning his name. Zechariah has formed the name *Tsemach*, Sprout, or Shoot, primarily from Jer. 23:5 and 33:15, where the promise is given that a righteous Sprout (*tsemach tsaddiq*), or a Sprout of righteousness, shall be raised up to Jacob. And Jeremiah took the figurative description of the great descendant of David,

who will create righteousness upon the earth, as a *tsemach* which Jehovah will raise up, or cause to shoot up to David, from Isa. 11:1, 2; 53:2, according to which the Messiah is to spring up as a rod out of the stem of Jesse that has been hewn down, or as a root-shoot out of dry ground. *Tsemach*, therefore, denotes the Messiah in His origin from the family of David that has fallen into humiliation, as a sprout which will grow up from its original state of humiliation to exaltation and glory, and answers therefore to the train of thought in this passage, in which the deeply humiliated priesthood is exalted by the grace of the Lord into a type of the Messiah. Whether the designation of the *sprout* as “my servant” is taken from Isa. 52:13 and 53:11 (cf. 42:1; 49:3), or formed after “my servant David” in Ezek. 34:24; 37:24, is a point which cannot be decided, and is of no importance to the matter in hand. The circumstance that the removal of iniquity, which is the peculiar work of the Messiah, is mentioned in v. 9*b*, furnishes no satisfactory reason for deducing *’abhdī tsemach* pre-eminently from Isa. 53. For in v. 9 the removal of iniquity is only mentioned in the second rank, in the explanation of Jehovah’s purpose to bring His servant *Tsemach*. The first rank is assigned to the stone, which Jehovah has laid before Joshua, etc.

The answer to the question, what this stone signifies, or who is to be understood by it, depends upon the view we take of the words עַל אֶבֶן ... עֵינַיִם. Most of the commentators admit that these words do not form a parenthesis (Hitzig, Ewald), but introduce a statement concerning הַיְהוָה הָאֶבֶן. Accordingly, הַיְהוָה הָאֶבֶן וגו' is placed at the head absolutely, and resumed in עַל אֶבֶן אַחַת. This statement may mean, either upon one stone are seven eyes (visible or to be found), or seven eyes are directed upon one stone. For although, in the latter case, we should expect אֵל instead of עַל (according to Ps. 33:18; 34:16), עַל עֵינַיִם does occur in the sense of the exercise of loving care (Gen. 44:21; Jer. 39:12; 40:4). But if the seven eyes were to be

seen upon the stone, they could only be engraved or drawn upon it. And what follows, הַנְּגִי כִפְתָּהּ וּגִי, does not agree with this, inasmuch as, according to this, the engraving upon the stone had now first to take place instead of having been done already, since *hinnēh* followed by a participle never expresses what has already occurred, but always what is to take place in the future. For this reason we must decide that the seven eyes are directed towards the stone, or watch over it with protecting care. But this overthrows the view held by the expositors of the early church, and defended by Kliefoth, namely, that the stone signifies the Messiah, after Isa. 28:16 and Ps. 118:22, —a view with which the expression *nāthattī*, “given, laid before Joshua,” can hardly be reconciled, even if this meant that Joshua was to see with his own eyes, as something actually present, that God was laying the foundation-stone. Still less can we think of the foundation-stone of the temple (Ros., Hitz.), since this had been laid long ago, and we cannot see for what purpose it was to be engraved; or of the stone which, according to the Rabbins, occupied the empty place of the ark of the covenant in the most holy place of the second temple (Hofmann); or of a precious stone in the breastplate of the high priest. The stone is the symbol of the kingdom of God, and is laid by Jehovah before Joshua, by God’s transferring to him the regulation of His house and the keeping of His courts (before, *liphnē*, in a spiritual sense, as in 1 Kings 9:6, for example). The seven eyes, which watch with protecting care over this stone, are not a figurative representation of the all-embracing providence of God; but, in harmony with the seven eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven Spirits of God (Rev. 5:6), and with the seven eyes of Jehovah (Zech. 4:10), they are the sevenfold radiations of the Spirit of Jehovah (after Isa. 11:2), which show themselves in vigorous action upon this stone, to prepare it for its destination. This preparation is called *pittēäch pittuchâh* in harmony with the figure of the stone (cf. Ezek. 28:9, 11). “I will engrave the engraving thereof,” i.e., engrave it so as to prepare it for a beautiful

and costly stone. The preparation of this stone, i.e., the preparation of the kingdom of God established in Israel, by the powers of the Spirit of the Lord, is one feature in which the bringing of the *tsemach* will show itself. The other consists in the wiping away of the iniquity of this land. *Mūsh* is used here in a transitive sense, to cause to depart, to wipe away. הָאָרֶץ הַהִיא (that land) is the land of Canaan or Judah, which will extend in the Messianic times over the whole earth. The definition of the time, *byōm ‘echâd*, cannot of course mean “on one and the same day,” so as to affirm that the communication of the true nature to Israel, namely, of one well pleasing to God, and the removal of guilt from the land, would take place simultaneously (Hofmann, Koehler); but the expression “in one day” is substantially the same as ἐφάπαξ in Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:10, and affirms that the wiping away of sin to be effected by the Messiah (*tsemach*) will not resemble that effected by the typical priesthood, which had to be continually repeated, but will be all finished at once. This one day is the day of Golgotha. Accordingly, the thought of this verse is the following: Jehovah will cause His servant *Tsemach* to come, because He will prepare His kingdom gloriously, and exterminate all the sins of His people and land at once. By the wiping away of all guilt and iniquity, not only of that which rests upon the land (Koehler), but also of that of the inhabitants of the land, i.e., of the whole nation, all the discontent and all the misery which flow from sin will be swept away, and a state of blessed peace will ensue for the purified church of God. This is the thought of the tenth verse, which is formed after Mic. 4:4 and 1 Kings 5:5, and with which the vision closes. The next vision shows the glory of the purified church.

Zechariah 4

The Fifth Vision: The Candlestick with the Two Olive Trees

Zechariah 4:1–3. V. 1. “And the angel that talked with me returned and waked me, like a

man who is waked out of his sleep." After the prophet has seen four visions one after another, probably with very short intervals, and has heard the marvellous interpretation of them, he is so overpowered by the impression produced by what he has seen and heard, that he falls into a state of spiritual exhaustion resembling sleep, just as Peter and his companions were unable to keep awake at the transfiguration of Christ (Luke 9:32). He has not only fallen back into the state of ordinary human consciousness, but his ordinary spiritual consciousness was so depressed that he resembled a man asleep, and had to be waked out of this sleep-like state by the mediating angel, in order to be qualified for further seeing. It is evident from the expression וַיֵּשָׁב (and he returned) that the *angelus interpretes* had left the prophet after the termination of the previous visions, and now came back to him again. The fresh vision which presents itself to his spiritual intuition, is described according to its principal features in vv. 2 and 3. V. 2. "And he said to me, What seest thou? And I said, I see, and behold a candlestick all of gold, and its oil-vessel up above it, and its seven lamps upon it, seven pipes each for the lamps upon the top of it. V. 3. And two olive trees (oil trees) by it, one to the right of the oil-vessel, and one to the left of it." The second וַיֹּאמֶר (*chethib*) in v. 2 might, if necessary, be explained in the way proposed by L. de Dieu, Gusset., and Hofmann, viz., by supposing that the mediating angel had no sooner asked the prophet what he saw, than he proceeded, without waiting for his answer, to give a description himself of what was seen. But this is at variance with the analogy of all the rest of the visions, where the visions seen by the prophet are always introduced with וַיֹּאמֶר or וַיִּרְאֶה followed by וַהֲגִידָהּ (cf. Zech. 1:8; 2:1, 5; 5:1; 6:1), and it remains quite inflexible; so that we must accept the *keri* וַיֹּאמֶר, which is adopted by the early translators, and found in many codd., as being the true reading, and pronounce וַיֹּאמֶר a copyist's error. On the combination מְנוֹרַת זָהָב

בְּלָהּ, in which the last two words are construed as a relative clause in subordination to *mnōrath*, see Ewald, § § 332, c.

The visionary candlestick, all of gold, with its seven lamps, is unquestionably a figurative representation of the seven-branched golden candlestick in the tabernacle, and differs from this only in the three following additions which are peculiar to itself: (1) That it has its *gullâh* (גֻּלְלָהּ for גֻּלְתָּהּ, with the feminine termination resolved; cf. Hos. 13:2, and Ewald, § 257, d), i.e., a can or round vessel for the oil, which was omitted altogether from the candlestick of the holy place, when the lamps were filled with oil by the priests, "at the top of it" (עַל־רֵאשָׁתָּהּ); (2) That it had seven *mûtsâqôth* (pipes) each for the lamps, that is to say, tubes through which the oil poured from the *gullâh* into the lamps, or was conducted to them, whereas the candlestick of the tabernacle had no pipes, but only seven arms (*qânîm*), for the purpose of holding the lamps, which of course could not be wanting in the case of the visionary candlestick, and are merely omitted from the description as being self-evident. The number of the pipes is also a disputed point, viz., whether שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה means seven and seven, i.e., fourteen, or whether it is to be taken distributively, seven each for the lamps, i.e., seven for each lamp, and therefore forty-nine for the seven. The distributive view is disputed by Hitzig and Koehler as at variance with the usage of the language: the former proposing to alter the text, so as to obtain seven pipes, i.e., one for each lamp; and the latter, on the other hand, assuming that there were fourteen pipes, and inferring from the statement "seven and seven," instead of fourteen, that the second seven are to be sought in a different place from the first, that is to say, that the first seven led from the oil-vessel to the seven different lamps, whilst the second seven connected the seven lamps with one another, which would have been a very strange and perfectly useless provision. But there is no foundation whatever for the assertion that it is at variance with the usage of

the language. For although a distributive relation is certainly expressed as a rule by the simple repetition of the number without any connecting *Vav*, such passages as 2 Sam. 21:20 and 1 Chron. 20:6 show quite indisputably that the repetition of the same number with the *Vav cop.* between is also to be taken distributively. When, for example, it is stated in 2 Sam. 21:20, with regard to the hero of Gath, that the fingers of his hands and the fingers (toes) of his feet were “*shēsh vāshēsh*, four-and-twenty in number,” it is evident that *shēsh vāshēsh* cannot mean “six and six,” because six and six do not make twenty-four; and a division of the *shēsh* between the hands and feet is also untenable, because his two hands had not six fingers on them, but twelve, and so his two feet had not six toes on them, but twelve. Consequently *shēsh vāshēsh* must be taken distributively: the fingers of his (two) hands and the toes of his (two) feet were six each; for it is only $2 + 2 (= 4) \times 6$ that can give 24. This is shown still more clearly in 1 Chron. 20:6: “and his fingers were *shēsh vāshēsh*, four-and-twenty.” It is in this distributive sense, which is thus thoroughly established, so far as the usage of the language is concerned, that שְׁבַעָה וְשִׁבְעָה מוֹיָן is to be taken: seven pipes each for the lamps, i.e., forty-nine for the seven lamps; inasmuch as if fourteen pipes were meant, it would be impossible to imagine any reason why “seven and seven” should be written instead of fourteen. And we cannot be shaken in this conviction, either by the objection “that if there was any proportion between the pipes and the size of the oil-vessel, such a number of pipes could not possibly (?) spring from one oil-can” (Koehler), or by the statement that “forty-nine would be quite as much at variance with the *original* as fourteen, since that had only one pipe for every lamp” (Hitzig). For the supposed original for the pipes had no existence, inasmuch as the Mosaic candlestick had no pipes at all; and we can form no opinion as to the possibility of forty-nine pipes issuing from one oil-vessel, because we have no information as to the size either of the oil-vessel or of the pipes. (3) The third peculiarity in the visionary

candlestick consists in the olive trees on the right and left of the oil-vessel, which supplied it with oil, and whose connection with the candlestick is first described in v. 12. These three additions which were made to the golden candlestick seen by Zechariah, as contrasted with the golden candlestick of the tabernacle, formed the apparatus through which it was supplied with the oil required to light it continually without the intervention of man.

Zechariah 4:4–7. The interpretation of this vision must therefore be founded upon the meaning of the golden candlestick in the symbolism of the tabernacle, and be in harmony with it. The prophet receives, first of all, the following explanation, in reply to his question on this point: V. 4. “*And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord?*” V. 5. “*And the angel that talked with me answered and said to me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord.*” V. 6. “*Then he answered and spake to me thus: This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, and not by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.*” V. 7. “*Who art thou, O great mountain before Zerubbabel? Into a plain! And He will bring out the top-stone amidst shoutings, Grace, grace unto it!*” The question addressed by the prophet to the mediating angel, “What are these?” (*māh ’ēlleh*, as in Zech. 2:2) does not refer to the two olive trees only (Umbreit, Kliefoth), but to everything described in vv. 2 and 3. We are not warranted in assuming that the prophet, like every other Israelite, knew what the candlestick with its seven lamps signified; and even if Zechariah had been perfectly acquainted with the meaning of the golden candlestick in the holy place, the candlestick seen by him had other things beside the two olive trees which were not to be found in the candlestick of the temple, viz., the *gullâh* and the pipes for the lamps, which might easily make the meaning of the visionary candlestick a doubtful thing. And the counter-question of the angel, in which astonishment is expressed, is not at variance with this. For that simply presupposes that the object of these additions is so clear, that their

meaning might be discovered from the meaning of the candlestick itself. The angel then gives him the answer in v. 6: "This (the vision as a symbolical prophecy) is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might," etc. That is to say, through this vision Zerubbabel is informed that it—namely, the work which Zerubbabel has taken in hand or has to carry out—will not be effected by human strength, but by the Spirit of God. The work itself is not mentioned by the angel, but is referred to for the first time in v. 7 in the words, "He will bring out the top-stone," and then still more clearly described in the word of Jehovah in v. 9: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house (the temple), and his hands will finish it." It by no means follows from this that the candlestick, with its seven lamps, represented Zerubbabel's temple (Grotius, Hofmann); for whilst it is impossible that the candlestick, as one article of furniture in the temple, should be a figurative representation of the whole temple, what could the two olive trees, which supplied the candlestick with oil, signify with such an interpretation? Still less can the seven lamps represent the seven eyes of God (v. 10), according to which the candlestick would be a symbol of God or of the Spirit (Hitzig, Maurer, Schegg). The significance of the candlestick in the holy place centred, as I have shown in my *biblische Archäologie* (i. p. 107), in its seven lamps, which were lighted every evening, and burned through the night. The burning lamps were a symbol of the church or of the nation of God, which causes the light of its spirit, or of its knowledge of God, to shine before the Lord, and lets it stream out into the night of a world estranged from God. As the disciples of Christ were called, as lights of the world (Matt. 5:14), to let their lamps burn and shine, or, as candlesticks in the world (Luke 12:35; Phil. 2:15), to shine with their light before men (Matt. 5:16), so as the church of the Old Testament also. The correctness of this explanation of the meaning of the candlestick is placed beyond all doubt by Rev. 1:20, where the seven *λαμπάδες*, which John saw before the throne of God, are explained as being the seven

ἐκκλησίαι, which represent the new people of God, viz., the Christian church. The candlestick itself merely comes into consideration here as the stand which carried the lamps, in order that they might shine, and as such was the divinely appointed form for the realization of the purpose of the shining lamps. In this respect it might be taken as a symbol of the kingdom of God on its formal side, i.e., of the divinely appointed organism for the perpetuation and life of the church. But the lamps received their power to burn from the oil, with which they had to be filled before they could possibly burn.

Oil, regarded according to its capacity to invigorate the body and increase the energy of the vital spirits, is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the Spirit of God, not in its transcendent essence, but so far as it works in the world, and is indwelling in the church; and not merely the anointing oil, as Kliefoth supposes, but also the lamp oil, since the Israelites had no other oil than olive oil even for burning, and this was used for anointing also. And in the case of the candlestick, the oil comes into consideration as a symbol of the Spirit of God. There is no force in Kliefoth's objection—namely, that inasmuch as the oil of the candlestick was to be presented by the people, it could not represent the Holy Spirit with its power and grace, as coming from God to man, but must rather represent something human, which being given up to God, is cleansed by God through the fire of His word and Spirit; and being quickened thereby, is made into a shining light. For, apart from the fact that the assumption upon which this argument is founded—namely, that in the oil of the candlestick the Spirit of God was symbolized by the altar fire with which it was lighted—is destitute of all scriptural support, since it is not mentioned anywhere that the lamps of the candlestick were lighted with fire taken from the altar of burnt-offering, but it is left quite indefinite where the light or fire for kindling the lamps was to be taken from; apart, I say, from this, such an argument proves too much (*nimum, ergo nihil*), because the anointing oil did not come directly from God, but was also

presented by the people. Supposing, therefore, that this circumstance was opposed to the symbolical meaning of the lamp oil, it would also be impossible that the anointing oil should be a symbol of the Holy Ghost, since not only the oil, but the spices also, which were used in preparing the anointing oil, were given by the people (Ex. 25:6). We might indeed say, with Kliefoth, that "the oil, as the fatness of the fruit of the olive tree, is the last pure result of the whole of the vital process of the olive tree, and therefore the quintessence of its nature; and that man also grows, and flourishes, and bears fruit like an olive tree; and therefore the fruit of his life's fruit, the produce of his personality and of the unfolding of his life, may be compared to oil." But it must also be added (and this Kliefoth has overlooked), that the olive tree could not grow, flourish, and bear fruit, unless God first of all implanted or communicated the power to grow and bear fruit, and then gave it rain and sunshine and the suitable soil for a prosperous growth. And so man also requires, for the production of spiritual fruits of life, not only the kindling of this fruit by the fire of the word and Spirit of God, but also the continued nourishment and invigoration of this fruit through God's word and Spirit, just as the lighting and burning of the lamps are not effected simply by the kindling of the flame, but it is also requisite that the oil should possess the power to burn and shine. In this double respect the candlestick, with its burning and shining lamps, was a symbol of the church of God, which lets the fruit of its life, which is not only kindled but also nourished by the Holy Spirit, shine before God. And the additions made to the visionary candlestick indicate generally, that the church of the Lord will be supplied with the conditions and requirements necessary to enable it to burn and shine perpetually, i.e., that the daughter of Zion will never fail to have the Spirit of God, to make its candlestick bright. (See at v. 14.)

There is no difficulty whatever in reconciling the answer of the angel in v. 6 with the meaning of the candlestick, as thus unfolded according to

its leading features, without having to resort to what looks like a subterfuge, viz., the idea that v. 6 does not contain an exposition, but passes on to something new, or without there being any necessity to account, as Koehler does, for the introduction of the candlestick, which he has quite correctly explained (though he weakens the explanation by saying that it applies primarily to Zerubbabel), namely, by assuming that "it was intended, on the one hand, to remind him what the calling of Israel was; and, on the other hand, to admonish him that Israel could never reach this calling by the increase of its might and the exaltation of its strength, but solely by suffering itself to be filled with the Spirit of Jehovah." For the candlestick does not set forth the object after which Israel is to strive, but symbolizes the church of God, as it will shine in the splendour of the light received through the Spirit of God. It therefore symbolizes the future glory of the people of God. Israel will not acquire this through human power and might, but through the Spirit of the Lord, in whose power Zerubbabel will accomplish the work he has begun. V. 7 does not contain a new promise for Zerubbabel, that if he lays to heart the calling of Israel, and acts accordingly, i.e., if he resists the temptation to bring Israel into a free and independent position by strengthening its external power, the difficulties which have lain in the way of the completion of the building of the temple will clear away of themselves by the command of Jehovah (Koehler). For there is not the slightest intimation of any such temptation as that supposed to have presented itself to Zerubbabel, either in the vision itself or in the historical and prophetic writings of that time. Moreover, v. 7 has not at all the form of a promise, founded upon the laying to heart of what has been previously mentioned. The contents of the verse are not set forth as anything new either by יהוה יֵאָמֵר (saith Jehovah), or by any other introductory formula. It can only be a further explanation of the word of Jehovah, which is still covered by the words "saith Jehovah of hosts" at the close of v. 6. The contents of the verse, when properly

understood, clearly lead to this. The great mountain before Zerubbabel is to become a plain, not by human power, but by the Spirit of Jehovah. The meaning is given in the second hemistich: He (Zerubbabel) will bring out the top-stone. הוֹצִיא (is not a simple preterite, "he has brought out the foundation-stone" (viz., at the laying of the foundation of the temple), as Hengstenberg supposes, but a future, "he will bring out," as is evident from the *Vav consec.*, through which הוֹצִיא is attached to the preceding command as a consequence to which it leads. Moreover, אֲבֵן הָרֵאשִׁית does not mean the foundation-stone, which is called אֲבֵן פִּנָּה, lit., corner-stone (Job 38:6; Isa. 28:16; Jer. 51:26), or ראש פִּנָּה, the head-stone of the corner (Ps. 118:22), but the stone of the top, i.e., the finishing or gable stone (הָרֵאשִׁית with *raphe* as a feminine form of ראש, and in apposition to הוֹצִיא). הוֹצִיא, to bring out, namely out of the workshop in which it had been cut, to set it in its proper place in the wall. That these words refer to the finishing of the building of the temple which Zerubbabel had begun, is placed beyond all doubt by v. 9.

The great mountain, therefore, is apparently "a figure denoting the colossal difficulties, which rose up mountain high at the continuation and completion of the building of the temple." Koehler adopts this explanation in common with "the majority of commentators." But, notwithstanding this appearance, we must adhere to the view adopted by the Chald., Jerome, Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Kimchi, Luther, and others, that the great mountain is a symbol of the power of the world, or the imperial power, and see no difficulty in the "unwarrantable consequence" spoken of by Koehler, viz., that in that case the plain must be a symbol of the kingdom of God (see, on the contrary, Isa. 40:4). For it is evident from what follows, that the passage refers to something greater than this, namely to the finishing of the building of the temple that has already begun, or to express it briefly and clearly, that the

building of the temple of stone and wood is simply regarded as a type of the building of the kingdom of God, as v. 9 clearly shows. There was a great mountain standing in the way of this building of Zerubbabel's—namely the power of the world, or the imperial power—and this God would level to a plain. Just as, in the previous vision, Joshua is introduced as the representative of the high-priesthood, so here Zerubbabel, the prince of Judah, springing from the family of David, comes into consideration not as an individual, but according to his official rank as the representative of the government of Israel, which is now so deeply humbled by the imperial power. But the government of Israel has no reality or existence, except in the government of Jehovah. The family of David will rise up into a new royal power and glory in the *Tsemach*, whom Jehovah will bring forth as His servant (Zech. 3:8). This servant of Jehovah will fill the house of God, which Zerubbabel has built, with glory. In order that this may be done, Zerubbabel must build the temple, because the temple is the house in which Jehovah dwells in the midst of His people. On account of this importance of the temple in relation to Israel, the opponents of Judah sought to throw obstacles in the way of its being built; and these obstacles were a sign and prelude of the opposition which the imperial power of the world, standing before Zerubbabel as a great mountain, will offer to the kingdom of God. This mountain is to become a plain. What Zerubbabel the governor of Judah has begun, he will bring to completion; and as he will finish the building of the earthly temple, so will the true Zerubbabel, the Messiah, *Tsemach*, the servant of Jehovah, build the spiritual temple, and make Israel into a candlestick, which is supplied with oil by two olive trees, so that its lamps may shine brightly in the world. In this sense the angel's reply gives an explanation of the meaning of the visionary candlestick. Just as, according to the economy of the Old Testament, the golden candlestick stood in the holy place of the temple before the face of Jehovah, and could only shine there, so does the congregation, which is symbolized by the

candlestick, need a house of God, that it may be able to cause its light to shine. This house is the kingdom of God symbolized by the temple, which was to be built by Zerubbabel, not by human might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. In this building the words “He will bring forth the top-stone” find their complete and final fulfilment. The finishing of this building will take place *הַתְּשׂוּת חֵן חֵן לָהּ*, i.e., amidst loud cries of the people, “Grace, grace unto it.” *הַתְּשׂוּת* is an accusative of more precise definition, or of the attendant circumstances (cf. Ewald, § 204, *a*), and signifies noise, tumult, from *שׂוּא* = *שָׂאָה*, a loud cry (Job 39:7; Isa. 22:2). The suffix *לָהּ* refers, so far as the form is concerned, to *הַבַּיִת הַרְאֵשׁוֹנָה*, but actually to *habbayith*, the temple which is finished with the gable-stone. To this stone (so the words mean) may God direct His favour or grace, that the temple may stand for ever, and never be destroyed again.

Zechariah 4:8-10. A further and still clearer explanation of the angel’s answer (vv. 6 and 7) is given in the words of Jehovah which follow in vv. 8-10. V. 8. “*And the word of Jehovah came to me thus: V. 9. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it; and thou wilt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to you. V. 10. For who despiseth the day of small things? and they joyfully behold the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, those seven: the eyes of Jehovah, they sweep through the whole earth.*” This word of God is not addressed to the prophet through the *angelus interpretes*, but comes direct from Jehovah, though, as v. 9*b* clearly shows when compared with Zech. 2:9*b* and 11*b*, through the *Maleach* Jehovah. Although the words “the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house” unquestionably refer primarily to the building of the earthly temple, and announce the finishing of that building by Zerubbabel, yet the apodosis commencing with “and thou shalt know” shows that the sense is not thereby exhausted, but rather that the building is simply mentioned here as a type of

the spiritual temple (as in Zech. 7:12, 13), and that the completion of the typical temple simply furnishes a pledge of the completion of the true temple. For it was not by the finishing of the earthly building, but solely by the carrying out of the kingdom of God which this shadowed forth, that Judah could discern that the angel of Jehovah had been sent to it. This is also apparent from the reason assigned for this promise in v. 10, the meaning of which has been explained in very different ways. Many take *וְשָׂמְחוּ* as an apodosis, and connect it with *כִּי בֹז* as the protasis: “for whoever despises the day of small things, they shall see with joy,” etc. (LXX, Chald., Pesh., Vulg., Luther., Calvin., and others); but *כִּי* can hardly be taken as an indefinite pronoun, inasmuch as the introduction of the apodosis by *Vav* would be unsuitable, and it has hitherto been impossible to find a single well-established example of the indefinite *כִּי* followed by a perfect with *Vav consec.* And the idea that *vsâmchû* is a circumstantial clause, in the sense of “whereas they see with joy” (Hitzig, Koehler), is equally untenable, for in a circumstantial clause the verb never stands at the head, but always the subject; and this is so essential, that if the subject of the minor (or circumstantial) clause is a noun which has already been mentioned in a major clause, either the noun itself, or at any rate its pronoun, must be repeated (Ewald, § 341, *a*), because this is the only thing by which the clause can be recognised as a circumstantial clause. We must therefore take *כִּי* as an interrogative pronoun: Who has ever despised the day of the small things? and understand the question in the sense of a negation, “No one has ever despised,” etc. The perfect *baz* with the syllable sharpened, for *bâz*, from *bûz* (like *tach* for *tâch* in Isa. 44:18; cf. Ges. § 72, Anm. 8), expresses a truth of experience resting upon facts. The words contain a perfect truth, if we only take them in the sense in which they were actually intended,—namely, that no one who hopes to accomplish, or does accomplish, anything great, despises the day of the small

things. *Yōm qtannōth*, a day on which only small things occur (cf. Num. 22:18). This does not merely mean the day on which the foundation-stone of the temple was first laid, and the building itself was still in the stage of its small beginnings, according to which the time when the temple was built up again in full splendour would be the day of great things (Koehler and others). For the time when Zerubbabel's temple was finished—namely, the sixth year of Darius—was just as miserable as that in which the foundation was laid, and the building that had been suspended was resumed once more. The whole period from Darius to the coming of the Messiah, who will be the first to accomplish great things, is a day of small things, as being a period in which everything that was done for the building of the kingdom of God seemed but small, and in comparison with the work of the Messiah really was small, although it contained within itself the germs of the greatest things.

The following perfects, וְשָׁמְחוּ וְרָאוּ, have *Vav consec.*, and express the consequence, though not “the necessary consequence, of their having despised the day of small beginnings,” as Koehler imagines, who for that reason properly rejects this view, but the consequence which will ensue if the day of small things is not despised. The fact that the clause beginning with *vsāmchū* is attached to the first clause of the verse in the form of a consequence, may be very simply explained on the ground that the question “who hath despised,” with its negative answer, contains an admonition to the people and their rulers not to despise the small beginnings. If they lay this admonition to heart, the seven eyes of God will see with delight the plumb-lead in the hand of Zerubbabel. In the combination וְשָׁמְחוּ וְרָאוּ the verb *sāmchū* takes the place of an adverb (Ges. § 142, 3, a). אֶבֶן הַבְּדִיל is not a stone filled up with lead, but an *'ebhen* which is lead, i.e., the plumb-lead or plummet. A plummet in the hand is a sign of being engaged in the work of building, or of superintending the erection of a building. The meaning of the clause is therefore, “Then will

the seven eyes of Jehovah look with joy, or with satisfaction, upon the execution,” not, however, in the sense of “They will find their pleasure in this restored temple, and look upon it with protecting care” (Kliefoth); for if this were the meaning, the introduction of the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel would be a very superfluous addition. Zerubbabel is still simply the type of the future Zerubbabel—namely, the Messiah—who will build the true temple of God; and the meaning is the following: Then will the seven eyes of God help to carry out this building. שְׁבַע עֵינֵי יְהוָה אֵלֶּה cannot be grammatically joined to עֵינֵי יְהוָה in the sense of “these seven eyes,” as the position of *'elleh* (these) between the numeral and the noun precludes this; but עֵינֵי יְהוָה is an explanatory apposition to שְׁבַע עֵינֵי יְהוָה: “those (well-known) seven, (viz.) the eyes of Jehovah.” The reference is to the seven eyes mentioned in the previous vision, which are directed upon a stone. These, according to Zech. 3:9, are the sevenfold radiations or operations of the Spirit of the Lord. Of these the angel of the Lord says still further here: They sweep through the whole earth, i.e., their influence stretches over all the earth. These words also receive their full significance only on the supposition that the angel of Jehovah is speaking of the Messianic building of the house or kingdom of God. For the eyes of Jehovah would not need to sweep through the whole earth, in order to see whatever could stand in the way and hinder the erection of Zerubbabel's temple, but simply to watch over the opponents of Judah in the immediate neighbourhood and the rule of Darius.

Zechariah 4:11–14. This gave to the prophet a general explanation of the meaning of the vision; for the angel had told him that the house (or kingdom) of God would be built and finished by the Spirit of Jehovah, and the church of the Lord would accomplish its mission, to shine brightly as a candlestick. But there is one point in the vision that is not yet quite clear to him, and he therefore asks for an explanation in vv. 11–14. V. 11. “And I answered and said to

him, *What are these two olive-trees on the right of the candlestick, and on the left?* V. 12. *And I answered the second time, and said to him, What are the two branches (ears) of the olive-trees which are at the hand of the two golden spouts, which pour the gold out of themselves?* V. 13. *And he spake to me thus: Knowest thou not what these are? and I said, No, my lord.* V. 14. *Then said he, These are the two oil-children, which stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*" The meaning of the olive-trees on the right and left sides of the candlestick ('*al*, over, because the olive-trees rose above the candlestick on the two sides) is not quite obvious to the prophet. He asks about this in v. 11; at the same time, recognising the fact that their meaning is bound up with the two *shibbālē hazzēthīm*, he does not wait for an answer, but gives greater precision to his question, by asking the meaning of these two branches of the olive-trees. On *וַיִּשְׁׁ* the Masora observes, that the *dagesh forte conjunct.*, which is generally found after the interrogative pronoun *māh*, is wanting in the *ׁ*, and was probably omitted, simply because the *ׁ* has not a full vowel, but a *sheva*, whilst the *ן* which follows has also a *dagesh*. These branches of the olive-trees were *byad*, "at the hand of" (i.e., close by, as in Job 15:23) the two golden *tsantrōth*, which poured the gold from above into the *gullâh* of the candlestick. *Tsantrōth* (ἀπ. λεγ.) is supposed by Aben Ezra and others to stand for oil-presses; but there is no further ground for this than the conjecture that the olive-trees could only supply the candlestick with oil when the olives were pressed. The older translators render the word by spouts or "channels" (LXX *μυξωτήρες*, Vulg. *rostra*, Pesh. *noses*). It is probably related in meaning to *tsinnōr*, channel or waterfall, and to be derived from *tsānar*, to rush: hence spouts into which the branches of the olive-trees emptied the oil of the olives, so that it poured with a rush out of them into the oil vessel. The latter is obviously implied in the words *hammrīqīm*, etc., which empty out the gold from above themselves, i.e., the gold which comes to them from above. *Hazzâhâbh*, the gold which

the *tsantrōth* empty out, is supposed by most commentators to signify the golden-coloured oil. Hofmann (*Weiss. u. Erf.* i. 344–5) and Kliefoth, on the contrary, understand by it real gold, which flowed out of the spouts into the candlestick, so that the latter was thereby perpetually renewed. But as the candlestick is not now for the first time in process of formation, but is represented in the vision as perfectly finished, and as the gold comes from the branches of the olive-trees, it is impossible to think of anything else than the oil which shines like gold. Accordingly the oil (*yitshâr*, lit., shining) is called *zâhâbh*, as being, as it were, liquid gold. Hence arises the play upon words: the spouts are of gold, and they pour gold from above themselves into the candlestick (Hitzig and Koehler).

The angel having expressed his astonishment at the prophet's ignorance, as he does in v. 5, gives this answer: These (the two bushes of the olive-tree, for which the olive-trees stood there) are the two *bnē yitshâr*, sons of oil, i.e., endowed or supplied with oil (cf. Isa. 5:1), which stand by the Lord of the whole earth, namely as His servants (on '*amad 'al*, denoting the standing posture of a servant, who rises above his master when seated, see 1 Kings 22:19, also Isa. 6:2). The two children of oil cannot be the Jews and Gentiles (Cyril), or Israel and the Gentile world in their fruitful branches, i.e., their believing members (Kliefoth), because the candlestick is the symbol of the church of the Lord, consisting of the believers in Israel and also in the Gentile world. This is just as clear as the distinction between the olive-trees and the candlestick, to which they conduct the oil. Others think of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (J. D. Mich., Hofm., Baumg., etc.); but although there is no force in Koehler's objection, that in that case there would be a double order of prophets in Israel, since two prophets, both influenced by the Spirit of God, would not imply a double order of prophets, this explanation is decidedly precluded by the fact that two mortal men could not convey to the church for all ages the oil of the Spirit of God. The two sons of oil can only be the two

media, anointed with oil, through whom the spiritual and gracious gifts of God were conveyed to the church of the Lord, namely, the existing representatives of the priesthood and the regal government, who were at that time Joshua the high priest and the prince Zerubbabel. These stand by the Lord of the whole earth, as the divinely appointed instruments through whom the Lord causes His Spirit to flow into His congregation. Israel had indeed possessed both these instruments from the time of its first adoption as the people of Jehovah, and both were consecrated to their office by anointing. So far the fact that the olive-trees stand by the side of the candlestick does not appear to indicate anything that the prophet could not have interpreted for himself; and hence the astonishment expressed in the question of the angel in v. 13. Moreover, the vision was not intended to represent an entirely new order of things, but simply to show the completion of that which was already contained and typified in the old covenant. The seven-armed candlestick was nothing new in itself. All that was new in the candlestick seen by Zechariah was the apparatus through which it was supplied with oil that it might give light, namely, the connection between the candlestick and the two olive-trees, whose branches bore olives like bunches of ears, to supply it abundantly with oil, which was conveyed to each of its seven lamps through seven pipes. The candlestick of the tabernacle had to be supplied every day with the necessary oil by the hands of the priests. This oil the congregation had to present; and to this end the Lord had to bestow His blessing, that the fruits of the land might be made to prosper, so that the olive-tree should bear its olives, and yield a supply of oil. But this blessing was withdrawn from the nation when it fell away from its God (cf. Joel 1:10). If, then, the candlestick had two olive-trees by its side, yielding oil in such copious abundance, that every one of the seven lamps received its supply through seven pipes, it could never fail to have sufficient oil for a full and brilliant light. This was what was new in the visionary candlestick; and the meaning was

this, that the Lord would in future bestow upon His congregation the organs of His Spirit, and maintain them in such direct connection with it, that it would be able to let its light shine with sevenfold brilliancy.

Zechariah 5

Sixth Vision: The Flying Roll, and the Woman in the Ephah

Zechariah 5. These two figures are so closely connected, that they are to be taken as *one* vision. The circumstance, that a pause is introduced between the first and second view, in which both the ecstatic elevation and the interpreting angel leave the prophet, so that it is stated in v. 5 that "the angel came forth," furnishes no sufficient reason for the assumption that there were two different visions. For the figure of the ephah with the woman sitting in it is also divided into two views, since the prophet first of all sees the woman and receives the explanation (vv. 5–8), and the further development of the vision is then introduced in v. 9 with a fresh introductory formula, "And I lifted up my eyes, and saw." And just as this introductory formula, through which new and different visions are introduced in Zech. 2:1 and 5, by no means warrants us in dividing what is seen here into two different visions; so there is nothing in the introduction in v. 5 to compel us to separate the vision of the flying roll (vv. 1–4) from the following vision of the ephah, since there is no such difference in the actual contents of the two as to warrant such a separation. They neither stand in such a relation to one another, as that the first sets forth the extermination of sinners out of the holy land, and the second the extermination of sin itself, as Maurer supposes; nor does the one treat of the fate of the sinners and the other of the full measure of the sin; but the vision of the flying roll prepares the way for, and introduces, what is carried out in the vision of the ephah (vv. 5–11), and the connection between the two is indicated formally by the fact that the suffix in עֲיָנִים in v. 6 refers back to vv. 3 and 4.

Zechariah 5:1-4. V. 1. *“And I lifted up my eyes again, and saw, and behold a flying roll. V. 2. And he said to me, What seest thou? And I said, I see a flying roll; its length twenty cubits, and its breadth ten cubits. V. 3. And he said to me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the whole land: for every one that stealeth will be cleansed away from this side, according to it; and every one that sweareth will be cleansed away from that side, according to it. V. 4. I have caused it to go forth, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and it will come into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth by my name for deceit: and it will pass the night in the midst of his house, and consume both its beams and its stones.”* The person calling the prophet’s attention to the vision, and interpreting it, is the *angelus interpres*. This is not specially mentioned here, as being obvious from what goes before. The roll (book-scroll, *mgillâh = mgillath sēpher*, Ezek. 2:9) is seen flying over the earth unrolled, so that its length and breadth can be seen. The statement as to its size is not to be regarded as “an approximative estimate,” so that the roll would be simply described as of considerable size (Koehler), but is unquestionably significant. It corresponds both to the size of the porch of Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 6:3), and also to the dimensions of the holy place in the tabernacle, which was twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad. Hengstenberg, Hofmann, and Umbreit, following the example of Kimchi, assume that the reference is to the porch of the temple, and suppose that the roll has the same dimensions as this porch, to indicate that the judgment is “a consequence of the theocracy” or was to issue from the sanctuary of Israel, where the people assembled before the Lord. But the porch of the temple was neither a symbol of the theocracy, nor the place where the people assembled before the Lord, but a mere architectural ornament, which had no significance whatever in relation to the worship. The people assembled before the Lord in the court, to have reconciliation made for them with God by sacrifice; or they entered the holy place in the person of their sanctified mediators, the priests, as cleansed from sin,

there to appear before God and engage in His spotless worship. The dimensions of the roll are taken from the holy place of the tabernacle, just as in the previous vision the candlestick was the mosaic candlestick of the tabernacle. Through the similarity of the dimensions of the roll to those of the holy place in the tabernacle, there is no intention to indicate that the curse proceeds from the holy place of the tabernacle or of the temple; for the roll would have issued from the sanctuary, if it had been intended to indicate this. Moreover, the curse or judgment does indeed begin at the house of God, but it does not issue or come from the house of God. Kliefoth has pointed to the true meaning in the following explanation which he gives: “The fact that the writing, which brings the curse upon all the sinners of the earth, has the same dimensions as the tabernacle, signifies that the measure will be meted out according to the measure of the holy place;” and again, “the measure by which this curse upon sinners will be meted out, will be the measure of the holy place.” With this measure would all sinners be measured, that they might be cut off from the congregation of the Lord, which appeared before God in the holy place.

The flight of the roll symbolized the going forth of the curse over the whole land. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is rendered by Hofmann, Neumann, and Kliefoth “the whole earth,” because “it evidently signifies the whole earth in v. 4:10, 14, and 6:5” (Kliefoth). But these passages, in which the Lord of the whole earth is spoken of, do not prove anything in relation to our vision, in which כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is unmistakably limited to the land of Canaan (Judah) by the antithesis in v. 11, “the land of Shinar.” If the sinners who are smitten by the curse proceeding over כָּל־הָאָרֶץ are to be carried into the land of *Sinar*, the former must be a definite land, and not the earth as the sum of all lands. It cannot be argued in opposition to this, that the sin of the land in which the true house of God and the true priesthood were, was wiped away by expiation, whereas the sin of the whole world would be brought into the land of judgment,

when its measure was concluded by God; for this antithesis is foreign not only to this vision, but to the Scriptures universally. The Scriptures know nothing of any distribution or punishment of sins according to different lands, but simply according to the character of the sinners, viz., whether they are penitent or hardened. At the same time, the fact that כָּל־הָאָרֶץ denotes the whole of the land of Israel, by no means proves that our vision either treats of the “carrying away of Israel into exile,” which had already occurred (Ros.), or “sets before them a fresh carrying away into exile, and one still in the future” (Hengstenberg), or that on the coming of the millennial kingdom the sin and the sinners will be exterminated from the whole of the holy land, and the sin thrown back upon the rest of the earth, which is still under the power of the world (Hofmann). The vision certainly refers to the remote future of the kingdom of God; and therefore “the whole land” cannot be restricted to the extent and boundaries of Judaea or Palestine, but reaches as far as the spiritual Israel or church of Christ is spread over the earth; but there is no allusion in our vision to the millennial kingdom, and its establishment within the limits of the earthly Canaan. The curse falls upon all thieves and false swearers. הַגִּשְׁבֵּעַ in v. 3 is defined more precisely in v. 4, as swearing in the name of Jehovah for deceit, and therefore refers to perjury in the broadest sense of the word, or to all abuse of the name of God for false, deceitful swearing. Thieves are mentioned for the sake of individualizing, as sinners against the second table of the decalogue; false swearers, as sinners against the first table. The repetition of מִזְזַח מִזְזַח points to this; for *mizzech*, repeated in correlative clauses, signifies *hinc et illinc*, hence and thence, i.e., on one side and the other (Ex. 17:12; Num. 22:24; Ezek. 47:7), and can only refer here to the fact that the roll was written upon on both sides, so that it is to be taken in close connection with כְּמוֹהָ: “on this side ... and on that, according to it” (the roll), i.e., according to the curse written upon this side and that side of the roll. We have therefore to picture the roll

to ourselves as having the curse against the thieves written upon the one side, and that against the perjurers upon the other. The supposition that *mizzech* refers to כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is precluded most decidedly, by the fact that *mizzech* does not mean “thence,” i.e., from the whole land, but when used adverbially of any place, invariably signifies “hence,” and refers to the place where the speaker himself is standing. Moreover, the double use of *mizzech* is at variance with any allusion to *hâ'ârets*, as well as the fact that if it belonged to the verb, it would stand after כְּמוֹהָ, whether before or after the verb. *Niqqâh*, the *niphal*, signifies here to be cleaned out, like καθαρίζεσθαι in Mark 7:19 (cf. 1 Kings 14:10; Deut. 17:12). This is explained in v. 4 thus: Jehovah causes the curse to go forth and enter into the house of the thief and perjurer, so that it will pass the night there, i.e., stay there (*lâneh* third pers. perf. of *lûn*, from *lânâh*, to be blunted, like *zûreh* in Isa. 59:5, and other verbal formations); it will not remain idle, however, but work therein, destroying both the house and sinners therein, so that beams and stones will be consumed (cf. 1 Kings 18:38). The suffix in כְּלֵתוֹ (for כְּלֵתָהּ, cf. Ges. § 75, Anm. 19) refers to the house, of course including the inhabitants. The following nouns introduced with וְאֵת are in explanatory apposition: both its beams and its stones. The roll therefore symbolizes the curse which will fall upon sinners throughout the whole land, consuming them with their houses, and thus sweeping them out of the nation of God.

Zechariah 5:5–8. To this there is appended in vv. 5–11 a new view, which exhibits the further fate of the sinners who have been separated from the congregation of the saints. V. 5. “*And the angel that talked with me went forth, and said to me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, what is this that goeth out there?* V. 6. *And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah going out. And He said, This is their aspect in all the land.* V. 7. *And behold a disk of lead was lifted up, and there was a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah.* V.8. *And he said, This is wickedness; and*

he cast it into the midst of the ephah, and cast the leaden weight upon its mouth." With the disappearing of the previous vision, the *angelus interpretes* had also vanished from the eyes of the prophet. After a short pause he comes out again, calls the prophet's attention to a new figure which emerges out of the cloud, and so comes within the range of vision (הַיִּצְאָת הַזֹּאת), and informs him with regard to it: "This is the ephah which goeth out." יֵצֵא, to go out, in other words, to come to view. The *ephah* was the greatest measure of capacity which really existed among the Hebrews for dry goods, and was about the size of a cubic foot; for the *chōmer*, which contained ten ephahs, appears to have had only an ideal existence, viz., for the purpose of calculation. The meaning of this figure is indicated generally in the words זֹאת בְּדֵי עֵינַי, the meaning of which depends upon the interpretation to be given to עֵינַי. The suffix of this word can only refer to the sinners mentioned before, viz., the thieves and perjurers; for it is contrary to the Hebrew usage to suppose that the words refer to the expression appended, בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, in the sense of "all those who are in the whole land" (Koehler). Consequently עֵינַי does not mean the eye, but *adspectus*, appearance, or shape, as in Lev. 13:55, Ezek. 1:4ff.; and the words have this meaning: The ephah (bushel) is the shape, i.e., represents the figure displayed by the sinners in all the land, after the roll of the curse has gone forth over the land, i.e., it shows into what condition they have come through that anathema (Kliefoth). The point of comparison between the ephah and the state into which sinners have come in consequence of the curse, does not consist in the fact that the ephah is carried away, and the sinners likewise (Maurer), nor in the fact that the sin now reaches its full measure (Hofm., Hengstenberg); for "the carrying away of the sinners does not come into consideration yet, and there is nothing at all here about the sin becoming full." It is true that, according to what follows, sin sits in the ephah as a woman, but there is nothing to

indicate that the ephah is completely filled by it, so that there is no further room in it; and this thought would be generally out of keeping here. The point of comparison is rather to be found in the explanation given by Kliefoth: "Just as in a bushel the separate grains are all collected together, so will the individual sinners over the whole earth be brought into a heap, when the curse of the end goes forth over the whole earth." We have no hesitation in appropriating this explanation, although we have not rendered הָאָרֶץ "the earth," inasmuch as at the final fulfilment of the vision the holy land will extend over all the earth. Immediately afterwards the prophet is shown still more clearly what is in the ephah. A covering of lead (*kikkâr*, a circle, a rounding or a circular plate) rises up, or is lifted up, and then he sees a woman sitting in the ephah (*'achath* does not stand for the indefinite article, but is a numeral, the sinners brought into a heap appearing as a unity, i.e., as *one* living personality, instead of forming an atomistic heap of individuals). This woman, who had not come into the ephah now for the first time, but was already sitting there, and was only seen now that the lid was raised, is described by the angel as *mirsha'ath*, ungodliness, as being wickedness embodied, just as in 2 Chron. 24:7 this name is given to godless Jezebel. Thereupon he throws her into the ephah, out of which she had risen up, and shuts it with the leaden lid, to carry her away, as the following vision shows, out of the holy land.

Zechariah 5:9–11. V. 9. "And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold there came forth two women, and wind in their wings, and they had wings like a stork's wings; and they carried the ephah between earth and heaven. V. 10. And I said to the angel that talked with me, Whither are these taking the ephah? V. 11. And he said to me, To build it a dwelling in the land of Shinar: and it will be placed and set up there upon its stand." The meaning of this new scene may easily be discovered. The ephah with the woman in it is carried away between earth and heaven, i.e., through the air. Women carry it

because there is a woman inside; and two women, because two persons are required to carry so large and heavy a measure, that they may lay hold of it on both sides (הַשְׂנָה with the א dropped; cf. Ges. § 74, Anm. 4). These women have wings, because it passes through the air; and a stork's wings, because these birds have broad pinions, and not because the stork is a bird of passage or an unclean bird. The wings are filled with wind, that they may be able to carry their burden with greater velocity through the air. The women denote the instruments or powers employed by God to carry away the sinners out of His congregation, without any special allusion to this or the other historical nation. This is all that we have to seek for in these features, which only serve to give distinctness to the picture. But the statement in v. 11 is significant: "to build it a house in the land of Shinar." The pronoun לָהּ with the suffix softened instead of לָהּ, as in Ex. 9:18, Lev. 13:4 (cf. Ewald, § 247, *d*), refers grammatically to הַאֵיפָה; but so far as the sense is concerned, it refers to the woman sitting in the ephah, since a house is not built for a measure, but only for men to dwell in. This also applies to the feminine form הַנִּיחָה, and to the suffix in מִבְּנֵתָהּ. The building of a house indicates that the woman is to dwell there permanently, as is still more clearly expressed in the second hemistich. הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה refers to בַּיִת, and is not to be taken hypothetically, in the sense of "as soon as the house shall be restored," but is a perfect with *Vav consec.*; and *hūkhan*, the *hophal* of *kūn*, is not to be taken in the sense of restoring, but, in correspondence with *mkhunâh*, in the sense of establishing or building on firm foundations. *Mkhunâh*: the firmly established house. In this the woman of sin is brought to rest. The land in which the woman of sin carried away out of the holy land is permanently to dwell, is the land of *Shinar*. This name is not to be identified with *Babel*, so as to support the conclusion that it refers to a fresh removal of the people of Israel into exile; but according to Gen. 10:10 and 11:2, *Shinar* is the land in which Nimrod founded the

first empire, and where the human race built the tower of Babel which was to reach to the sky. The name is not to be taken geographically here as an epithet applied to Mesopotamia, but is a notional or real definition, which affirms that the ungodliness carried away out of the sphere of the people of God will have its permanent settlement in the sphere of the imperial power that is hostile to God. The double vision of this chapter, therefore, shows the separation of the wicked from the congregation of the Lord, and their banishment into and concentration within the ungodly kingdom of the world. This distinction and separation commenced with the coming of the Messiah, and runs through all the ages of the spread and development of the Christian church, until at the time of the end they will come more and more into outward manifestation; and the evil, having been sifted out by the judicial power of God and His Spirit, will form itself into a Babel of the last days, as Ezek. 38 and 39 clearly show, and attempt a last struggle with the kingdom of God, in which it will be overcome and destroyed by the last judgment.

Zechariah 6

Seventh Vision: The Four Chariots—Ch. 6:1–8

Zechariah 6:1–8. V. 1. "And again I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold four chariots coming forth between the two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass. V. 2. In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot black horses. V. 3. And in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot speckled powerful horses. V. 4. And I answered and said to the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? V. 5. And the angel answered and said to me, These are the four winds of heaven going out, after having stationed themselves by the Lord of the whole earth. V. 6. Those in which the black horses are, go out into the land of the north, and the white have gone out behind them, and the speckled have gone out into the land of the south. V. 7. And the powerful ones have gone out, and sought to go, to pass

through the earth; and he said, Go ye, and pass through the earth; and they passed through the earth. V. 8. And he called to me, and spake to me thus: Behold, those which go out into the land of the north let down my spirit in the land of the north." The four chariots are explained in v. 5 by the interpreting angel to be the four winds of heaven, which go forth after they have taken their stand by the Lord of the whole earth, i.e., have appeared before Him in the attitude of servants, to lay their account before Him, and to receive commands from Him (הִתְיַצַּב עָלַי, as in Job 1:6; 2:1). This addition shows that the explanation is not a real interpretation; that is to say, the meaning is not that the chariots represent the four winds; but the less obvious figure of the chariots is explained through the more obvious figure of the winds, which answers better to the reality. Since, for example, according to v. 8, the chariots are designed to carry the Spirit (*rūäch*) of God, there was nothing with which they could be more suitably compared than the winds (*rūäch*) of heaven, for these are the most appropriate earthly substratum to symbolize the working of the Divine Spirit (cf. Jer. 49:36; Dan. 7:2). This Spirit, in its judicial operations, is to be borne by the chariots to the places more immediately designated in the vision. As they go out, after having appeared before God, the two mountains, between which they go out or come forth, can only be sought in the place where God's dwelling is. But the mountains are of brass, and therefore are not earthly mountains; but they are not therefore mere symbols of the might of God with which His church is defended (Hengst., Neumann), or allusions to the fact that the dwelling-place of God is immovable and unapproachable (Koehler), or symbols of the imperial power of the world and the kingdom of God (Kliefoth), according to which the power of the world would be just as immovable as the kingdom of God. The symbol has rather a definite geographical view as its basis. As the lands to which the chariots go are described geographically as the lands of the north and south, the starting-point of the chariots must also be thought of geographically, and must

therefore be a place or country lying between the northern and southern lands: this is the land of Israel, or more especially Jerusalem, the centre of the Old Testament kingdom of God, where the Lord had His dwelling-place. It is therefore the view of Jerusalem and its situation that lies at the foundation of the vision; only we must not think of the mountains Zion and Moriah (as Osiander, Maurer, Hofmann, and Umbreit do), for these are never distinguished from one another in the Old Testament as forming two separate mountains; but we have rather to think of Zion and the Mount of Olives, which stood opposite to it towards the east. Both are named as places where or from which the Lord judges the world, viz., the Mount of Olives in Zech. 14:4, and Zion very frequently, e.g., in Joel 3:16. The place between the two mountains is, then, the valley of Jehoshaphat, in which, according to Joel 3:2ff., the Lord judges the nations. In the vision before us this valley simply forms the starting-point for the chariots, which carry the judgment from the dwelling-place of God into the lands of the north and south, which are mentioned as the seat of the imperial power; and the mountains are of brass, to denote the immovable firmness of the place where the Lord dwells, and where He has founded His kingdom.

The colour of the horses, by which the four chariots are distinguished, is just as significant here as in Zech. 1:8; and indeed, so far as the colour is the same, the meaning is also the same here as there. Three colours are alike, since *bruddīm*, speckled, is not essentially different from *sruqqīm*, starling-grey, viz., black and white mixed together (see at Zech. 1:8). The black horses are added here. Black is the colour of grief (cf. "black as sackcloth of hair," Rev. 6:12). The rider upon the black horse in Rev. 6:5, 6, holds in his hand the emblem of dearth, the milder form of famine. Consequently the colours of the horses indicate the destination of the chariots, to execute judgment upon the enemies of the kingdom of God. Red, as the colour of blood, points to war and bloodshed; the speckled colour to

pestilence and other fatal plagues; and the black colour to dearness and famine: so that these three chariots symbolize the three great judgments, war, pestilence, and hunger (2 Sam. 24:11ff.), along with which “the noisome beast” is also mentioned in Ezek. 14:21 as a fourth judgment. In the vision before us the fourth chariot is drawn by white horses, to point to the glorious victories of the ministers of the divine judgment. The explanation of the chariots in this vision is rendered more difficult by the fact, that on the one hand the horses of the fourth chariot are not only called *bruddim*, but אֲמָצִים also; and on the other hand, that in the account of the starting of the chariots the red horses are omitted, and the speckled are distinguished from the אֲמָצִים instead, inasmuch as it is affirmed of the former that they went forth into the south country, and of the latter, that “they sought to go that they might pass through the whole earth,” and they passed through with the consent of God. The commentators have therefore attempted in different ways to identify אֲמָצִים in v. 7 with אֲדָמִים. Hitzig and Maurer assume that אֲמָצִים is omitted from v. 6 by mistake, and that אֲמָצִים in v. 7 is a copyist’s error for אֲדָמִים, although there is not a single critical authority that can be adduced in support of this. Hengstenberg and Umbreit suppose that the predicate אֲמָצִים, strong, in v. 3 refers to all the horses in the four chariots, and that by the “strong” horses of v. 7 we are to understand the “red” horses of the first chariot. But if the horses of all the chariots were strong, the red alone cannot be so called, since the article not only stands before אֲמָצִים in v. 7, but also before the three other colours, and indicates nothing more than that the colours have been mentioned before. Moreover, it is grammatically impossible that אֲמָצִים in v. 3 should refer to all the four teams; as “we must in that case have had אֲמָצִים כָּלֵם” (Koehler). Others (e.g., Abulw., Kimchi, Calvin, and Koehler) have attempted to prove that אֲמָצִים

may have the sense of אֲדָמִים; regarding אֲמָצִים as a softened form of אֲדָמִים, and explaining the latter, after Isa. 63:1, as signifying bright red. But apart from the fact that it is impossible to see why so unusual a word should have been chosen in the place of the intelligible word *’āduddim* in the account of the destination of the red team in v. 7, unless אֲמָצִים were merely a copyist’s error for *’āduddim*, there are no satisfactory grounds for identifying אֲמָצִים with אֲדָמִים, since it is impossible to adduce any well-established examples of the change of ה into א in Hebrew. The assertion of Koehler, that the Chaldee verb אֲלָם, *robustus fuit*, is אֲלָם in Hebrew in Job 39:4, is incorrect; for we find אֲלָם in the sense of to be healthy and strong in the Syriac and Talmudic as well, and the Chaldaic אֲלָם is a softened form of אֲלָם, and not of אֲלָם. The fact that in 1 Chron. 8:35 we have the name אֲרָרַע in the place of אֲרָרַע in 1 Chron. 9:41, being the only instance of the interchange of א and ה in Hebrew, is not sufficient of itself to sustain the alteration, amidst the great mass of various readings in the genealogies of the Chronicles. Moreover, *chāmūts*, from *chāmēts*, to be sharp, does not mean red (= *’ādōm*), but a glaring colour, like the Greek ὀξύς; and even in Isa. 63:1 it has simply this meaning, i.e., merely “denotes the unusual redness of the dress, which does not look like the purple of a king’s talar, or the scarlet of a chlamys” (Delitzsch); or, speaking more correctly, it merely denotes the glaring colour which the dress has acquired through being sprinkled over with red spots, arising either from the dark juice of the grape or from blood. All that remains therefore is to acknowledge, in accordance with the words of the text, that in the interpretation of the vision the departure of the team with the red horses is omitted, and the team with speckled powerful horses divided into two teams—one with speckled horses, and the other with black. We cannot find any support in this for the interpretation of the four chariots as denoting

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the four imperial monarchies of Daniel, since neither the fact that there are four chariots nor the colour of the teams furnishes any tenable ground for this. And it is precluded by the angel's comparison of the four chariots to the four winds, which point to four quarters of the globe, as in Jer. 39:36 and Dan. 7:2, but not to four empires rising one after another, one of which always took the place of the other, so that they embraced the same lands, and were merely distinguished from one another by the fact that each in succession spread over a wider surface than its predecessor. The colour of the horses also does not favour, but rather opposes, any reference to the four great empires. Leaving out of sight the arguments already adduced at Zech. 1:8 against this interpretation, Kliefoth himself admits that, so far as the horses and their colour are concerned, there is a thorough contrast between this vision and the first one (Zech. 1:7-17),—namely, that in the first vision the colour assigned to the horses corresponds to the kingdoms of the world to which they are sent, whereas in the vision before us they have the colour of the kingdoms from which they set out to convey the judgment to the others; and he endeavours to explain this distinction, by saying that in the first vision the riders procure information from the different kingdoms of the world as to their actual condition, whereas in the vision before us the chariots have to convey the judgment to the kingdoms of the world. But this distinction furnishes no tenable ground for interpreting the colour of the horses in the one case in accordance with the object of their mission, and in the other case in accordance with their origin or starting-point. If the intention was to set forth the stamp of the kingdoms in the colours, they would correspond in both visions to the kingdoms upon or in which the riders and the chariots had to perform their mission. If, on the other hand, the colour is regulated by the nature and object of the vision, so that these are indicated by it, it cannot exhibit the character of the great empires.

If we look still further at the statement of the angel as to the destination of the chariots, the

two attempts made by Hofmann and Kliefoth to combine the colours of the horses with the empires, show most distinctly the untenable character of this view. According to both these expositors, the angel says nothing about the chariot with the red horses, because the Babylonian empire had accomplished its mission to destroy the Assyrian empire. But the Perso-Median empire had also accomplished its mission to destroy the Babylonian, and therefore the team with the black horses should also have been left unnoticed in the explanation. On the other hand, Kliefoth asserts, and appeals to the participle יֵצְאוּ in v. 6 in support of his assertion, that the chariot with the horses of the imperial monarchy of Medo-Persia goes to the north country, viz., Mesopotamia, the seat of Babel, to convey the judgment of God thither; that the judgment was at that very time in process of execution, and the chariot was going in the prophet's own day. But although the revolt of Babylon in the time of Darius, and its result, furnish an apparent proof that the power of the Babylonian empire was not yet completely destroyed in Zechariah's time, this intimation cannot lie in the participle as expressing what is actually in process, for the simple reason that in that case the perfects יֵצְאוּ which follow would necessarily affirm what had already taken place; and consequently not only would the white horses, which went out behind the black, i.e., the horses of the imperial monarchy of Macedonia, have executed the judgment upon the Persian empire, but the speckled horses would have accomplished their mission also, since the same יֵצְאוּ is affirmed of both. The interchange of the participle with the perfect does not point to any difference in the time at which the events occur, but simply expresses a distinction in the idea. In the clause with יֵצְאוּ the mission of the chariot is expressed through the medium of the participle, according to its idea. The expression "the black horses are going out" is equivalent to, "they are appointed to go out;" whereas in the following clauses

with יצא the going out is expressed in the form of a fact, for which we should use the present. A still greater difficulty lies in the way of the interpretation of the colours of the horses as denoting the great empires, from the statement concerning the places to which the teams go forth. Kliefoth finds the reason why not only the black horses (of the Medo-Persian monarchy), but also the white horses (of the Graeco-Macedonian), go forth to the north country (Mesopotamia), but the latter after the former, in the fact that not only the Babylonian empire had its seat there, but the Medo-Persian empire also. But how does the going forth of the speckled horses into the south country (Egypt) agree with this? If the fourth chariot answered to the fourth empire in Daniel, i.e., to the Roman empire, since this empire executed the judgment upon the Graeco-Macedonian monarchy, this chariot must of necessity have gone forth to the seat of that monarchy. But that was not Egypt, the south country, but Central Asia or Babylon, where Alexander died in the midst of his endeavours to give a firm foundation to his monarchy. In order to explain the going out of the (fourth) chariot with the speckled horses into the south country, Hofmann inserts between the Graeco-Macedonian monarchy and the Roman the empire of Antiochus Epiphanes as a small intermediate empire, which is indicated by the speckled horses, and thereby brings Zechariah into contradiction not only with Daniel's description of the empires, but also with the historical circumstances, according to which, as Kliefoth has already observed, "Antiochus Epiphanes and his power had not the importance of an imperial monarchy, but were merely an offshoot of another imperial monarchy, namely the Graeco-Macedonian." Kliefoth's attempt to remove this difficulty is also a failure. Understanding by the spotted strong horses the Roman empire, he explains the separation of the spotted from the powerful horses in the angel's interpretation from the peculiar character of the imperial monarchy of Rome,—namely, that it will first of all appear as

an actual and united empire, but will then break up into ten kingdoms, i.e., into a plurality of kingdoms embracing the whole earth, and finally pass over into the kingdom of Antichrist. Accordingly, the spotted horses go out first of all, and carry the spirit of wrath to the south country, Egypt, which comes into consideration as the kingdom of the Ptolemies, and as that most vigorous offshoot of the Graeco-Macedonian monarchy, which survived Antiochus Epiphanes himself. The powerful horses harnessed to the same chariot as the Roman horses go out after this, and wander over the whole earth. They are the divided kingdoms of Daniel springing out of the Roman empire, which are called the powerful ones, not only because they go over the whole earth, but also because Antichrist with his kingdom springs out of them, to convey the judgments of God over the whole earth. But however skilful this interpretation is, it founders on the fact, that it fails to explain the going forth of the speckled horses into the land of the south in a manner corresponding to the object of the vision and the historical circumstances. If the vision represented the judgment, which falls upon the empires in such a manner that the one kingdom destroys or breaks up the other, the speckled horses, which are intended to represent the actual and united Roman empire, would of necessity have gone out not merely into the south country, but into the north country also, because the Roman empire conquered and destroyed not only the one offshoot of the Graeco-Macedonian empire, but all the kingdoms that sprang out of that empire. Kliefoth has given no reason for the exclusive reference to the southern branch of this imperial monarchy, nor can any reason be found. The kingdom of the Ptolemies neither broke up the other kingdoms that sprang out of the monarchy of Alexander, nor received them into itself, so that it could be mentioned as *pars pro toto*, and it had no such importance in relation to the holy land and nation as that it could be referred to on that account. If the angel had simply wished to mention a vigorous offshoot of the Graeco-Macedonian empire

instead of mentioning the whole, he would certainly have fixed his eye upon the kingdom of the Seleucidae, which developed itself in Antiochus Epiphanes into a type of Antichrist, and have let the speckled horses also go to the north, i.e., to Syria. This could have been explained by referring to Daniel; but not their going forth to the south country from the fact that the south country is mentioned in Dan. 11:5, as Kliefoth supposes, inasmuch as in this prophecy of Daniel not only the king of the south, but the king of the north is also mentioned, and that long-continued conflict between the two described, which inflicted such grievous injury upon the holy land.

To obtain a simple explanation of the vision, we must consider, above all things, that in all these visions the interpretations of the angel do not furnish a complete explanation of all the separate details of the vision, but simply hints and expositions of certain leading features, from which the meaning of the whole may be gathered. This is the case here. All the commentators have noticed the fact, that the statement in v. 8 concerning the horses going forth into the north country, viz., that they carry the Spirit of Jehovah thither, also applies to the rest of the teams—namely, that they also carry the Spirit of Jehovah to the place to which they go forth. It is also admitted that the angel confines himself to interpreting single features by individualizing. This is the case here with regard to the two lands to which the chariots go forth. The land of the north, i.e., the territory covered by the lands of the Euphrates and Tigris, and the land of the south, i.e., Egypt, are mentioned as the two principal seats of the power of the world in its hostility to Israel: Egypt on the one hand, and Asshur-Babel on the other, which were the principal foes of the people of God, not only before the captivity, but also afterwards, in the conflicts between Syria and Egypt for the possession of Palestine (Dan. 11). If we observe this combination, the hypothesis that our vision depicts the fate of the four imperial monarchies, is deprived of all support. Two chariots go into the north country, which is one representative of the

heathen world-power: viz., first of all the black horses, to carry famine thither, as one of the great plagues of God with which the ungodly are punished: a plague which is felt all the more painfully, in proportion to the luxury and excess in which men have previously lived. Then follow the white horses, indicating that the judgment will lead to complete victory over the power of the world. Into the south country, i.e., to Egypt, the other representative of the heathen world-power, goes the chariot with the speckled horses, to carry the manifold judgment of death by sword, famine, and pestilence, which is indicated by this colour. After what has been said concerning the team that went forth into the north country, it follows as a matter of course that this judgment will also execute the will of the Lord, so that it is quite sufficient for a chariot to be mentioned. On the other hand, it was evidently important to guard against the opinion that the judgment would only affect the two countries or kingdoms that are specially mentioned, and to give distinct prominence to the fact that they are only representatives of the heathen world, and that what is here announced applies to the whole world that is at enmity against God. This is done through the explanation in v. 7 concerning the going out of a fourth team, to pass through the whole earth. This mission is not received by the red horses, but by the powerful ones, as the speckled horses are also called in the vision, to indicate that the manifold judgments indicated by the speckled horses will pass over the earth in all their force. The going forth of the red horses is not mentioned, simply because, according to the analogy of what has been said concerning the other teams, there could be no doubt about it, as the blood-red colour pointed clearly enough to the shedding of blood. The object of the going forth of the chariots is to let down the Spirit of Jehovah upon the land in question. הַגִּיחַ רִיחַ יי, to cause the Spirit of Jehovah to rest, i.e., to let it down, is not identical with הַגִּיחַ חֲמַתוֹ, to let out His wrath, in Ezek. 5:13; 16:42; for *rūäch* is not equivalent to *chēmâh*, wrath or fury; but the

Spirit of Jehovah is *rūāch mishpāt* (Isa. 4:4), a spirit of judgment, which not only destroys what is ungodly, but also quickens and invigorates what is related to God. The vision does not set forth the destruction of the world-power, which is at enmity against God, but simply the judgment by which God purifies the sinful world, exterminates all that is ungodly, and renews it by His Spirit. It is also to be observed, that vv. 6 and 7 are a continuation of the address of the angel, and not an explanation given by the prophet of what has been said by the angel in v. 5. The construction in v. 6a is anakolouthic, the horses being made the subject in *וַיֵּצְאוּ*, instead of the chariot with black horses, because the significance of the chariots lay in the horses. The object to *וַיֵּאמֶר* in v. 7b is “the Lord of the whole earth” in v. 5, who causes the chariots to go forth; whereas in *וַיִּזְעַק אֵתִי* in v. 8 it is the interpreting angel again. By *וַיִּזְעַק*, lit., he cried to him, i.e., called out to him with a loud voice, the contents of the exclamation are held up as important to the interpretation of the whole.

The Crown Upon Joshua’s Head—Ch. 6:9–15

Zechariah 6:9–11. The series of visions closes with a symbolical transaction, which is closely connected with the substance of the night-visions, and sets before the eye the figure of the mediator of salvation, who, as crowned high priest, or as priestly king, is to build the kingdom of God, and raise it into a victorious power over all the kingdoms of this world, for the purpose of comforting and strengthening the congregation. The transaction is the following: V. 9. *“And the word of Jehovah came to me thus: V. 10. Take of the people of the captivity, of Cheldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedahyah, and go thou the same day, go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, whither they have come from Babel; V. 11. And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Jozadak the high priest.”* By the introduction, “The word of the Lord came to me,” the following transaction is introduced as a procedure of symbolical importance. It is

evident from vv. 10 and 11 that messengers had come to Jerusalem from the Israelites who had been left behind in Babel, to offer presents of silver and gold, probably for supporting the erection of the temple, and had gone to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. The prophet is to go to them, and to take silver and gold from them, to have a crown made for Joshua the high priest. The construction in vv. 10 and 11 is somewhat broad and dragging. The object is wanting to the inf. absol. *לְקוּחַ*, which is used instead of the imperative; and the sentence which has been begun is interrupted by *וּבְאֵת וְגו’*, so that the verb which stands at the head is resumed in the *וְלִקְחָהּ* of v. 11, and the sentence finished by the introduction of the object. This view is the simplest one. For it is still more impracticable to take *לְקוּחַ* in an absolute sense, and either supply the object from the context, or force it out by alterations of the text (Hitzig). If, for example, we were to supply as the object, “that which they are bringing,” this meaning would result: “accept what they are bringing, do not refuse it,” without there being any ground for the assumption that there had been any unwillingness to accept the presents. The alteration of *מִחֲלָדַי* into *מִחֲמַדַי*, “my jewels,” is destitute of any critical support, and *מִחֲלָדַי* is defended against critical caprice by the *לְחַלֵּם* in v. 14. Nor can *מֵאֵת הַגּוֹלָה* be taken as the object to *לְקוּחַ*, “take (some) from the emigration,” because this thought requires *מֵן*, and is irreconcilable with *מֵאֵת*, “from with.” *Haggōlâh*, lit., the wandering into exile, then those who belong to the wandering, or to the exiled, not merely those who are still in exile, but very frequently also those who have returned from exile. This is the meaning here, as in Ezra 4:1; 6:19, etc. *Mēcheldai* is an abbreviation for *מֵאֵת חֲלָדַי*. *Cheldai*, *Tobiyah*, and *Yedahyah*, were the persons who had come from Babylon to bring the present. This is implied in the words *אֲשֶׁר*

בְּאוֹ מִבְּ, whither they have come from Babel. אֲשֶׁר is an *accus. loci*, pointing back to בְּיַת. We are not warranted in interpreting the names of these men symbolically or typically, either by the circumstance that the names have an appellative meaning, like all proper names in Hebrew, or by the fact that *Cheldai* is written *Chēlem* in v. 14, and that instead of *Josiah* we have there apparently *chēn*. For *chēn* is not a proper name (see at v. 14), and *chēlem*, i.e., strength, is not materially different from *Cheldai*, i.e., the enduring one; so that it is only a variation of the name, such as we often meet with. The definition “on that day” can only point back to the day mentioned in Zech. 1:7, on which Zechariah saw the night-visions, so that it defines the chronological connection between this symbolical transaction and those night-visions. For, with the explanation given by C. B. Michaelis, “*die isto quo scil. facere debes quae nunc mando,*” the definition of the time is unmeaning. If God had defined the day more precisely to the prophet in the vision, the prophet would have recorded it. Zechariah is to have given to him as much of the silver and gold which they have brought with them as is required to make *’ātârōth*. The plural *’ātârōth* does indeed apparently point to at least two crowns, say a silver and a golden one, as C. B. Michaelis and Hitzig suppose. But what follows cannot be made to harmonize with this. The prophet is to put the *’ātârōth* upon Joshua’s head. But you do not put two or more crowns upon the head of one man; and the indifference with which Ewald, Hitzig, and Bunsen interpolate the words וְרֹבֶקֶל וְבָרָאשׁ after בְּרָאשׁ, without the smallest critical authority, is condemned by the fact that in what follows only *one* wearer of a crown is spoken of, and in v. 13, according to the correct interpretation, there is no “sharp distinction made between the priest and the Messiah.” The plural *’ātârōth* denotes here one single splendid crown, consisting of several gold and silver twists wound together, or rising one above another, as in Job 31:36, and just as in Rev. 19:12 (ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ διαδήματα πολλά) Christ is said to wear, not

many separate diadems, but a crown consisting of several diadems twisted together, as the insignia of His regal dignity.

Zechariah 6:12–15. The meaning of this is explained in vv. 12–15. V. 12. “*And speak to him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold a man, His name is Tsemach (Sprout), and from His place will He sprout up, and build the temple of Jehovah. V. 13. And He will build the temple of Jehovah, and He will carry loftiness, and will sit and rule upon His throne, and will be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between them both. V. 14. And the crown will be to Chelem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedahjah, and the favour of the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah. V. 15. And they that are far off will come and build at the temple of Jehovah; then will ye know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to you; and it will come to pass, if ye hearken to the voice of Jehovah your God.*” Two things are stated in these verses concerning the crown: (1) In vv. 12 and 13 the meaning is explained of the setting of the crown upon the head of Joshua the high priest; and (2) in vv. 14, 15, an explanation is given of the circumstance, that the crown had been made of silver and gold presented by men of the captivity. The crowning of Joshua the high priest with a royal crown, which did not properly belong to the high priest as such, as his headdress is neither called a crown (*’ātârâh*) nor formed part of the insignia of royal dignity and glory, had a typical significance. It pointed to a man who would sit upon his throne as both ruler and priest, that is to say, would combine both royalty and priesthood in his own person and rank. The expression “Speak thou to him” shows that the words of Jehovah are addressed to Joshua, and to him alone (אֵלָיו is singular), and therefore that Zerubbabel must not be interpolated into v. 11 along with Joshua. The man whom Joshua is to represent or typify, by having a crown placed upon his head, is designated as the Messiah, by the name *Tsemach* (see at Zech. 3:8); and this name is explained by the expression מְתַתָּיו יִצְמַח. These words must not

be taken impersonally, in the sense of “under him will it sprout” (LXX, Luth., Calov., Hitzig, Maurer, and others); for this thought cannot be justified from the usage of the language, to say nothing of its being quite remote from the context, since we have *מִתַּחְתָּיו*, and not *תַּחְתָּיו* (under him); and moreover, the change of subject in *יִצְמַח* and *וַיִּבְנֶה* would be intolerably harsh. In addition to this, according to Jer. 33:15, the Messiah is called *Tsemach*, because Jehovah causes a righteous growth to spring up to David, so that *Tsemach* is the sprouting one, and not he who makes others or something else to sprout. *מִתַּחְתָּיו*, “from under himself,” is equivalent to “from his place” (Ex. 10:23), i.e., from his soil; and is correctly explained by Alting in Hengstenberg thus: “both as to his nation and as to his country, of the house of David, Judah, and Abraham, to whom the promises were made.” It also contains an allusion to the fact that He will grow from below upwards, from lowliness to eminence. This Sprout will build the temple of the Lord. That these words do not refer to the building of the earthly temple of stone and wood, as Ros. and Hitzig with the Rabbins suppose, is so obvious, that even Koehler has given up this view here, and understands the words, as Hengstenberg, Tholuck, and others do, as relating to the spiritual temple, of which the tabernacle and the temples of both Solomon and Zerubbabel were only symbols, the temple which is the church of God itself (Hos. 8:1; 1 Pet. 2:5; Heb. 3:6; and Eph. 2:21, 22). Zechariah not only speaks of this temple here, but also in Zech. 4:9, as Haggai had done before him, in Hag. 2:6–9, which puts the correctness of our explanation of these passages beyond the reach of doubt. The repetition of this statement in v. 13a is not useless, but serves, as the emphatic *וְהָיָה* before this and the following sentence shows, to bring the work of the *Tsemach* into connection with the place He will occupy, in other words, to show the glory of the temple to be built. The two clauses are to be linked together thus: “He who will build the temple,

the same will carry eminence.” There is no “antithesis to the building of the temple by Joshua and Zerubbabel” (Koehler) in *וְהָיָה*; but this is quite as foreign to the context as another view of the same commentator, viz., that v. 13 interrupts the explanation of what the shoot is to be. *הָיָה*, eminence, is the true word for regal majesty (cf. Jer. 22:18; 1 Chron. 29:25; Dan. 11:21). In this majesty He will sit upon His throne and rule, also using His regal dignity and power for the good of His people, and will be a Priest upon His throne, i.e., will be at once both Priest and King upon the throne which He assumes. The rendering, “And there will be a priest upon His throne” (Ewald and Hitzig), is precluded by the simple structure of the sentences, and still more by the strangeness of the thought which it expresses; for the calling of a priest in relation to God and the people is not to sit upon a throne, but to stand before Jehovah (cf. Judg. 20:28; Deut. 17:12). Even the closing words of this verse, “And a counsel of peace will be between them both,” do not compel us to introduce a priest sitting upon the throne into the text by the side of the *Tsemach* ruling upon His throne. *שְׁנֵיהֶם* cannot be taken as a neuter in the sense of “between the regal dignity of the Messiah and His priesthood” (Capp., Ros.), and does not even refer to the *Tsemach* and *Jehovah*, but to the *Mōshēl* and *Kōhēn*, who sit upon the throne, united in one person, in the *Tsemach*. Between these two there will be *’ātsath shālōm*. This does not merely mean, “the most perfect harmony will exist” (Hofmann, Umbreit), for that is a matter of course, and does not exhaust the meaning of the words. *’ātsath shālōm*, counsel of peace, is not merely peaceful, harmonious consultation, but consultation which has peace for its object; and the thought is the following: The Messiah, who unites in Himself royalty and priesthood, will counsel and promote the peace of His people.

This is the typical meaning of the crowning of the high priest Joshua. But another feature is added to this. The crown, which has been placed upon the head of Joshua, to designate

him as the type of the Messiah, is to be kept in the temple of the Lord after the performance of this act, as a memorial for those who bring the silver and gold from the exiles in Babel, and לְחֵן וְחֶן־בֶּן־יְהוֹנָדָב, i.e., for the favour or grace of the son of Zephaniah. *Chên* is not a proper name, or another name for Josiah, but an appellative in the sense of favour, or a favourable disposition, and refers to the favour which the son of Zephaniah has shown to the emigrants who have come from Babylon, by receiving them hospitably into his house. For a memorial of these men, the crown is to be kept in the temple of Jehovah. The object of this is not merely "to guard it against profanation, and perpetuate the remembrance of the givers" (Kliefoth); but this action has also a symbolical and prophetic meaning, which is given in v. 15 in the words, "Strangers will come and build at the temple of the Lord." Those who have come from the far distant Babylon are types of the distant nations who will help to build the temple of the Lord with their possessions and treasures. This symbolical proceeding therefore furnishes a confirmation of the promise in Hag. 2:7, that the Lord will fill His temple with the treasures of all nations. By the realization of what is indicated in this symbolical proceeding, Israel will perceive that the speaker has been sent to them by the Lord of hosts; that is to say, not that Zechariah has spoken by the command of God, but that the Lord has sent the angel of Jehovah. For although in what precedes, only the prophet, and not the angel of Jehovah, has appeared as acting and speaking, we must not change the "sending" into "speaking" here, or take the formula כִּי וְיִדְעֻתֶם בִּי וְגו' in any other sense here than in Zech. 2:13, 15, and 4:9. We must therefore assume, that just as the words of the prophet pass imperceptibly into words of Jehovah, so here they pass into the words of the angel of Jehovah, who says concerning himself that Jehovah has sent him. The words conclude with the earnest admonition to the hearers, that they are only to become partakers of the predicted good when they hearken to the voice of their God. The sentence commencing with

וְיָדָעִים does not contain any *aposiopesis*; there is no valid ground for such an assumption as this in the simple announcement, which shows no trace of excitement; but *vhâyâh* may be connected with the preceding thought, "ye will know," etc., and affirms that they will only discern that the angel of Jehovah has been sent to them when they pay attention to the voice of their God. Now, although the recognition of the sending of the angel of the Lord involves participation in the Messianic salvation, the fact that this recognition is made to depend upon their giving heed to the word of God, by no means implies that the coming of the Messiah, or the participation of the Gentiles in His kingdom, will be bound up with the fidelity of the covenant nation, as Hengstenberg supposes; but the words simply declare that Israel will not come to the knowledge of the Messiah or to His salvation, unless it hearkens to the voice of the Lord. Whoever intentionally closes his eyes, will be unable to see the salvation of God.

The question whether the prophet really carried out the symbolical action enjoined upon him in vv. 10ff., externally or not, can neither be answered in the affirmative nor with a decided negative. The statement in v. 11, that the prophet who was hardly a goldsmith, was to make the crown, is no more a proof that it was not actually done, than the talmudic notice in *Middoth* iii., concerning the place where the crown was hung up in the temple, is a proof that it was. For עָשִׂיתָ in v. 11 may also express causing to be made; and the talmudic notice referred to does not affirm that this crown was kept in the temple, but simply states that in the porch of the temple there were beams stretching from one wall to the other, and that golden chains were fastened to them, upon which the priestly candidates climbed up and saw crowns; and the verse before us is then quoted, with the formula שְׁנֵאמַר as a confirmation of this.

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Zechariah 7

II. The Answer to the Question Concerning the Fasting—Ch. 7 and 8

Zechariah 7–8. In reply to a question addressed to the priests and prophets in Jerusalem by the messengers of Bethel, whether the day on which Jerusalem and the temple were reduced to ashes by the Chaldaeans is still to be kept as a day of mourning and fasting (Zech. 7:1–3), the Lord declares to the people through Zechariah, that He does not look upon fasting as a service well-pleasing to Him, but that He desires obedience to His word (vv. 4–7), and that He has only been obliged to scatter Israel among the nations on account of its obstinate resistance to the commandments of righteousness, love, and truth made known to them through the prophets (vv. 8–14), but that now He will turn again to Zion and Jerusalem with great warmth of love, and will bless His people with abundant blessings if they will only perform truth, just judgment, faithfulness, and love one towards another (Zech. 8:1–17). Then will He made the previous fast-days into days of joy and delight to them, and so glorify Himself upon Jerusalem, that many and powerful nations will come to seek and worship the Lord of hosts there (Zech. 8:18–23).

The Fast-Days of Israel, and Obedience to the Word of God

Zechariah 7:1–3. Vv. 1–3 describe the occasion for this instructive and consolatory “word of God,” which was addressed to Zechariah in the fourth year of Darius, i.e., two years after the building of the temple was resumed, and two years before its completion, and therefore at a time when the building must have been far advanced, and the temple itself was possibly already finished in the rough. V. 1. *“It came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, on the fourth (day) of the ninth month, in Kislev.”* In this definition of the time we are surprised first of all at the circumstance, that, according to the Masoretic accentuation, and the division of the

verses, the statement of the time is torn into two halves, and the notice of the year is placed after וְיָהִי, whilst that of the month does not follow till after וְיָהִי דְבַר יי; and secondly, at the fact that the introduction of the occurrence which led to this word of God is appended with the imperfect *c. Vav rel. (vayyishlach)*, which would then stand in the sense of the pluperfect in opposition to the rule. On these grounds we must give up the Masoretic division of the verses, and connect the notice of the month and day in v. 1*b* with v. 2, so that v. 1 contains merely the general statement that in the fourth year of king Darius the word of the Lord came to Zechariah. What follows will then be appended thus: On the fourth day of the ninth month, in Kislev, Bethel sent, etc. Thus the more precise definition of the time is only given in connection with the following occurrence, because it was self-evident that the word of God which was addressed to the prophet in consequence of that event, could not have been addressed to him before it occurred. The rendering of the words in v. 2*a* is also a disputed point. We adopt the following: V. 2. *“Then Bethel sent Sharezer and Regem-melech, and his people, to entreat the face of Jehovah, (v. 3) to speak to the priests who were at the house of Jehovah of hosts, and to the prophets, thus: Shall I weep, abstaining in the fifth month as I have now done so many years?”* As *Bēth-ēl* may either signify the house of God, or be the name of the town of Bethel, it may be taken either as *accus. loci*, or as the subject of the sentence. Against the first explanation, which is very widely spread, viz., “it sent to the house of God, or to Bethel, Sharezer,” etc., or “they sent to the house of God Sharezer,” etc., it may be argued not only that the prophet, in order to make himself intelligible, ought either to have written *‘el Bēth-‘ēl*, or to have placed *Bēth-‘ēl* after the object, but also that *bēth-‘ēl* cannot be shown to have been ever applied to the temple of Jehovah, and that it would have been altogether out of place to speak of sending to Bethel, because Jehovah could not be prayed to in Bethel after the captivity. We must therefore

take *bēth-’ēl* as the subject, and understand it as denoting the population of Bethel, and not as a name given to the church of the Lord, since there are no conclusive passages to support any such use, as *bēth Yhōvâh* only is used for the church of God (see at Hos. 8:1), and here there could be no inducement to employ so unusual an epithet to denote the nation. A considerable number of the earlier inhabitants of Bethel had already returned with Zerubbabel, according to Ezra 2:28 and Neh. 7:32; and, according to Neh. 11:31, the little town appears to have been soon rebuilt. The inhabitants of this city sent an embassy to Jerusalem, namely Sharezer and Rechem-Melech, and his men. The omission of the *nota accus.* אַתָּה has indeed been adduced as an objection to this interpretation of the names as the object, and the names have been therefore taken as the subject, and regarded as in apposition to *Bēth-ēl*: “Bethel, namely Sharezer and Rechem, etc., sent;” that is to say, two men are mentioned in connection with Bethel, who are supposed to have acted as leaders of the embassy. But there is something so harsh and inflexible in the assumption of such an apposition as this, that in spite of the omission of the אַתָּה we prefer to regard the names as accusatives. The name *Sharezer* is evidently Assyrian (cf. Isa. 37:38; Jer. 39:3, 13), so that the man was probably born in Babylonia.

The object of sending these men is given first of all in general terms: viz., לְהִלּוֹת אֶת־פָּנָי יְיָ, lit., to stroke the face of Jehovah,—an anthropomorphic expression for affectionate entreaty (see at Ps. 119:58), and then defined more precisely in v. 3, where it is stated that they were to inquire of the priests and prophets, i.e., through their mediation, to entreat an answer from the Lord, whether the mourning and fasting were to be still kept up in the fifth month. Through the clause אֲשֶׁר לְבַיִת יְיָ the priests are described as belonging to the house of Jehovah, though not in the sense supposed by Kliefoth, namely, “because they were appointed to serve in His house along

with the Levites, in the place of the first-born, who were the possession of Jehovah” (Num. 3:41; Deut. 10:8, 9). There is no such allusion here; but the meaning is simply, “as the persons in the temple, who by virtue of their mediatorial service were able to obtain an answer from Jehovah to a question addressed to Him in prayer.” The connection with the prophets points to this. The question הֲאֵבֶכֶה הֵאָבֶנָה defined by the inf. absol. הִנָּנִיר, as consisting in weeping or lamentation connected with abstinence from food and drink, i.e., with fasting. On this use of the *inf. abs.*, see Ewald, § 280, *a*; הִנָּנִיר, to abstain (in this connection from meat and drink), is synonymous with צוּם in v. 5. זָה כַּמָּה שָׁנִים: “these how many years,” for which we should say, “so many years.” *Kammeh* suggests the idea of an incalculably long duration. זָה, in this and other similar combinations with numerical *data*, has acquired the force of an adverb: now, already (cf. Zech. 1:12, and Ewald, § 302, *b*). The subject to אֵבֶכֶה is the population of Bethel, by which the men had been delegated. The question, however, had reference to a subject in which the whole community was interested, and hence the answer from God is addressed to all the people (v. 5). So far as the circumstances themselves are concerned, we can see from v. 5 and Zech. 8:19, that during the captivity the Israelites had adopted the custom of commemorating the leading incidents in the Chaldaean catastrophe by keeping fast-days in the fifth, seventh, fourth, and tenth months. In the fifth month (*Ab*), on the tenth day, because, according to Jer. 52:12, 13, that was the day on which the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed by fire in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, though the seventh day of that month is the date given in 2 Kings 25:8, 9 (see the comm. *in loc.*). In the seventh month, according to Jewish tradition, they fasted on the third day, on account of the murder of the governor Gedaliah, and the Judaeans who had been left in the land (2 Kings 25:25, 26; Jer. 51:1ff.). In the fourth month *Tammuz*) they

fasted on the ninth day, on account of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah (Jer. 39:2; 52:6, 7). And lastly, in the tenth month, a fast was kept on the tenth day on account of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar on that day, in the ninth year of Zedekiah (2 Kings 25:1 and Jer. 39:1). The question put by the delegates referred simply to the fasting in the fifth month, in commemoration of the destruction of the temple. And now that the rebuilding of the temple was rapidly approaching completion, it appeared no longer in character to continue to keep this day, especially as the prophets had proclaimed on the part of God, that the restoration of the temple would be a sign that Jehovah had once more restored His favour to the remnant of His people. If this fast-day were given up, the others would probably be also relinquished. The question actually involved the prayer that the Lord would continue permanently to bestow upon His people the favour which He had restored to them, and not only bring to completion the restoration of the holy place, which was already begun, but accomplish generally the glorification of Israel predicted by the earlier prophets. The answer given by the Lord through Zechariah to the people refers to this, since the priests and prophets could give no information in the matter of their own accord.

The answer from the Lord divides itself into two parts, Zech. 7:4–14 and Zech. 8. In the first part He explains what it is that He requires of the people, and why He has been obliged to punish them with exile: in the second He promises them the restoration of His favour and the promised salvation. Each of these parts is divisible again into two sections, Zech. 7:4–7 and Zech. 7:8–14, Zech. 8:1–17 and Zech. 8:18–23; and each of these sections opens with the formula, “The word of Jehovah (of hosts) came to me (Zechariah), saying.”

Zechariah 7:4–7. The first of these four words of God contains an exposure of what might be unwarrantable in the question and its motives,

and open to disapproval. V. 4. “*And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me thus, V. 5. Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh (month), and that for seventy years, did ye, when fasting, fast to me? V. 6. And when ye eat, and when ye drink, is it not ye who eat, and ye who drink? V. 7. Does it not concern the words, which Jehovah has preached through the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and satisfied, and her towns round about her, and the south country and the low land were inhabited?*” The thought of vv. 6 and 7 is the following: It is a matter of indifference to God whether the people fast or not. The true fasting, which is well pleasing to God, consists not in a pharisaical abstinence from eating and drinking, but in the fact that men observe the word of God and live thereby, as the prophets before the captivity had already preached to the people. This overthrew the notion that men could acquire the favour of God by fasting, and left it to the people to decide whether they would any longer observe the previous fast-days; it also showed what God would require of them if they wished to obtain the promised blessings. For the inf. absol. see at Hag. 1:6. The fasting in the seventh month was not the fast on the day of atonement which was prescribed in the law (Lev. 23), but, as has been already observed, the fast in commemoration of the murder of Gedaliah. In the form *צַמְתֶּינִי* the suffix is not a substitute for the dative (Ges. § 121, 4), but is to be taken as an accusative, expressive of the fact that the fasting related to God (Ewald, § 315, b). The suffix is strengthened by *אֲנִי* for the sake of emphasis (Ges. § 121, 3). In v. 7 the form of the sentence is elliptical. The verb is omitted in the clause *הֲלוֹא אֵת־הַדְּבָרִים*, but not the subject, say *זֶה*, which many commentators supply, after the LXX, the Peshito, and the Vulgate (“Are these not the words which Jehovah announced?”), in which case *אֵת* would have to be taken as *nota nominativi*. The sentence contains an *aposiopesis*, and is to be completed by supplying a verb, either “should

ye not do or give heed to the words which," etc.? or "do ye not know the words?" יִשְׁבֹּת, as in Zech. 1:11, in the sense of sitting or dwelling; not in a passive sense, "to be inhabited," although it might be so expressed. שְׁלֵיָהּ is synonymous with שִׁקְטָהּ in Zech. 1:11. יָשַׁב, in the sense indicated at the close of the verse, is construed in the singular masculine, although it refers to a plurality of previous nouns (cf. Ges. § 148, 2). In addition to Jerusalem, the following are mentioned as a periphrasis for the land of Judah: (1) her towns round about; these are the towns belonging to Jerusalem as the capital, towns of the mountains of Judah which were more or less dependent upon her: (2) the two rural districts, which also belonged to the kingdom of Judah, viz., the *negeb*, the south country (which Koehler erroneously identifies with the mountains of Judah; compare Josh. 15:21 with 15:48), and the *shphēlâh*, or lowland along the coast of the Mediterranean (see at Josh. 15:33).

Zechariah 7:8–14. The second word of the Lord recalls to the recollection of the people the disobedience of the fathers, and its consequences, viz., the judgment of exile, as a warning example. The introduction of the prophet's name in the heading in v. 8 does not warrant the strange opinion held by Schmieder and Schlier—namely, that our prophet is here reproducing the words of an earlier Zechariah who lived before the captivity—but is merely to be attributed to a variation in the form of expression. This divine word was as follows: V. 9. "Thus hath Jehovah of hosts spoken, saying, Execute judgment of truth, and show love and compassion one to another. V. 10. And widows and orphans, strangers and destitute ones, oppress not; and meditate not in your heart the injury of every brother. V. 11. But they refused to attend, and offered a rebellious shoulder, and hardened their ears that they might not hear. V. 12. And they made their heart diamond, that they might not hear the law and the words which Jehovah of hosts sent through His Spirit by means of the former prophet, so that great wrath came

from Jehovah of hosts." בָּה אָמַר is to be taken as a preterite here, referring to what Jehovah had caused to be proclaimed to the people before the captivity. The kernel of this announcement consisted in the appeal to the people, to keep the moral precepts of the law, to practise the true love of the neighbour in public life and private intercourse. *Mishpat 'ēmeth*, judgment of truth (cf. Ezek. 18:8), is such an administration of justice as simply fixes the eye upon the real circumstances of any dispute, without any personal considerations whatever, and decides them in accordance with truth. For the fact itself, compare Ex. 22:20, 211; 23:6–9; Lev. 19:15–18; Deut. 10:18, 19; 24:14; Isa. 1:17; Jer. 7:5, 6; 22:3; Ezek. 18:8; Hos. 12:7, etc. רָעַת אִישׁ אָהוּי, the injury of a man who is his brother (as in Gen. 9:5); not "injury one towards another," which would suppose a transposition of the אִישׁ = אָהוּי = רָעַת אִישׁ. In vv. 11 and 12 the attitude of the people towards these admonitions of God is described. *Nāthan kâthēph sōrereth*: to give or offer a rebellious shoulder, as in Neh. 9:29. The figure is borrowed from an ox, which will not allow a yoke to be placed upon its neck (cf. Hos. 4:16). To make the ears heavy (*hikhbîd*), away from hearing, i.e., so that they do not hear (cf. Isa. 6:10). To make the heart diamond (*shâmîr*), i.e., as hard as diamond. A stony heart is a heart not susceptible to impressions (cf. Ezek. 11:19). The relative אֲשֶׁר before *shâlach* refers to the two nouns named before, viz., *tôrâh* and *dbhârîm*, though we need not on that account take *tôrâh* in the general sense of instruction. God also sent the law to the people through the prophets, i.e., caused them to preach it and impress it upon their hearts. The consequence of this obduracy of the people was, that "there arose great wrath from Jehovah" (cf. Zech. 1:2; 2 Kings 3:27).

Zechariah 7:13, 14. This wrath is described in vv. 13, 14. V. 13. "It came to pass: as he cried and they did not hear, so will they cry and I shall not hear, said Jehovah of hosts. V. 14. And I will scatter them with a whirlwind over all nations,

who did not know them, and the land is laid waste behind them, so that no one passes to and fro. And thus they made the choice land a desert."

The form of the address changes in v. 13. Whereas in the protasis the prophet is still speaking of Jehovah in the third person, in the apodosis he introduces Jehovah as speaking (so will they cry, and I, etc.) and announcing the punishment, which He will inflict upon the rebellious and has already inflicted in their captivity. This address of God is continued in v. 14 as far as *וּמִשָּׁב*. The opinion, that the address terminates with *לֹא יִדְעוּם*, and that *וְהָאָרֶץ* commences the account of the accomplishment of the purpose to punish, is not so much at variance with the circumstance, that in that case the last two clauses of v. 14 would say essentially the same thing, as with the fact that *וְהָאָרֶץ וְגו'* cannot, from its very form, be taken as an account of the accomplishment of the divine purpose. The perfect *nâshammâh* in this clause does not preclude our connecting it with the preceding one, but is used to set forth the devastation as a completed fact: the land will be (not become) waste. The infliction of the punishment is expressed in v. 13 in the form of a divine *talio*. As they have not hearkened to the word of God, so will God, when they call upon Him, namely in distress (cf. Hos. 5:15), also not hear (cf. Jer. 11:11), but whirl them like a tempest over the nations. The form *אֲסַעְרֵם* is the first pers. imperf. *piel* for *אֲסַעְרֵם* or *אֲסַעְרֵם*, and Aramaic (cf. Ges. § 52, 2, Anm. 2). On the nations whom they do not know, and who will therefore have no pity and compassion upon them, compare Jer. 22:28; 16:13. *מֵעֵבֶר וּמִשָּׁב* (cf. 9:8), that not one goes to and fro in the desolate land; lit., goes away from a place and returns again (cf. Ex. 32:27). In the clause *וַיִּשְׁימוּ וְגו'* the result of the stiff-necked obstinacy of the fathers is briefly stated: They have made the choice land a desert (*'erets chemdâh*, as in Jer. 3:19 and Ps. 106:24), so that they have brought upon the land all the calamity which is now bewailed upon the fast-days.

Zechariah 8

Renewal and Completion of the Covenant of Grace

Zechariah 8. In this chapter we have the second half of the Lord's answer to the question concerning the fast-days, which promises to the people the restitution of the former relation of grace, and the future glorification of Israel, on the simple condition of their observing the moral precepts of the law. This double promise is contained in two words of God, each of which is divided into a number of separate sayings, containing the separate details of the salvation bestowed by the formula *כֹּה אָמַר יְיָ* (thus saith Jehovah of hosts): the first into seven (vv. 2, 3, 4–5, 6, 7, and Zech. 8:9–13, 14–17), the second into three (vv. 19, 20–22, and 23). Jerome observes, with reference to this: "By the separate words and sentences, in which Israel is promised not only prosperity, but things almost incredible in their magnitude, the prophet declares, 'Thus saith the Almighty God;' saying, in other words, Do not imagine that the things which I promise are my own, and so disbelieve me as only a man; they are the promises of God which I unfold."

Zechariah 8:1–17. Restoration and completion of the covenant relation.—V. 1. *"And the word of Jehovah of hosts came, saying, V. 2. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great fury I am jealous for her."* The promise commences with the declaration of the Lord, that He has resolved to give active expression once more to the warmth of His love to Zion. The perfects are used prophetically of that which God had resolved to do, and was now about to accomplish. For the fact itself, compare Zech. 1:14, 15. This warmth of the love of God towards Zion, and of His wrath towards the nations that were hostile to Zion, will manifest itself in the facts described in v. 3: *"Thus saith Jehovah, I return to Zion, and shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be called city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts the holy mountain."* When Jerusalem was given up into the power of

its foes, the Lord had forsaken His dwelling-place in the temple. Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart from the temple (Ezek. 9:3; 10:4, 18; 11:22, 23). Now He is about to resume His abode in Jerusalem once more. The difference between this promise and the similar promise in Zech. 2:14–17, is not that in the latter passage Jehovah’s dwelling in the midst of His people is to be understood in an ideal and absolute sense, whereas here it simply denotes such a dwelling as had taken place before, as Koehler supposes. This is not implied in *יְרֵמֶת*, nor is it in harmony with the statement that Jerusalem is to be called a city of truth, and the temple hill the holy mountain. *’Ir ’ēmeth* does not mean “city of security,” but city of truth or fidelity, i.e., in which truth and fidelity towards the Lord have their home. The temple mountain will be called the holy mountain, i.e., will *be* so, and will be recognised and known as being so, from the fact that Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, will sanctify it by His dwelling there. Jerusalem did not acquire this character in the period after the captivity, in which, though not defiled by gross idolatry, as in the times before the captivity, it was polluted by other moral abominations no less than it had been before. Jerusalem becomes a faithful city for the first time through the Messiah, and it is through Him that the temple mountain first really becomes the holy mountain. The opinion, that there is nothing in the promises in vv. 3–13 that did not really happen to Israel in the period from Zerubbabel to Christ (Kliefoth, Koehler, etc.), is proved to be incorrect by the very words, both of this verse and also of vv. 6, 7, 8, which follow. How could the simple restoration of the previous covenant relation be described in v. 6 as something that appeared miraculous and incredible to the nation? There is only so much correctness in the view in question, that the promise does not refer exclusively to the Messianic times, but that feeble commencements of its fulfilment accompanied the completion of the work of building the temple, and the restoration of Jerusalem by Nehemiah. But the saying which follows proves

that these commencements do not exhaust the meaning of the words.

Zechariah 8:4, 5. V. 4. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Yet will there sit old men and women in the streets of Jerusalem, every one with his staff in his hand, for the multitude of the days of his life. V. 5. And the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in their streets.”* Long life, to an extreme old age, and a plentiful number of blooming children, were theocratic blessings, which the Lord had already promised in the law to His people, so far as they were faithful to the covenant. Consequently there does not appear to be any Messianic element in this promise. But if we compare this fourth verse with Isa. 65:20, we shall see that extreme old age also belonged to the blessings of the Messianic times. And as Israel had almost always to suffer most grievously from wars and other calamities, which swept off the people at an untimely age, during the time which extended from Zerubbabel to Christ; it must be admitted, notwithstanding the description of the prosperous times which Israel enjoyed under the government of Simon (1 Macc. 14:4–15), that this promise also was only fulfilled in a very meagre measure, so far as Jerusalem was concerned, before the coming of Christ.

Zechariah 8:6. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those days, will it also be marvellous in my eyes? is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.”* The second clause of this verse is to be taken as a question with a negative answer, *אֵין לְיְהוָה*, as in 1 Sam. 22:7, and the meaning is the following: If this (what is promised in vv. 3–5) should appear marvellous, i.e., incredible, to the people in those days when it shall arrive, it will not on that account appear marvellous to Jehovah Himself, i.e., Jehovah will for all that cause what has been promised actually to occur. This contains an assurance not only of the greatness of the salvation set before them, but also of the certainty of its realization. “The remnant of the nation,” as in Hag. 1:12–14.

Zechariah 8:7, 8. V. 7. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, I save my people out of the land of*

the rising and out of the land of the setting of the sun. V. 8. And I bring them hither, and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and will be my people, and I shall be their God, in truth and righteousness." The deliverance of the people of God out of the heathen lands did indeed commence with the return of a body of exiles from Babylon under the guidance of Zerubbabel, but their deliverance out of all the countries of the earth is still in the future. Instead of all countries, the land of the rising (the east) and the land of the setting (the west) are individualized (cf. Ps. 50:1; 113:3; Isa. 59:19; Mal. 1:11). This deliverance is first effected through the Messiah. This is indisputably evident from the words, "I bring them to Jerusalem," by which of course we cannot understand the earthly Jerusalem, since that would not furnish space enough for the Jews scattered throughout all the world, but the open and enlarged Jerusalem mentioned in Zech. 2:8, i.e., the Messianic kingdom of God. Then will those who have been gathered together out of all the countries of the earth become in truth God's nation. Israel was the nation of Jehovah, and Jehovah was also Israel's God from the time of the establishment of the old covenant at Sinai (Ex. 24). This relation is to be restored in the future, "in truth and righteousness." This is the new feature by which the future is to be distinguished from the present and the past. The words "in truth and righteousness" belong to the two clauses, "they shall be" and "I will be." For the fact itself, compare Hos. 2:21, 22; and for the expression, Isa. 48:1 and 1 Kings 3:6.

Zechariah 8:9–12. After these promises the prophet admonishes the people to be of good courage, because the Lord will from henceforth bestow His blessing upon them. V. 9. *"Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets, on the day that the foundation of the house of Jehovah of hosts was laid, the temple, that it may be built. V. 10. For before those days there were no wages for the men, and no wages of cattle; and whoever went out and in had no peace because of the*

oppressor: and I drove all men, one against the other. V. 11. But now I am not as in the former days to the remnant of this people, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts. V. 12. But the seed of peace, the vine, shall yield its fruit, and the land shall yield its produce, and the heaven give its dew; and to the remnant of this people will I give all this for an inheritance." Having the hands strong, is the same as taking good courage for any enterprise (thus in Judg. 7:11, 2 Sam. 2:7, and Ezek. 22:14). This phrase does not refer specially to their courageous continuation of the building of the temple, but has the more general meaning of taking courage to accomplish what the calling of each required, as vv. 10–13 show. The persons addressed are those who hear the words of the prophets in these days. This suggests a motive for taking courage. Because they hear these words, they are to look forward with comfort to the future, and do what their calling requires. The words of the prophets are the promises which Zechariah announced in vv. 2–8, and his contemporary Haggai in Hag. 2. It will not do to take the plural נְבִיאִים in a general sense, as referring to Zechariah alone. For if there had been no prophet at that time beside Zechariah, he could not have spoken in general terms of prophets. By the defining phrase, who are or who rose up at the time when the foundation of the temple was laid, these prophets are distinguished from the earlier ones before the captivity (Zech. 7:7, 12; 1:4), and their words are thereby limited to what Haggai and Zechariah prophesied from that time downwards. מֵיּוֹם does not stand for מֵיּוֹם (Hitzig), but *yōm* is used in the general sense of the time at which anything does occur or has occurred. As a more precise definition of יוֹם יִסַּד the word לְהִבְנוֹת is added, to show that the time referred to is that in which the laying of the foundation of the temple in the time of Cyrus became an eventful fact through the continuation of the building. In vv. 10ff. a reason is assigned for the admonition to work with good courage, by an exhibition of the contrast between the present and the former

times. Before those days, sc. when the building of the temple was resumed and continued, a man received no wages for his work, and even the cattle received none, namely, because the labour of man and beast, i.e., agricultural pursuits, yielded no result, or at any rate a most meagre result, by no means corresponding to the labour (cf. Hag. 1:9, 9–11; 2:16, 19). The feminine suffix attached to אֵינָנָה refers with inexactness to the nearest word הַבְּהֵמָה, instead of the more remote שֶׁבֶר (cf. Ewald, § 317, c). In addition to this, on going out and coming in, i.e., when pursuing their ordinary avocations, men came everywhere upon enemies or adversaries, and therefore there was an entire absence of civil peace. הַצָּר is not an abstract noun, “oppression” (LXX, Chald., Vulg.), but a concrete, “adversary,” oppressor, though not the heathen foe merely, but, as the last clause of v. 10 shows, the adversaries in their own nation also. In וַאֲשֶׁלַח the ו is not a simple copula, but the *consec.* with the compensation wanting, like וַאֲגַרֶשׁ in Judg. 6:9 (cf. Ewald, § 232, h); and שֶׁלַח, to send, used of a hostile nation, is here transferred to personal attacks on the part of individuals.

Zechariah 8:11ff. But now the Lord will act differently to His remaining people, and bless it again with a fruitful harvest of the fruits of the field and soil. כִּי in v. 12, “for,” after a negative clause, “but.” זֶרַע הַשְּׁלוֹם, not the seed will be secure (Chald., Pesh.), but the seed of peace, viz., the vine. This is so designated, not because there is a *brâkhâh* in the grape (Isa. 65:8); but because the vine can only flourish in peaceful times, and not when the land is laid waste by enemies (Koehler). On the words which follow, compare Lev. 26:4ff, Ps. 67:7, Hag. 1:10; 2:19. “Future abundance will compensate for the drought and scarcity of the past” (Jerome).

Zechariah 8:13. The whole blessing is finally summed up in one expression in v. 13: “*And it will come to pass, as ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so*

will I endow you with salvation, that ye may be a blessing. Fear not, let your hands be strong.” The formula, to be a curse among the nations, is to be interpreted according to Jer. 24:9; 25:9; 42:18, 2 Kings 22:19, as equivalent to being the object of a curse, i.e., so smitten by God as to serve as the object of curses. In harmony with this, the phrase to “become a blessing” is equivalent to being so blessed as to be used as a benedictory formula (cf. Gen. 48:22; Jer. 29:22). This promise is made to the remnant of Judah and Israel, and therefore of all the twelve tribes, who are to become partakers of the future salvation in undivided unity (cf. Zech. 9:10, 13; 10:6; 11:14). Israel is therefore to look forward to the future without alarm.

Zechariah 8:14–17. The ground upon which this promise rests is given in vv. 14 and 15, and it is closed in vv. 16 and 17 by the addition of the condition upon which it is to be fulfilled. V. 14. “*For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: As I thought to do evil to you, when your fathers were angry with me, saith Jehovah of hosts, and repented not; V. 15. So have I purposed again in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Fear ye not. V. 16. These are the words that ye are to do: speak truth every one to his neighbour; truth and judgment of peace judge ye in your gates. V. 17. And let not one devise the evil of his neighbour, and love not the oath of deceit: for all this, I hate it, is the saying of Jehovah.*” As the time of punishment by exile came upon Israel through the decree of God, so is it now a decree of the Lord to show good to Judah. In וְזָמַמְתִּי שִׁבְתִּי the שִׁבְתִּי takes the place of the adverbial idea “again.” The people have therefore no need to fear, if they are only diligent in practising truth, righteousness, and love to their neighbour. God required the same of the fathers (Zech. 7:9, 10). *Mishpat shâlôm* is such an administration of justice as tends to promote peace and establish concord between those who are at strife. “In your gates,” where courts of justice were held (cf. Deut. 21:19; 22:15, etc.). The אֶת before כָּל-אֱלֹהִים in v. 17 may be accounted for from a kind of attraction, inasmuch as by the insertion of אֶשְׂר the object

“all this” is separated from the verb, to bring it out with emphasis: “As for all this, it is what I hate.” Compare the similar use of *’ēth* in Hag. 2:5, and Ewald, § 277, *d*.

Zechariah 8:18–23. The last word of God gives, in connection with what precedes, the direct answer to the inquiry concerning the fast-days, and consists of three sayings, vv. 19, 20, and 23, of which the second and third explain the contents of the first more clearly. V. 18 is the same as vv. 1 and 7 and Zech. 4:8. V. 19. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The fasting of the fourth, and the fasting of the fifth, and the fasting of the seventh, and the fasting of the tenth (months), will become pleasure and joy to the house of Judah, and good feasts. But truth and peace ye should love.”* On the fast-days mentioned, compare the exposition of Zech. 7:3. These fast-days the Lord will turn into days of joy and cheerful feast-days—namely, by bestowing upon them such a fulness of salvation, that Judah will forget to commemorate the former mournful events, and will only have occasion to rejoice in the blessings of grace bestowed upon it by God; though only when the condition mentioned in vv. 16 and 17 has been fulfilled.

Zechariah 8:20–22. V. 20. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet will nations come, and inhabitants of many cities. V. 21. And the inhabitants of one (city) will go to another, and say, ‘We will go, go away, to supplicate the face of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah of hosts.’ I will also go.’ V. 22. And many peoples and strong nations will come, to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to supplicate the face of Jehovah.”* These verses do not announce a further or second glorification, which God has designed for His people, but simply indicate the nature and magnitude of the salvation appointed for Israel, through which its fast-days will be turned into days of joy. Hitherto Israel had kept days of mourning and fasting on account of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; but in the future the Lord will so glorify His city and His house, that not only will Israel keep joyful feasts there, but many and strong heathen nations will go to the

house of God, to seek and worship the God of hosts. **דַּע** is used with emphasis, so that it resembles a sentence: “It will still come to pass, that,” etc. This is how **אָשָׁר** in vv. 21 and 23 is to be taken, and not as the introduction to the saying preceded energetically by **דַּע**, for which Hitzig is wrong in referring to Mic. 6:10. For the fact itself, compare Mic. 4:1ff., Isa. 2:2ff., Jer. 16:19. In v. 21 the thought is individualized. The inhabitants of one city call upon those of another. **וְנִלְכָה הַלְלוּ**, “we will go to supplicate,” etc.; and the population of the other city responds to the summons by saying, “I also will go.” **וְהָלוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי**, as in Zech. 7:2.

Zechariah 8:23. *“Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days ten men out of all languages of the nations take hold; they will take hold of the skirt of a Jewish man, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard God is with you.”* Not only will the heathen then flow to Jerusalem to seek the God of Israel, but they will crowd together to Israel and Judah to be received into fellowship with them as a nation. Ten men from the heathen nations to one Jewish man: so great will be the pressure of the heathen. *Ten* is used as an indefinite number, denoting a great and complete multitude, as in Gen. 31:7, Lev. 26:26, Num. 14:22, and 1 Sam. 1:8. For the figure, compare Isa. 4:1. **וְהִחְזִיקוּ** is a resumption of **יִחְזִיקוּ** in the form of an apodosis. The unusual combination **בְּלִשְׁנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם**, “all the tongues of the nations,” is formed after Isa. 66:18 (**הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְשׁוֹנוֹת**, “all nations and tongues,” i.e., nations of all languages), and on the basis of Gen. 10:20 and 31. For **וְנִלְכָה עִמָּכֶם**, compare Ruth 1:16; and for **אֶל־הֵימָּם עִמָּכֶם**, 2 Chron. 15:9.

The promise, that the Lord would change the fast-days in the future into days of rejoicing and cheerful feasts, if Israel only loved truth and peace (v. 20), when taken in connection with what is said in Zech. 7:5, 6 concerning fasting, left the decision of the question, whether the fast-days were to be given up or to be still

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observed, in the hands of the people. We have no historical information as to the course adopted by the inhabitants of Judah in consequence of the divine answer. All that we know is, that even to the present day the Jews observe the four disastrous days as days of national mourning. The talmudic tradition in *Rosh-hashana* (f. 18, a, b), that the four fast-days were abolished in consequence of the answer of Jehovah, and were not restored again till after the destruction of the second temple, is not only very improbable, but is no doubt erroneous, inasmuch as, although the restoration of the days for commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple could easily be explained, on the supposition that the second destruction occurred at the same time as the first, it is not so easy to explain the restoration of the fast-days in commemoration of events for which there was no link of connection whatever in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. In all probability, the matter stands rather thus: that after the receipt of this verbal answer, the people did not venture formally to abolish the fast-days before the appearance of the promised salvation, but let them remain, even if they were not always strictly observed; and that at a later period the Jews, who rejected the Messiah, began again to observe them with greater stringency after the second destruction of Jerusalem, and continue to do so to the present time, not because “the prophecy of the glory intended for Israel (vv. 18–23) is still unfulfilled” (Koehler), but because “blindness in part is happened to Israel,” so that it has not discerned the fulfilment, which commenced with the appearance of Christ upon earth.

Zechariah 9

III. Future of the World-Powers, and of the Kingdom of God—Chs. 9–14

Zechariah 9–14. The two longer prophecies, which fill up the last part of our book (Zech. 9–11 and 12–14), show by their headings, as well as by their contents, and even by their formal arrangement, that they are two corresponding

portions of a greater whole. In the headings, the fact that they have both the common character of a threatening prophecy or proclamation of judgment, is indicated by the application of the same epithet, *Massâ' dbhar Yhōvâh* (burden of the word of Jehovah), whilst the objects, “land of Hadrach” (Zech. 9:1) and “Israel” (Zech. 12:1), point to a contrast, or rather to a conflict between the lands of Hadrach and Israel. This contrast or conflict extends through the contents of both. All the six chapters treat of the war between the heathen world and Israel, though in different ways. In the first oracle (Zech. 9–11), the judgment, through which the power of the heathen world over Israel is destroyed and Israel is endowed with strength to overcome all its enemies, forms the fundamental thought and centre of gravity of the prophetic description. In the second (Zech. 12–14), the judgment through which Israel, or Jerusalem and Judah, is sifted in the war with the heathen nations, and translated into the holy nation of the Lord by the extermination of its spurious members, is the leading topic. And lastly, in a formal respect the two oracles resemble one another, in the fact that in the centre of each the announcement suddenly takes a different tone, without any external preparation (Zech. 11:1 and 13:7), so that it is apparently the commencement of a new prophecy; and it is only by a deeper research into the actual fact, that the connection between the two is brought out, and the relation between the two clearly seen,—namely, that the second section contains a more minute description of the manner in which the events announced in the first section are to be realized. In the threatening word concerning the land of Hadrach, Zech. 9 and 10 form the first section, Zech. 11 the second; in that concerning Israel, the first section extends from Zech. 12:1 to 13:6, and the second from Zech. 13:7 to the end of the book.

Fall of the Heathen World, and Deliverance and Glorification of Zion—Ch. 9 and 10

Zechariah 9–10. Whilst the judgment falls upon the land of Hadrach, upon Damascus and

Hamath, and upon Phoenicia and Philistia, so that these kingdoms are overthrown and the cities laid waste and the remnant of their inhabitants incorporated into the nation of God (Zech. 9:1-7), Jehovah will protect His people, and cause His King to enter Zion, who will establish a kingdom of peace over the whole earth (vv. 8-10). Those members of the covenant nation who are still in captivity are redeemed, and endowed with victory over the sons of Javan (vv. 11-17), and richly blessed by the Lord their God to overcome all enemies in His strength (Zech. 10). The unity of the two chapters, which form the first half of this oracle, is evident from the close substantial connection between the separate sections. The transitions from one complex of thought to the other are so vanishing, that it is a matter of dispute, in the case of Zech. 10:1 and 2, for example, whether these verses should be connected with Zech. 9, or retained in connection with Zech. 10:4ff.

Zechariah 9:1-10. Judgment upon the Land of Hadrach; and Zion's King of Peace.—V. 1. The true interpretation of this section, and, in fact, of the whole prophecy, depends upon the explanation to be given to the heading contained in this verse. The whole verse reads thus: "*Burden of the word of Jehovah over the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is its resting-place; for Jehovah has an eye upon the men, and upon all the tribes of Israel.*" There is a wide divergence of opinion concerning the land of הַדְּרַח . We need not stop to give any elaborate refutation to the opinion that *Hadrach* is the name of the Messiah (as some Rabbins suppose), or that it is the name of an unknown Syrian king (Ges., Bleek), or of an Assyrian fire-god, *Adar* or *Asar* (Movers), or of a deity of Eastern Aramaea (Babylonia), as Hitzig maintained, since there is no trace whatever of the existence of such a king or deity; and even Hitzig himself has relinquished his own conjecture. And the view defended by J. D. Mich. and Rosenmüller, that *Hadrach* is the name of an ancient city, situated not far from Damascus, is destitute of any tenable basis, since Hengstenberg (*Christol.* iii. p. 372, transl.) has

proved that the historical testimonies adduced in support of this rest upon some confusion with the ancient Arabian city of *Drâa*, *Adrâa*, the biblical *Edrei* (Deut. 1:4). As the name *Hadrach* or *Chadrach* never occurs again, and yet a city which gives its name to a land, and occurs in connection with Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, and Sidon, could not possibly have vanished so completely, that even the earlier Jewish and Christian commentators heard nothing of it, *Chadrach* can only be a symbolical name formed by the prophet himself (as Jerome maintained, according to a Jewish tradition), from *chad*, *acris*, sharp, brave, ready for war (in Arabic, *ḥdd*, *vehemens fuit*, *durus in ira*, *pugna*), and *râkh*, soft, tender, in the sense of sharp-soft, or strong-tender, after the analogy of the symbolical names. *Dumah* for Edom, in Isa. 21:11; *Sheshach* for Babylon, in Jer. 25:26; 51:41; *Ariel* for Jerusalem, in Isa. 29:1, 2, 7. This view can no more be upset by the objection of Koehler, that the interpretation of the name is a disputed point among the commentators, and that it is doubtful why the prophet should have chosen such a symbolical epithet, than by the circumstance that the rabbinical interpretation of the word as a name for the Messiah is evidently false, and has long ago been given up by the Christian commentators. That *Hadrach* denotes a land or kingdom, is raised above all reach of doubt by the fact that *'erets* (the land) is placed before it. But what land? The statement in the following sentence by no means compels us to think of a province of Syria, as Hitzig, Koehler, and others suppose. As the cities and lands which follow are quoted under their ordinary names, it is impossible to imagine any reason for the choice of a symbolical name for another district of Syria bordering upon Damascus and Hamath. The symbolical name rather points to the fact that the land of *Hadrach* denotes a territory, of which Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia formed the several parts. And this is favoured by the circumstance that the words, "*Burden of the word of Jehovah upon the land of Hadrach,*" form the heading to the oracle, in which the preposition ב is used as in the

expression *מִשָּׂא בְעֵרֶב* in Isa. 21:13, and is to be explained from the phrase *נָפַל דְּבַר בָּ* in Isa. 9:7: The burdensome word falls, descends upon the land of Hadrach. The remark of Koehler in opposition to this, to the effect that these words are not a heading, but form the commencement of the exposition of the word of Jehovah through the prophet, inasmuch as the following clause is appended with ו, is quite groundless. The clause in Isa. 14:28, "In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden," is also a heading; and the assertion that the ו before *דְּמִשֶּׁק* is not a ו *explic.*, but an actual ו *conjunct.*, rests upon the assumption that the cities and lands mentioned in the course of this prophecy have not already been all embraced by the expression *אֶרֶץ חֲדָרַךְ*,—an assumption which has not been sustained by any proofs. On the contrary, the fact that not only is Damascus mentioned as the resting-place of the word of Jehovah, but Hamath and also the capitals of Phoenicia and Philistia are appended, proves the very opposite. This evidently implies that the burden resting upon the land of Hadrach will affect all these cities and lands.

The exposition of the burden announced upon the land of *Hadrach* commences with *וְדַמִּשֶּׁק*. This is attached to the heading with *Vav*, because, so far as the sense is concerned, *massâ*' is equivalent to "it presses as a burden." The exposition, however, is restricted, so far as Damascus and Hamath are concerned, to the simple remark that the burdensome word upon Hadrach will rest upon it, i.e., will settle permanently upon it. (The suffix in *מִנְחָתוֹ* refers to *י* (*מִשָּׂא דְבַר י*.) It is only with the lands which stood in a closer relation to Judah, viz., Tyre, Sidon, and the provinces of Philistia, that it assumes the form of a specially prophetic description. The contents of the heading are sustained by the thought in the second hemistich: "Jehovah has an eye upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel." *עַיִן אֲדָם* with the *genit. obj.* signifies the rest of mankind, i.e., the

heathen world, as in Jer. 32:20, where "Israel" and "men" are opposed to one another. The explanatory clause, according to which the burden of Jehovah falls upon the land of Hadrach, and rests upon Damascus, because the eyes of Jehovah looks upon mankind and all the tribes of Israel, i.e., His providence stretches over the heathen world as well as over Israel, is quite sufficient in itself to overthrow the assumption of Hofmann and Koehler, that by the land of Hadrach we are to understand the land of Israel. For if the explanatory clause were understood as signifying that the burden, i.e., the judgment, would not only fall upon Hamath as the representative of the human race outside the limits of Israel, but also upon the land of Hadrach as the land of all the tribes of Israel, this view would be precluded not only by the circumstance that in what follows heathen nations alone are mentioned as the objects of the judgment, whereas salvation and peace are proclaimed to Israel, but also by the fact that no ground whatever can be discovered for the application of so mysterious an epithet to the land of Israel. According to Hofmann (*Schriftb.* ii. 2, p. 604), *אֶרֶץ חֲדָרַךְ* signifies the whole of the territory of the kingdom of David, which is so called as "the land of Israel, which, though weak in itself, was, through the strength of God, as sharp as a warrior's sword." But if a judgment of destruction, which Hofmann finds in our prophecy, were announced "to all the nations dwelling within the bounds of what was once the Davidic kingdom," the judgment would fall upon Israel in the same way as upon the heathen nations that are named, since the tribes of Israel formed the kernel of the nations who dwelt in what was once the Davidic kingdom, and Israel would therefore show itself as a sharp-soft people. Hence Koehler has modified this view, and supposes that only the heathen dwelling within the limits of the nation of the twelve tribes are threatened with Jehovah's judgment,—namely, all the heathen within the land which Jehovah promised to His people on their taking possession of Canaan (Num. 34:1–12). But apart from the unfounded assumption that *Hadrach* is the name of a

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district of Syria on the border of Damascus and Hamath, this loophole is closed by the fact that, according to Num. 34:1ff., Hamath and Damascus are not included in the possession promised to Israel. According to Num. 34:8, the northern boundary of the land of Israel was to extend to Hamath, i.e., to the territory of the kingdom of Hamath, and Damascus is very far beyond the eastern boundary of the territory assigned to the Israelites (see the exposition of Num. 34:1–12). Now, if the land of Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath were not within the ideal boundaries of Israel, and if Hamath and Hadrach did not belong to the Israelitish kingdom in the time of David, the other lands or cities mentioned in our oracle cannot be threatened with the judgment on account of their lying within the Mosaic boundaries of the land of Israel, or being subject to the Israelites for a time, but can only come into consideration as enemies of Israel whose might was to be threatened and destroyed by the judgment. Consequently the land of *Hadrach* must denote a land hostile to the covenant nation or the kingdom of God, and can only be a symbolical epithet descriptive of the Medo-Persian empire, which is called sharp-soft or strong-weak on account of its inwardly divided character, as Hengstenberg and Kliefoth assume. Now, however difficult it may be satisfactorily to explain the reason why Zechariah chose this symbolical name for the Medo-Persian monarchy, so much is certain, that the choice of a figurative name was much more suitable in the case of the dominant empire of that time, than in that of any small country on the border of Damascus or Hamath. All the cities and land enumerated after “the land of Hadrach,” as losing their glory at the same time, belonged to the Medo-Persian monarchy. Of these the prophet simply refers to Damascus and Hamath in general terms; and it is only in the case of the Phoenician and Philistian cities that he proceeds to a special description of their fall from their lofty eminence, because they stood nearest to the kingdom of Israel, and represented the might of the kingdom of the world, and its hostility to the kingdom of God,

partly in the worldly development of their own might, and partly in their hostility to the covenant nation. The description is an individualizing one throughout, exemplifying general facts by particular cities. This is also evident from the announcement of salvation for Zion in vv. 8–10, from which we may see that the overthrow of the nations hostile to Israel stands in intimate connection with the establishment of the Messianic kingdom; and it is also confirmed by the second half of our chapter, where the conquest of the imperial power by the people of God is set forth in the victories of Judah and Ephraim over the sons of Javan. That the several peoples and cities mentioned by name are simply introduced as representatives of the imperial power, is evident from the distinction made in this verse between (the rest of) mankind and all the tribes of Israel.

Zechariah 9:2–4. V. 2. “*And Hamath also, which borders thereon; Tyre and Sidon, because it is very wise.* V. 3. *And Tyre built herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver like dust, and gold like dirt of the streets.* V. 4. *Behold, the Lord will cause it to be taken, and smite its might in the sea, and she will be consumed by fire.*” *Chămâth* is appended to Damascus by *vgam* (and also). *Tigbol-bâh* is to be taken as a relative clause; and *bâh* refers to *chămâth*, and not to *'erets chadrâkh* (the land of Hadrach). “*Hamath also,*” i.e., Ἐπιφάνεια on the Orontes, the present *Hamah* (see at Gen. 10:18), which borders on Damascus, i.e., which has its territory touching the territory of Damascus, sc. will be a resting-place of the burden of Jehovah. The relative clause connects *Hamath* with *Damascus*, and separates it from the names which follow. Damascus and Hamath represent Syria. Tyre and Sidon, the two capitals of Phoenicia, are connected again into a pair by the explanatory clause כִּי הַקְּמָה מְאֹד. For although הַקְּמָה is in the singular, it cannot be taken as referring to *Sidon* only, because Tyre is mentioned again in the very next verse as the subject, and the practical display of its wisdom is described. The singular הַקְּמָה cannot be taken

distributively in this sense, that being wise applies in just the same manner to both the cities (Koehler); for the cases quoted by Gesenius (§ 146, 4) are of a totally different kind, since there the subject is in the plural, and is construed with a singular verb; but צִידוֹן is subordinate to צָר, “Tyre with Sidon,” Sidon being regarded as an annex of Tyre, answering to the historical relation in which the two cities stood to one another,—namely, that Tyre was indeed originally a colony of Sidon, but that it very soon overshadowed the mother city, and rose to be the capital of all Phoenicia (see the comm. on Isa. 23), so that even in Isaiah and Ezekiel the prophecies concerning Sidon are attached to those concerning Tyre, and its fate appears interwoven with that of Tyre (cf. Isa. 23:4, 12; Ezek. 28:21ff.). Hence we find Tyre only spoken of here in vv. 3 and 4. This city showed its wisdom in the fact that it built itself a fortress, and heaped up silver and gold like dust and dirt of the streets. Zechariah has here in his mind the insular Tyre, which was built about three or four stadia from the mainland, and thirty stadia to the north of *Palae-tyrus*, and which is called מְעוֹז הַיָּם in Isa. 23:4, because, although very small in extent, it was surrounded by a wall a hundred and fifty feet high, and was so strong a fortification, that Shalmaneser besieged it for five years without success, and Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years, and apparently was unable to conquer it (see Delitzsch on *Isaiah*, at Isa. 23:18). This fortification is called *mâtsôr*. Here Tyre had heaped up immense treasures. *Chârûts* is shining gold (Ps. 68:14, etc.). but the wisdom through which Tyre had acquired such might and such riches (cf. Ezek. 28:4, 5) would be of no help to it. For it was the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. 1:20), which ascribes to itself the glory due to God, and only nourishes the pride out of which it sprang. The Lord will take the city. *Hôrîsh* does not mean to drive from its possession—namely, the population (Hitzig)—for the next two clauses show that it is not the population of Tyre, but the city itself, which is thought of as the object; nor does it mean to

“give as a possession”—namely, their treasures (Calv., Hengst., etc.)—but simply to take possession, to take, to conquer, as in Josh. 8:7; 17:12, Num. 14:24 (Maurer, Koehler). And will smite in the sea הַיָּם, not “her bulwarks:” for הַיָּם, when used of fortifications, neither denotes the city wall nor earthworks, but the moat, including the small outer wall (2 Sam. 20:15) as distinguished from the true city wall (*chômâh*, Isa. 26:1, Lam. 2:8), and this does not apply to the insular Tyre; moreover, הַיָּם cannot be taken here in any other sense than in Ezek. 28:4, 5, which Zechariah follows. There it denotes the might which Tyre had acquired through its wisdom, not merely warlike or military power (Koehler), but might consisting in its strong situation and artificial fortification, as well as in the wealth of its resources for defence. This will be smitten in the sea, because Tyre itself stood in the sea. And finally, the city will be destroyed by fire.

Zechariah 9:5–7. V. 5. *“Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza, and tremble greatly; and Ekron, for her hope has been put to shame; and the king will perish out of Gaza, and Ashkelon will not dwell.* V. 6. *The bastard will dwell in Ashdod; and I shall destroy the pride of the Philistines.* V. 7. *And I shall take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth; and he will also remain to our God, and will be as a tribe-prince in Judah, and Ekron like the Jebusite.”* From the Phoenicians the threat turns against the Philistines. The fall of the mighty Tyre shall fill the Philistian cities with fear and trembling, because all hope of deliverance from the threatening destruction is thereby taken away (cf. Isa. 23:5). הַיָּם is jussive. The effect, which the fall of Tyre will produce upon the Philistian cities, is thus set forth as intended by God. The description is an individualizing one in this instance also. The several features in this effect are so distributed among the different cities, that what is said of each applies to all. They will not only tremble with fear, but will also lose their kingship, and be laid waste. Only four of the Philistian capitals are mentioned,

Gath being passed over, as in Amos 1:6, 8, Zeph. 2:4, and Jer. 25:20; and they occur in the same order as in Jeremiah, whose prophecy Zechariah had before his mind. To **וְעָזָה** we must supply **תָּרָא** from the parallel clause; and to **עָקְרוּן** not only **תָּרָא**, but also **וְתִירָא**. The reason for the fear is first mentioned in connection with *Ekron*,—namely, the fact that the hope is put to shame. **הַזְּבִישׁ** is the *hiphil* of **בוֹשׁ** (Ewald, § 122, *e*), in the ordinary sense of this *hiphil*, to be put to shame. **מִבָּט** with *seghol* stands for **מִבָּט** (Ewald, § 88, *d*, and 160, *d*), the object of hope or confidence. Gaza loses its king. *Melekh* without the article is the king as such, not the particular king reigning at the time of the judgment; and the meaning is, “Gaza will henceforth have no king,” i.e., will utterly perish, answering to the assertion concerning Ashkelon: **לֹא תֵשֵׁב**, she will not dwell, i.e., will not come to dwell, a poetical expression for be inhabited (see at Joel 3:20). The reference to a king of Gaza does not point to times before the captivity. The Babylonian and Persian emperors were accustomed to leave to the subjugated nations their princes or kings, if they would only submit as vassals to their superior control. They therefore bore the title of “kings of kings” (Ezek. 26:7; cf. Herod. iii. 15; Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 229, 230; and Koehler, *ad h. l.*). In Ashdod will *mamzēr* dwell. This word, the etymology of which is obscure (see at Deut. 23:3, the only other passage in which it occurs), denotes in any case one whose birth has some blemish connected with it; so that he is not an equal by birth with the citizens of a city or the inhabitants of a land. Hengstenberg therefore renders it freely, though not inappropriately, by *Gesindel* (rabble). The dwelling of the bastard in Ashdod is not at variance with the fact that Ashkelon “does not dwell,” notwithstanding the individualizing character of the description, according to which what is affirmed of one city also applies to the other. For the latter simply states that the city will lose its native citizens, and thus forfeit the character of a city. The dwelling of bastards or rabble in Ashdod

expresses the deep degradation of Philistia, which is announced in literal terms in the second hemistich. The pride of the Philistines shall be rooted out, i.e., everything shall be taken from them on which as Philistines they based their pride, viz., their power, their fortified cities, and their nationality. “These words embrace the entire contents of the prophecy against the Philistines, affirming of the whole people what had previously been affirmed of the several cities” (Hengstenberg).

A new and important feature is added to this in v. 7. Their religious peculiarity—namely, their idolatry—shall also be taken from them, and their incorporation into the nation of God brought about through this judgment. The description in v. 7 is founded upon a personification of the Philistian nation. the suffixes of the third pers. sing. and the pronoun **הוּא** in v. 7a do not refer to the *mamzēr* (Hitzig), but to *plishtīm* (the Philistines), the nation being comprehended in the unity of a single person. This person appears as an idolater, who, when keeping a sacrificial feast, has the blood and flesh of the sacrificial animals in his mouth and between his teeth. *Dāmīm* is not human blood, but the blood of sacrifices; and *shiqqutsīm*, abominations, are not the idols, but the idolatrous sacrifices, and indeed their flesh. Taking away the food of the idolatrous sacrifices out of their mouth denotes not merely the interruption of the idolatrous sacrificial meals, but the abolition of idolatry generally. He also (the nation of the Philistines regarded as a person) will be left to our God. The *gam* refers not to the Phoenicians and Syrians mentioned before, of whose being left nothing was said in vv. 1–4, but to the idea of “Israel” implied in **לֹא לֵהֲיוּ**, our God. Just as in the case of Israel a “remnant” of true confessors of Jehovah is left when the judgment falls upon it, so also will a remnant of the Philistines be left for the God of Israel. The attitude of this remnant towards the people of God is shown in the clauses which follow. He will be like an *’alluph* in Judah. This word, which is applied in the earlier books only to the tribe-princes of the

Edomites and Horites (Gen. 36:15, 16; Ex. 15:15; 1 Chron. 1:51ff.), is transferred by Zechariah to the tribe-princes of Judah. It signifies literally not a phylarch, the head of an entire tribe (*matteh*, φυλή), but a chiliarch, the head of an *'eleph*, one of the families into which the tribes were divided. The meaning "friend," which Kliefoth prefers (cf. Mic. 7:5), is unsuitable here; and the objection, that "all the individuals embraced in the collective אֶלֶף cannot receive the position of tribe-princes in Judah" (Kliefoth), does not apply, because אֶלֶף is not an ordinary collective, but the remnant of the Philistines personified as a man. Such a remnant might very well assume the position of a chiliarch of Judah. This statement is completed by the addition "and Ekron," i.e., the Ekronite "will be like the Jebusite." The Ekronite is mentioned fore the purpose of individualizing in the place of all the Philistines. "Jebusite" is not an epithet applied to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but stands for the former inhabitants of the citadel of Zion, who adopted the religion of Israel after the conquest of this citadel by David, and were incorporated into the nation of the Lord. This is evident from the example of the Jebusite Araunah, who lived in the midst of the covenant nation, according to 2 Sam. 24:16ff., 1 Chron. 21:15ff., as a distinguished man of property, and not only sold his threshing-floor to king David as a site for the future temple, but also offered to present the oxen with which he had been ploughing, as well as the plough itself, for a burnt-offering. On the other hand, Koehler infers, from the conventional mode of expression employed by the subject when speaking to his king, "thy God," and the corresponding words of David, "my God" instead of our God, that Araunah stood in the attitude of a foreigner towards the God of Israel; but he is wrong in doing so. And there is quite as little ground for the further inference drawn by this scholar from the fact that the servants of Solomon and the Nethinim are reckoned together in Ezra 2:58 and Neh. 7:60, in connection with the statement that Solomon

had levied bond-slaves for his buildings from the remnants of the Canaanitish population (1 Kings 9:20), viz., that the Jebusites reappeared in the Nethinim of the later historical books, and that the Nethinim "given by David and the princes" were chiefly Jebusites, according to which "Ekron's being like a Jebusite is equivalent to Ekron's not only meeting with reception into the national fellowship of Israel through circumcision, but being appointed, like the Jebusites, to service in the sanctuary of Jehovah." On the contrary, the thought is simply this: The Ekronites will be melted up with the people of God, like the Jebusites with the Judaeans. Kliefoth also observes quite correctly, that "there is no doubt that what is specially affirmed of the Philistians is also intended to apply to the land of Chadrach, to Damascus, etc., as indeed an absolute generalization follows expressly in v. 10 ... Just as in what precedes, the catastrophe intended for all these lands and nations is specially described in the case of Tyre alone; so here conversion is specially predicted of the Philistines alone."

If we inquire now into the historical allusion or fulfilment of this prophecy, it seems most natural to think of the divine judgment, which fell upon Syria, Phoenicia, and Philistia through the march of Alexander the Great from Asia Minor to Egypt. After the battle at Issus in Cilicia, Alexander sent one division of his army under Parmenio to Damascus, to conquer this capital of Coele-Syria. On this expedition Hamath must also have been touched and taken. Alexander himself marched from Cilicia direct to Phoenicia, where Sidon and the other Phoenician cities voluntarily surrendered to him; and only Tyre offered so serious a resistance in its confidence in its own security, that it was not till after a seven months' siege and very great exertions that he succeeded in taking this fortified city by storm. On his further march the fortified city of Gaza also offered a prolonged resistance, but it too was eventually taken by storm (cf. Arrian, ii. 15ff.; Curtius, iv. 12, 13, and 2-4; and Stark, *Gaza*, p. 237ff.). On the basis of these facts, Hengstenberg observes (*Christol.* iii. p. 369), as others have done before

him, that “there can be no doubt that in vv. 1–8 we have before us a description of the expedition of Alexander as clear as it was possible for one to be given, making allowance for the difference between prophecy and history.” But Koehler has already replied to this, that the prophecy in v. 7 was not fulfilled by the deeds of Alexander, since neither the remnant of the Phoenicians nor the other heathen dwelling in the midst of Israel were converted to Jehovah through the calamities connected with Alexander’s expedition; and on this ground he merely regards the conquests of Alexander as the commencement of the fulfilment, which was then continued throughout the calamities caused by the wars of succession, the conflicts between the Egyptians, Syrians, and Romans, until it was completed by the fact that the heathen tribes within the boundaries of Israel gradually disappeared as separate tribes, and their remnants were received into the community of those who confessed Israel’s God and His anointed. But we must go a step further, and say that the fulfilment has not yet reached its end, but is still going on, and will until the kingdom of Christ shall attain that complete victory over the heathen world which is foretold in vv. 8ff.

Zechariah 9:8–10. Whilst the heathen world falls under the judgment of destruction, and the remnant of the heathen are converted to the living God, the Lord will protect His house, and cause the King to appear in Jerusalem, who will spread out His kingdom of peace over all the earth. V. 8. *“I pitch a tent for my house against military power, against those who go to and fro, and no oppressor will pass over them any more; for now have I seen with my eyes. V. 9. Exult greatly, O daughter Zion; shout, daughter Jerusalem: behold, thy King will come to thee: just and endowed with salvation is He; lowly and riding upon an ass, and that upon a foal, the she-ass’s son. V. 10. And I cut off the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horses out of Jerusalem, and the war-bow will be cut off: and peace will He speak to the nations; and His dominion goes from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the*

earth.” *Chânâh*, to encamp, to pitch a tent. לְבֵיתִי, *dat. commod.* “for my house,” for the good of my house. The house of Jehovah is not the temple, but Israel as the kingdom of God or church of the Lord, as in Hos. 8:1; 9:15, Jer. 12:7, and even Num. 12:7, from which we may see that this meaning is not founded upon the temple, but upon the national constitution given to Israel, i.e., upon the idea of the house as a family. In the verse before us we cannot think of the temple, for the simple reason that the temple was not a military road for armies on the march either while it was standing, or, as Koehler supposes, when it was in ruins. מְצַבָּה stands, according to the Masora, for מְצַבָּא = מְצַבָּא, not however in the sense of without an army, but “on account of (against) a hostile troop,” protecting His house from them. But Böttcher, Koehler, and others, propose to follow the LXX and read מְצַבָּה, military post, after 1 Sam. 14:12, which is the rendering given by C. B. Michaelis and Gesenius to מְצַבָּה. But this does not apply to הַנֶּחֱבֵה, for a post (מְצַבָּה, that which is set up) stands up, and does not lie down. מְצַבָּה is more precisely defined by מְעַבֵּר וּמֵשֵׁב, as going through and returning, i.e., as an army marching to and fro (cf. Zech. 7:14). There will come upon them no more (עֲלֵיהֶם, *ad sensum*, referring to בֵּיתִי) *nōgēs*, lit., a bailiff or taskmaster (Ex. 3:7), then generally any oppressor of the nation. Such oppressors were Egypt, Asshur, Babel, and at the present time the imperial power of Persia. This promise is explained by the last clause: Now have I seen with mine eyes. The object is wanting, but it is implied in the context, viz., the oppression under which my nation sighs (cf. Ex. 2:25; 3:7). ‘Attâh (now) refers to the ideal present of the prophecy, really to the time when God interposes with His help; and the perfect רְאִיתִי is prophetic.

God grants help to His people, by causing her King to come to the daughter Zion. To show the magnitude of this salvation, the Lord calls upon

the daughter Zion, i.e., the personified population of Jerusalem as a representative of the nation of Israel, namely the believing members of the covenant nation, to rejoice. Through מְלִכָּךָ, *thy* King, the coming one is described as the King appointed for Zion, and promised to the covenant nation. That the Messiah is intended, whose coming is predicted by Isaiah (Isa. 9:5, 6), Micah (Mic. 5:1ff.), and other prophets, is admitted with very few exceptions by all the Jewish and Christian commentators. לְךָ, not only to thee, but also for thy good. He is *tsaddiq*, righteous, i.e., not one who has right, or the good cause (Hitzig), nor merely one righteous in character, answering in all respects to the will of Jehovah (Koehler), but animated with righteousness, and maintaining in His government this first virtue of a ruler (cf. Isa. 11:1–4; Jer. 23:5, 6; 33:15, 16, etc.). For He is also גּוֹשֵׁעַ, i.e., not σωζων, *salvator*, helper (LXX, Vulg., Luth.), since the *niphal* has not the active or transitive sense of the *hiphil* (מוֹשִׁיעַ), nor merely the passive σωζόμενος, *salvatus*, delivered from suffering; but the word is used in a more general sense, endowed with יִשְׁעַ, salvation, help from God, as in Deut. 33:29, Ps. 33:16, or furnished with the assistance of God requisite for carrying on His government. The next two predicates describe the character of His rule. עָנִי does not mean gentle, πραῦς (LXX and others) = עָנָו, but lowly, miserable, bowed down, full of suffering. The word denotes “the whole of the lowly, miserable, suffering condition, as it is elaborately depicted in Isa. 53” (Hengstenberg). The next clause answers to this, “riding upon an ass, and indeed upon the foal of an ass.” The ו before עַל עִיר is epexegetical (1 Sam. 17:40), describing the ass as a young animal, not yet ridden, but still running behind the she-asses. The youthfulness of the animal is brought out still more strongly by the expression added to עִיר, viz., בֶּן־אֲתָנוֹת, i.e., a foal, such as asses are accustomed to bear (עֲתָנוֹת is the plural of the species, as in כַּפִּיר

אֲרִיזוֹת, Judg. 14:5; שְׂעִיר הָעִזִּים, Gen. 37:31, Lev. 4:23). “Riding upon an ass” is supposed by most of the more modern commentators to be a figurative emblem of the peacefulness of the king, that He will establish a government of peace, the ass being regarded as an animal of peace in contrast with the horse, because on account of its smaller strength, agility, and speed, it is less adapted for riding in the midst of fighting and slaughter than a horse. But, in the first place, this leaves the heightening of the idea of the ass by the expression “the young ass’s foal” quite unexplained. Is the unriden ass’s foal an emblem of peace in a higher degree than the full-grown ass, that has already been ridden? And secondly, it is indeed correct that the ass was only used in war as the exception, not the rule, and when there were no horses to be had (cf. Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. p. 158, ed. Ros.); and also correct that in the East it is of a nobler breed, and not so despised as it is with us; but it is also a fact that in the East, and more especially among the Israelites, it was only in the earlier times, when they possessed no horses as yet, that distinguished persons rode upon asses (Judg. 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; 2 Sam. 17:23; 19:27), whereas in the time of David the royal princes and kings kept mules for riding instead of asses (2 Sam. 13:29; 18:9; 1 Kings 1:33; 38; 44); and from the time of Solomon downwards, when the breeding of horses was introduced, not another instance occurs of a royal person riding upon an ass, although asses and mules are still constantly used in the East for riding and as beasts of burden; and lastly, that in both the ancient and modern East the ass stands much lower than the horse, whilst in Egypt and other places (Damascus for example), Christians and Jews were, and to some extent still are, only allowed to ride upon asses, and not upon horses, for the purpose of putting them below the Mohammedans (for the proofs, see Hengstenberg’s *Christology*, iii. pp. 404–5). Consequently we must rest satisfied with this explanation, that in accordance with the predicate עָנִי the riding of the King of Zion upon the foal of an ass is an emblem, not of

peace, but of lowliness, as the Talmudists themselves interpreted it. "For the ass is not a more peaceful animal than the horse, but a more vicious one" (Kliefoth).

Zechariah 9:10. Just as the coming of the King does not contain within itself a sign of earthly power and exaltation, so will His kingdom not be established by worldly power. The war-chariots and horses, in which the kingdoms of the world seek their strength, will be exterminated by Jehovah out of Ephraim and Jerusalem (cf. Mic. 5:9). And so also will the war-chariots, for which "the battle-bow" stands synecdochically. Ephraim denotes the former kingdom of the ten tribes, and Jerusalem is mentioned as the capital in the place of the kingdom of Judah. Under the Messiah will the two kingdoms that were formerly divided be united once more, and through the destruction of their military power will their nature be also changed, the covenant nation be divested of its political and worldly character, and made into a spiritual nation or kingdom. The rule of this King will also speak peace to the nations, i.e., will not command peace through His authoritative word (Hitzig, Koehler, etc.), but bring the contests among the nations to an end (Mic. 4:3); for *dibbēr shâlôm* does not mean to command peace, but it either simply denotes such a speaking as has peace for its subject, giving an assurance of peace and friendship, i.e., uttering words of peace (a meaning which is inapplicable here), or signifies to speak peace for the purpose of bringing disputes to an end (Esth. 10:3). But this is done not by authoritative commands, but by His gaining the nations over through the spiritual power of His word, or establishing His spiritual kingdom in the midst of them. It is only as thus interpreted, that the statement concerning the extension of His kingdom harmonizes with the rest. This statement rests upon Ps. 72:8, "from sea to sea," as in Amos 8:12 and Mic. 7:12, viz., from the sea to the other end of the world where sea begins again. "From the river:" i.e., from the Euphrates, which is intended here by *nâhâr* without the article, as in Mic. 7:12 and Isa. 7:20, and is mentioned as the remotest eastern boundary of

the land of Israel, according to Gen. 15:18, Ex. 23:31, as being the *terminus a quo*, to which the ends of the earth are opposed as the *terminus ad quem*.

The leading thought in the promise (vv. 8–10) is therefore the following: When the catastrophe shall burst upon the Persian empire, Israel will enjoy the marvellous protection of its God, and the promised King will come for Zion, endowed with righteousness and salvation, but in outward humiliation; and through the extermination of the materials of war out of Israel, as well as by the peaceful settlement of the contests of the nations, He will establish a kingdom of peace, which will extend over all the earth. On the fulfilment of this prophecy, we learn from the gospel history, that when Jesus took His last journey to Jerusalem, He so arranged His entrance into this city, that our prophecy (v. 9), "Say ye to the daughter Zion, Behold, thy King cometh," etc., was fulfilled (cf. Matt. 21:2ff., Mark 11:2ff., Luke 19:30ff., and John 12:14ff.). The exact agreement between the arrangement made by Jesus on this occasion and our prophecy is especially evident from the account given by Matthew, according to which Jesus ordered not only the ass's foal (*πῶλον ὄναριον*), upon which He rode into Jerusalem, to be brought, as Mark, Luke, and John relate, but a she-ass and a foal with her (Matt. 21:2 and 7), "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" (v. 4), although He could really only ride upon one animal. The she-ass was to follow, to set forth Zechariah's figurative description with greater completeness. For we see, from the corresponding accounts of the other three evangelists, that Jesus only mounted the ass's foal. John, even when quoting our prophecy, only mentions the "sitting on an ass's colt" (v. 15), and then adds in v. 16, that the allusion in this act of Jesus to the Old Testament prophecy was only understood by the disciples after Jesus was glorified. By this mode of entering Jerusalem before His death, Jesus intended to exhibit Himself to the people as the King foretold by the prophets, who, coming in lowliness, would establish His kingdom through

suffering and dying, so as to neutralize the carnal expectations of the people as to the worldly character of the Messianic kingdom. The fulfilment, however, which Jesus thereby gave to our prophecy is not to be sought for in this external agreement between His act and the words of the prophet. The act of Jesus was in itself simply an embodiment of the thought lying at the basis of the prophecy,—namely, that the kingdom of the Messiah would unfold itself, through lowliness and suffering, to might and glory; that Jesus, as the promised Messiah, would not conquer the world by the force of arms, and so raise His people to political supremacy, but that He would found His kingdom by suffering and dying,—a kingdom which, though not of this world, would nevertheless overcome the world. The figurative character of the prophetic picture, according to which “riding upon an ass” merely serves to individualize *אָנִי*, and set forth the lowliness of the true King of Zion under appropriate imagery, has been already pointed out by Calvin and Vitringa; and the latter has also correctly observed, that the prophecy would have been fulfilled in Christ, even if He had not made His entry into Jerusalem in this manner. Hengstenberg and Koehler adopt the same view. Nevertheless, this entry of Christ into Jerusalem forms the commencement of the fulfilment of our prophecy, and that not merely inasmuch as Jesus thereby declared Himself to be the promised Messiah and King of Zion, and set forth in a living symbol the true nature of His person and of His kingdom in contrast with the false notions of His friends and foes, but still more in this respect, that the entry into Jerusalem formed the commencement of the establishment of His kingdom, since it brought to maturity the resolution on the part of the Jewish rulers to put Him to death; and His death was necessary to reconcile the sinful world to God, and restore the foundation of peace upon which His kingdom was to be built. With the spread of His kingdom over the earth, treated of in v. 10, the fulfilment continues till the annihilation of all the ungodly powers, after which all war will ceased. But this end can only

be reached through severe conflicts and victory. This is the subject of the following section.

Zechariah 9:11–17. Israel’s Redemption from Captivity, and Victory over the Heathen.—V. 11. *“Thou also, for the sake of thy covenant blood, I release thy captives out of the pit wherein there is no water. V. 12. Return to the fortress, ye prisoners of hope. Even to-day I proclaim: Double will I repay to thee.”* This is addressed to the daughter Zion, i.e., to all Israel, consisting of Ephraim and Judah. We not only learn this from the context, since both of them are spoken of before (v. 10) and afterwards (v. 13); but it is also obvious from the expression *bdam brīthēkh*, since the covenant blood belonged to all Israel of the twelve tribes (Ex. 24:8). *אֲנִי-גַּם* stands at the head absolutely, on account of the emphasis lying upon the *אֲנִי*. But as the following clause, instead of being directly attached to *אֲנִי*, is so constructed that the pronoun *אֲנִי* is continued with suffixes, the question arises, to what the *גַּם* is to be taken as referring, or which is the antithesis indicated by *גַּם*. The answer may easily be obtained if we only make it clear to ourselves which of the two words, with the second pers. suffix, forms the object of the assertion made in the entire clause. This is not *בְּדָם-בְּרִיתְךָ*, but *אֲנִי-גַּם*: thou also (= thee)—namely, thy prisoners—I release. But the emphasis intended by the position in which *אֲנִי-גַּם* is placed does not rest upon the prisoners of Israel in contrast with any other prisoners, but in contrast with the Israel in Jerusalem, the daughter Zion, to which the King is coming. Now, although *גַּם* actually belongs to *אֲנִי-גַּם*, it refers primarily to the *אֲנִי* to which it is attached, and this only receives its more precise definition afterwards in *אֲנִי-גַּם*. And the allusion intended by *גַּם* is simply somewhat obscured by the fact, that before the statement to which it gives emphasis *בְּדָם-בְּרִיתְךָ* is inserted, in order from the very first to give a firm pledge of the promise to the people, by declaring the motive

which induced God to make this fresh manifestation of grace to Israel. This motive also acted as a further reason for placing the pronoun אָנֹכִי at the head absolutely, and shows that אָנֹכִי is to be taken as an address, as for example in Gen. 49:8. בְּדַם־בְּרִיתֶךָ: literally, being in thy covenant blood, because sprinkled therewith, the process by which Israel was expiated and received into covenant with God (Ex. 24:8). "The covenant blood, which still separates the church and the world from one another, was therefore a certain pledge to the covenant nation of deliverance out of all trouble, so long, that is to say, as it did not render the promise nugatory by wickedly violating the conditions imposed by God" (Hengstenberg). The new matter introduced by אָנֹכִי in v. 11 is therefore the following: The pardon of Israel will not merely consist in the fact that Jehovah will send the promised King to the daughter Zion; but He will also redeem such members of His nation as shall be still in captivity out of their affliction. The perfect *shillachtī* is prophetic. Delivering them out of a pit without water is a figure denoting their liberation out of the bondage of exile. This is represented with an evident allusion to the history of Joseph in Gen. 37:22, as lying in a pit wherein there is no water, such as were used as prisons (cf. Jer. 38:6). Out of such a pit the captive could not escape, and would inevitably perish if he were not drawn out. The opposite of the pit is בְּצֻרֹן, a place cut off, i.e., fortified, not the steep height, although fortified towns were generally built upon heights. The prisoners are to return where they will be secured against their enemies; compare Ps. 40:3, where the rock is opposed to the miry pit, as being a place upon which it is possible to stand firmly. "Prisoners of hope" is an epithet applied to the Israelites, because they possess in their covenant blood a hope of redemption. גַּם־הַיּוֹם, also to-day, i.e., even to-day or still to-day, "notwithstanding all threatening circumstances" (Ewald, Hengstenberg). I repay

thee double, i.e., according to Isa. 61:7, a double measure of glory in the place of the sufferings.

Zechariah 9:13–15. This thought is supported in vv. 13ff. by a picture of the glory intended for Israel. V. 13. "For I stretch Judah as my bow, fill it with Ephraim, and stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan, and make thee like the sword of a hero. V. 14. And Jehovah will appear above them, and like the lightning will His arrow go forth; and the Lord Jehovah will blow the trumpets, and will pass along in storms of the south. V. 15. Jehovah of hosts will shelter above them, and they will eat and tread down sling-stones, and will drink, make a noise, as if with wine, and become full, like the sacrificial bowls, like the corners of the altar." The double recompense which the Lord will make to His people, will consist in the fact that He not only liberates them out of captivity and bondage, and makes them into an independent nation, but that He helps them to victory over the power of the world, so that they will tread it down, i.e., completely subdue it. The first thought is not explained more fully, because it is contained *implicite* in the promise of return to a strong place; the "double" only is more distinctly defined, namely, the victory over Javan. The expression, "I stretch," etc., implies that the Lord will subdue the enemies by Judah and Ephraim, and therefore Israel will carry on this conflict in the power of its God. The figurative description is a bold one. Judah is the extended bow; Ephraim the arrow which God shoots at the foe. קֶשֶׁת is indeed separated from יהוּדָה by the accents; but the LXX, Targ., Vulg., and others, have taken it more correctly, as in apposition to יהוּדָה; because with the many meanings that דְּרֹךְ possesses, the expression יהוּדָה דְּרֹךְ needs a more precise definition; whereas there is no difficulty in supplying in thought the noun *qesheth*, which has been mentioned only just before, to the verb מְלֵאֲתִי (I fill). מְלֵאֲתִי is to be understood as signifying the laying of the arrow upon the bow, and not to be explained from 2 Kings 9:24, "to fill the hand

with the bow." A bow is filled when it is supplied with the arrow for shooting. We must bear in mind that the matter is divided rhetorically between the parallel members; and the thought is this: Judah and Ephraim are bow and arrow in the hand of Jehovah. עֹרֶרְתִּי, I stir up, not I swing thy children as a lance (Hitzig and Koehler); for if עֹרֶר had this meaning, חֲנִית could not be omitted. The sons of Zion are Judah and Ephraim, the undivided Israel, not the Zionites living as slaves in Javan (Hitzig). The sons of Javan are the Greeks, as the world-power, the Graeco-Macedonian monarchy (cf. Dan. 8:21), against which the Lord will make His people into a hero's sword. This took place in weak beginnings, even in the wars between the Maccabees and the Seleucidae, to which, according to Jerome, the Jews understood our prophecy to refer; but it must not be restricted to this, as the further description in vv. 14, 15 points to the complete subjugation of the imperial power.

Jehovah appears above them, i.e., coming from heaven as a defence, to fight for them (the sons of Zion), as a mighty man of war (Ps. 24:8). His arrow goes out like the lightning (⌈ the so-called ⌈ *veritatis*; for the fact described, compare Hab. 3:11). Marching at the head of His people, He gives the signal of battle with a trumpet-blast, and attacks the enemy with terribly devastating violence. The description rests upon the poetical descriptions of the coming of the Lord to judgment, the colours of which are borrowed from the phenomena of a storm (cf. Ps. 18 and Hab. 3:8ff.). Storms of the south are the most violent storms, as they come from the Arabian desert, which bounds Canaan on the south (Isa. 21:1; cf. Hos. 13:15). But Jehovah not only fights for His people; He is also a shield to them in battle, covering them against the weapons of the foe. This is affirmed in יָגֵן עֲלֵיהֶם in v. 15. Hence they are able to destroy their enemies, and, like devouring lions, to eat their flesh and drink their blood. That this figure lies at the foundation of the horrible picture of וְאָכְלוּ, is evident from Num. 23:24,

which was the passage that Zechariah had in his mind: "Behold a people like the lioness; it rises up, and like the lion does it lift itself up: it lies not down till it devour the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." Hence the object to אָכְלוּ is not the possessions of the heathen, but their flesh. כָּבְשׁוּ אֲבָנֵי קֶלַע does not mean, they tread down (subdue) the enemy with sling-stones (LXX, Vulg., Grot.); for אֲבָנֵי ק' cannot, when considered grammatically, be taken in an instrumental sense, and is rather an *accus. obj.*; but they tread down sling-stones. The sling-stones might be used *per synecdochen* to signify darts, which the enemy hurls at them, and which they tread down as perfectly harmless (Kliefoth). But the comparison of the Israelites to the stones of a crown, in v. 16, leads rather to the conclusion that the sling-stones are to be taken as a figure denoting the enemy, who are trampled under the feet like stones (Hitzig, Hengstenberg). Only we cannot speak of eating sling-stones, as Koehler would interpret the words, overlooking כָּבְשׁוּ, and appealing to the parallel member: they will drink, reel as if from wine, which shows, in his opinion, that it is the sling-stones that are to be eaten. But this shows, on the contrary, that just as there no mention is made of what is to be drunk, so here what is to be eaten is not stated. It is true that wine and sacrificial blood point to the blood of the enemy; but wine and blood are drinkable, whereas sling-stones are not edible. The description of the enemy as sling-stones is to be explained from the figure in 1 Sam. 25:29, to hurl away the soul of the enemy. They drunk (sc., the blood of the enemy) even to intoxication, making a noise, as if intoxicated with wine (כְּמוֹ יַיִן, an abbreviated comparison; cf. Ewald, § 221, *a*, and 282, *e*), and even to overflowing, so that they become full, like the sacrificial bowls in which the blood of the sacrificial animals was caught, and like the corners of the altar, which were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. זְוֵיִת are corners, not the horns of the altar. The sacrificial blood was not sprinkled upon these; they were simply

smear with a little blood applied with the finger, in the case of the expiatory sacrifices. According to the law (Lev. 1:5, 11; 3:2, etc.), the blood was to be swung against the altar. This was done, according to rabbinical tradition (*Mishn. Seb.* v. 4ff., and Rashi on Lev. 1:5), in such a manner, that with two sprinklings all the four sides of the altar were wetted,—a result which could only be ensured by swinging the bowls filled with blood, so as to strike the corners of the altar.

Zechariah 9:16, 17. Through this victory over the world-power Israel will attain to glory. V. 16. *“And Jehovah their God will endow them with salvation in that day, like a flock His people; for stones of a crown are they, sparkling in His land.* V. 17. *For how great is its goodness, and how great its beauty! Corn will make youths to sprout, and new wine maidens.”* הוֹשִׁיעַ does not mean to help or deliver here; for this would affirm much too little, after what has gone before. When Israel has trodden down its foes, it no longer needs deliverance. It denotes the granting of positive salvation, which the explanatory clause that follows also requires. The motive for this is indicated in the clause, “like a flock His people.” Because Israel is His (Jehovah’s) people, the Lord will tend it as a shepherd tends his flock. The blessings which Jehovah bestows upon His people are described by David in Ps. 23. The Lord will do this also, because they (the Israelites) are crown-stones, namely as the chosen people, which Jehovah will make a praise and glory for all nations (Zeph. 3:19, 20). To the predicate אָבְנֵי נֶזֶר the subject הַמָּה may easily be supplied from the context, as for example in מְגִיד in v. 12. To this subject מִתְנוֹסְסוֹת וגו׳ attaches itself. This verb is connected with *nēs*, a banner, in Ps. 60:6, the only other passage in which it occurs; but here it is used in the sense of *nâtsats*, to glitter or sparkle. The meaning, to lift up, which is given by the lexicons, has no foundation, and is quite unsuitable here. For crown-stones do not lift themselves up, but sparkle; and the figure of precious stones, which sparkle upon the land,

denotes the highest possible glory to which Israel can attain. The suffix attached to אֲדָמָתוֹ refers to *Jehovah*, only we must not identify the land of Jehovah with Palestine. The application of this honourable epithet to Israel is justified in v. 17, by an allusion to the excellence and beauty to which it will attain. The suffixes in טוֹבוֹ and יָפִיּוּ cannot refer to *Jehovah*, as Ewald and Hengstenberg suppose, but refer to עַמּוֹ, the people of Jehovah. יָפִי is quite irreconcilable with an allusion to Jehovah, since this word only occurs in connection with men and the Messianic King (Ps. 45:3; Isa. 33:17); and even if it were used of Jehovah, it would still be unsuitable here. For though the vigorous prosperity of the nation is indeed a proof of the goodness of God, it is not a proof of the beauty of God. *Mâh* is an exclamation of Amazement: “how great!” (Ewald, § 330, a). טוֹב, when affirmed of the nation, is not moral goodness, but a good appearance, and is synonymous with יָפִי, beauty, as in Hos. 10:11. This prosperity proceeds from the blessings of grace, which the Lord causes to flow down to His people. Corn and new wine are mentioned as such blessings, for the purpose of individualizing, as indeed they frequently are (e.g., Deut. 33:28; Ps. 72:16), and are distributed rhetorically between the youths and the maidens.

Zechariah 10

Zechariah 10. Complete Redemption of the People of God.—This chapter contains no new promise, but simply a further expansion of the previous section, the condition on which salvation is to be obtained being mentioned in the introduction (vv. 1 and 2); whilst subsequently, more especially from v. 6 onwards, the participation of Ephraim in the salvation in prospect is more elaborately treated of. The question in dispute among the commentators, viz., whether vv. 1 and 2 are to be connected with the previous chapter, so as to form the conclusion, or whether they form the commencement of a new address, or new turn in the address, is to be answered thus: The

prayer for rain (v. 1) is indeed occasioned by the concluding thought in Zech. 9:17, but it is not to be connected with the preceding chapter as though it were an integral part of it, inasmuch as the second hemistich of v. 2 can only be separated with violence from v. 3. The close connection between v. 2b and v. 3 shows that v. 1 commences a new train of thought, for which preparation is made, however, by Zech. 9:17.

Zechariah 10:1. *“Ask ye of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain; Jehovah createth lightnings, and showers of rain will He give them, to every one vegetation in the field. V. 2. For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the soothsayers have seen a lie, and speak dreams of deceit; they comfort in vain: for this they have wandered like a flock, they are oppressed because there is no shepherd.”* The summons to prayer is not a mere turn of the address expressing the readiness of God to give (Hengstenberg), but is seriously meant, as the reason assigned in v. 2 clearly shows. The church of the Lord is to ask of God the blessings which it needs for its prosperity, and not to put its trust in idols, as rebellious Israel has done (Hos. 2:7). The prayer for rain, on which the successful cultivation of the fruits of the ground depends, simply serves to individualize the prayer for the bestowal of the blessings of God, in order to sustain both temporal and spiritual life; just as in Zech. 9:17 the fruitfulness of the land and the flourishing of the nation are simply a concrete expression, for the whole complex of the salvation which the Lord will grant to His people (Kliefoth). This view, which answers to the rhetorical character of the exhortation, is very different from allegory. The time of the latter rain is mentioned, because this was indispensable to the ripening of the corn, whereas elsewhere the early and latter rain are connected together (e.g., Joel 2:23; Deut. 11:13–15). The lightnings are introduced as the harbingers of rain (cf. Jer. 10:13; Ps. 135:7). *Mtar geshem*, rain of the rain-pouring, i.e., copious rain (compare Job 37:6, where the words are transposed). With *lâhem* (to them) the address passes into the third person: to

them, i.e., to every one who asks. עֵשֶׂב is not to be restricted to grass or herb as the food of cattle, as in Deut. 11:15, where it is mentioned in connection with the corn and the fruits of the field; but it includes these, as in Gen. 1:29 and Ps. 104:14, where it is distinguished from *châtsîr*. The exhortation to pray to Jehovah for the blessing needed to ensure prosperity, is supported in v. 2 by an allusion to the worthlessness of the trust in idols, and to the misery which idolatry with its consequences, viz., soothsaying and false prophecy, have brought upon the nation. The *trâphîm* were house-deities and oracular deities, which were worshipped as the givers and protectors of the blessings of earthly prosperity (see at Gen. 31:19). Along with these קוֹסָמִים are mentioned, i.e., the soothsayers, who plunged the nation into misery through their vain and deceitful prophesyings. הַלְמוֹת is not the subject of the sentence, for in that case it would have the article like הַקּוֹסָמִים; but it is the object, and הַקּוֹסָמִים is also the subject to יִנְהַמוּן and יִדְבְּרוּ. “Therefore,” i.e., because Israel had trusted in teraphim and soothsayers, it would have to wander into exile. נָסַע, to break up, applied to the pulling up of the pegs, to take down the tent, involves the idea of wandering, and in this connection, of wandering into exile. Hence the perfect נָסַע, to which the imperfect יֵעָנֶה is suitably appended, because their being oppressed, i.e., the oppression which Israel suffered from the heathen, still continued. The words apply of course to all Israel (Ephraim and Judah); compare Zech. 9:13 with Zech. 10:4, 6. Israel is bowed down because it has no shepherd, i.e., no king, who guards and provides for his people (cf. Num. 27:17; Jer. 23:4), having lost the Davidic monarchy when the kingdom was overthrown.

Zechariah 10:3, 4. To this there is appended in vv. 3ff. the promise that Jehovah will take possession of His flock, and redeem it out of the oppression of the evil shepherds. V. 3. *“My wrath is kindled upon the shepherds, and the*

goats shall I punish; for Jehovah of hosts visits His flock, the house of Judah, and makes it like His state-horse in the war. V. 4. From Him will be corner-stone, from Him the nail, from Him the war-bow; from Him will every ruler go forth at once." When Israel lost its own shepherds, it came under the tyranny of bad shepherds. These were the heathen governors and tyrants. Against these the wrath of Jehovah is kindled, and He will punish them. There is no material difference between רָעִים, shepherds, and עֲתוּדִים, leading goats. 'Attūdīm also signifies rulers, as in Isa. 14:9. The reason assigned why the evil shepherds are to be punished, is that Jehovah visits His flock. The perfect *pâqad* is used prophetically of what God has resolved to do, and will actually carry out; and *pâqad c. acc. pers.* means to visit, i.e., to assume the care of, as distinguished from *pâqad* with 'al pers., to visit in the sense of to punish (see at Zeph. 2:7). The house of Judah only is mentioned in v. 3, not in distinction from Ephraim, however (cf. v. 6), but as the stem and kernel of the covenant nation, with which Ephraim is to be united once more. The care of God for Judah will not be limited to its liberation from the oppression of the bad shepherds; but Jehovah will also make Judah into a victorious people. This is the meaning of the figure "like a state-horse," i.e., a splendid and richly ornamented war-horse, such as a king is accustomed to ride. This figure is not more striking than the description of Judah and Ephraim as a bow and arrow (Zech. 9:13). This equipment of Judah as a warlike power overcoming its foes is described in v. 4, namely in 4a, in figures taken from the firmness and furnishing of a house with everything requisite, and in 4b, etc., in literal words. The verb יָצָא of the fourth clause cannot be taken as the verb belonging to the מְמַנְּוּ in the first three clauses, because יָצָא is neither applicable to *pinnâh* nor to *yâthêd*. We have therefore to supply יָהִי. From (out of) Him will be *pinnâh*, corner, here corner-stone, as in Isa. 28:16, upon which the whole building stands firmly, and will be built securely,—a suitable figure for the

firm, stately foundation which Judah is to receive. To this is added *yâthêd*, the plug. This figure is to be explained from the arrangement of eastern houses, in which the inner walls are provided with a row of large nails or plugs for hanging the house utensils upon. The plug, therefore, is a suitable figure for the supports or upholders of the whole political constitution, and even in Isa. 22:23 was transferred to persons. The war-bow stands synecdochically for weapons of war and the military power. It is a disputed point, however, whether the suffix in *mimmennû* (out of him) refers to *Judah* or *Jehovah*. But the opinion of Hitzig and others, that it refers to Jehovah, is overthrown by the expression יָצָא מִמֶּנּוּ in the last clause. For even if we could say, Judah will receive its firm foundation, its internal fortification, and its military strength from *Jehovah*, the expression, "Every military commander will go out or come forth out of Jehovah," is unheard-of and unscriptural. It is not affirmed in the Old Testament even of the Messiah that He goes forth out of God, although His "goings forth" are from eternity (Mic. 5:1), and He Himself is called *El gibbôr* (Isa. 9:5). Still less can this be affirmed of every ruler (*kol-nōgēs*) of Judah. In this clause, therefore, *mimmennû* must refer to Judah, and consequently it must be taken in the same way in the first three clauses. On מִן יָצָא, see Mic. 5:1. *Nōgēs*, an oppressor or taskmaster, is not applied to a leader or ruler in a good sense even here, any more than in Isa. 3:12 and 60:17 (see the comm. on these passages). The fact that *negus* in Ethiopic is the name given to the king (Koehler), proves nothing in relation to Hebrew usage. The word has the subordinate idea of oppressor, or despotic ruler, in this instance also; but the idea of harshness refers not to the covenant nation, but to its enemies (Hengstenberg), and the words are used in antithesis to Zech. 9:8. Whereas there the promise is given to the nation of Israel that it will not fall under the power of the *nōgēs* any more, it is here assured that it is to attain to the position of a *nōgēs* in relation to its foes (Kliefoth). כָּל-נֹגֵשׁ is strengthened by יָהִי: every

oppressor together, which Judah will require in opposition to its foes.

Zechariah 10:5-7. Thus equipped for battle, Judah will annihilate its foes. V. 5. *“And they will be like heroes, treading street-mire in the battle: and will fight, for Jehovah is with them, and the riders upon horses are put to shame. V. 6. And I shall strengthen the house of Judah, and grant salvation to the house of Joseph, and shall make them dwell; for I have had compassion upon them: and they will be as if I had not rejected them: for I am Jehovah their God, and will hear them. V. 7. And Ephraim will be like a hero, and their heart will rejoice as if with wine: and their children will see it, and rejoice; their heart shall rejoice in Jehovah.”* In v. 5, *bōsīm* is a more precise definition of *kgibbōrīm*, and the house of Judah (v. 3) is the subject of the sentence. They will be like heroes, namely, treading upon mire. *Bōsīm* is the *kal* participle used in an intransitive sense, since the form with *o* only occurs in verbs with an intransitive meaning, like *bōsh*, *lōt*, *qōm*; and *būs* in *kal* is construed in every other case with the accusative of the object: treading upon mire = treading or treading down mire. Consequently the object which they tread down or trample in pieces is expressed by *בְּטִיט הַחוּצוֹת*; and thus the arbitrary completion of the sentence by “everything that opposes them” (C. B. Mich. and Koehler) is set aside as untenable. Now, as “treading upon mire” cannot possibly express merely the firm tread of a courageous man (Hitzig), we must take the dirt of the streets as a figurative expression for the enemy, and the phrase “treading upon street-mire” as a bold figure denoting the trampling down of the enemy in the mire of the streets (Mic. 7:10; 2 Sam. 22:43), analogous to their “treading down sling-stones,” Zech. 9:15. For such heroic conflict will they be fitted by the help of Jehovah, that the enemy will be put to shame before them. The riders of the horses are mentioned for the purpose of individualizing the enemy, because the principal strength of the Asiatic rulers consisted in cavalry (see Dan. 11:40). *הוֹבִישׁ* intransitive, as in Zech. 9:5. This strength for a

victorious conflict will not be confined to Judah, but Ephraim will also share it. The words, “and the house of Ephraim will I endow with salvation,” have been taken by Koehler as signifying “that Jehovah will deliver the house of Ephraim by granting the victory to the house of Judah in conflict with its own foes and those of Ephraim also;” but there is no ground for this. We may see from v. 7, according to which Ephraim will also fight as a hero, as Judah will according to v. 5, that *הוֹשִׁיעַ* does not mean merely to help or deliver, but to grant salvation, as in Zech. 9:16. The circumstance, however, “that in the course of the chapter, at any rate from v. 7 onwards, it is only Ephraim whose deliverance and restoration are spoken of,” proves nothing more than that Ephraim will receive the same salvation as Judah, but not that it will be delivered by the house of Judah. The abnormal form *הוֹשִׁבוּתִים* is regarded by many, who follow Kimchi and Aben Ezra, as a *forma composita* from *הוֹשִׁבָתִים* and *הַשְׁיִבוּתִי*: “I make them dwell, and bring them back.” But this is precluded by the fact that the bringing back would necessarily precede the making to dwell, to say nothing of the circumstance that there is no analogy whatever for such a composition (cf. Jer. 32:37). The form is rather to be explained from a confusion of the verbs *הוֹשִׁבָתִים* and *פָּרַץ*, and is the *hiphil* of *יָשַׁב* for *הוֹשִׁבָתִים* (LXX, Maurer, Hengstenberg; comp. Olshausen, *Grammat.* p. 559), and not a *hiphil* of *שׁוּב*, in which a transition has taken place into the *hiphil* form of the verbs *פָּרַץ* (Ewald, § 196, *b*, Not. 1; Targ., Vulg., Hitzig, and Koehler). For “bringing back” affirms too little here. *הוֹשִׁבָתִים*, “I make them dwell,” corresponds rather to “they shall be as if they had not been cast off,” without needing any further definition, since not only do we meet with *יָשַׁב* without anything else, in the sense of peaceful, happy dwelling (e.g., Mic. 5:3), but here also the manner of dwelling is indicated in the appended clause *בְּאִשֶׁר לֹא־זָנְחוּתִים*, “as before they were cast off” (cf. Ezek. 36:11). *אָעִנָם* is also not to be taken as

referring to the answering of the prayers, which Ephraim addressed to Jehovah out of its distress, out of its imprisonment (Koehler), but is to be taken in a much more general sense, as in Zech. 13:9, Isa. 58:9, and Hos. 2:23. Ephraim, like Judah, will also become a hero, and rejoice as if with wine, i.e., fight joyfully like a hero strengthened with wine (cf. Ps. 78:65, 66). This rejoicing in conflict the sons will see, and exult in consequence; so that it will be a lasting joy.

Zechariah 10:8-10. In order to remove all doubt as to the realization of this promise, the deliverance of Ephraim is described still more minutely in vv. 8-12. V. 8. *"I will hiss to them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they will multiply as they have multiplied. V. 9. And I will sow them among the nations: and in the far-off lands will they remember me; and will live with their sons, and return. V. 10. And I will bring them back out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Asshur, and bring them into the land of Gilead and of Lebanon; and room will not be found for them."* That these verses do not treat of a fresh (second) dispersion of Ephraim, or represent the carrying away as still in the future (Hitzig), is evident from the words themselves, when correctly interpreted. Not only are the enticing and gathering together (v. 8) mentioned before the sowing or dispersing (v. 9), but they are both expressed by similar verbal forms (אֶזְרְעֵם and אֶשְׂרְקָה); and the misinterpretation is thereby precluded, that events occurring at different times are referred to. We must also observe the voluntative form אֶשְׂרְקָה, "I will (not I shall) hiss to them, i.e., entice them" (*shâraq* being used for alluring, as in Isa. 5:26 and 7:18), as well as the absence of a copula. They both show that the intention here is simply to explain with greater clearness what is announced in vv. 6, 7. The perfect פְּדִיתִים is prophetic, like רְחַמְתִּים in v. 6. The further promise, "they will multiply," etc., cannot be taken as referring either merely to the multiplication of Israel in exile (Hengst., Koehler, etc.), or merely to the future multiplication after the gathering together.

According to the position in which the words stand between אֶזְרְעֵם and אֶשְׂרְקָה, they must embrace both the multiplication during the dispersion, and the multiplication after the gathering together. The perfect קָמוּ רַבּוֹ points to the increase which Israel experienced in the olden time under the oppression of Egypt (Ex. 1:7, 12). This increase, which is also promised in Ezek. 36:10, 11, is effected by God's sowing them broadcast among the nations. זָרַע does not mean to scatter, but to sow, to sow broadcast (see at Hos. 2:25). Consequently the reference cannot be to a dispersion of Israel inflicted as a punishment. The sowing denotes the multiplication (cf. Jer. 31:27), and is not to be interpreted, as Neumann and Kliefoth suppose, as signifying that the Ephraimites are to be scattered as seed-corn among the heathen, to spread the knowledge of Jehovah among the nations. This thought is quite foreign to the context; and even in the words, "in far-off lands will they remember me," it is neither expressed nor implied. These words are to be connected with what follows: Because they remember the Lord in far-off lands, they will live, and return with their children. In v. 10a the gathering together and leading back of Israel are more minutely described, and indeed as taking place out of the land of Asshur and out of Egypt. The fact that these two lands are mentioned, upon which modern critics have principally founded their arguments in favour of the origin of this prophecy before the captivity, cannot be explained "from the circumstance that in the time of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser many Ephraimites had fled to Egypt" (Koehler and others); for history knows nothing of this, and the supposition is merely a loophole for escaping from a difficulty. Such passages as Hos. 8:13; 9:3, 6; 11:11, Mic. 7:12, Isa. 11:11; 27:13, furnish no historical evidence of such thing. Even if certain Ephraimites had fled to Egypt, these could not be explained as relating to a return or gathering together of the Ephraimites of Israelites out of Egypt and Assyria, because the announcement presupposes that the Ephraimites had been

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transported to Egypt in quite as large numbers as to Assyria,—a fact which cannot be established either in relation to the times before or to those after the captivity. Egypt, as we have already shown at Hos. 9:3 (cf. 8:13), is rather introduced in all the passages mentioned simply as a type of the land of bondage, on account of its having been the land in which Israel lived in the olden time, under the oppression of the heathen world. And Asshur is introduced in the same way, as the land into which the ten tribes had been afterwards exiled. This typical significance is placed beyond all doubt by v. 1, since the redemption of Israel out of the countries named is there exhibited under the type of the liberation of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt under the guidance of Moses. (Compare also Delitzsch on Isa. 11:11.) The Ephraimites are to return into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; the former representing the territory of the ten tribes in the olden time to the east of the Jordan, the latter that to the west (cf. Mic. 7:14). לֹא יִמְצָא, there is not found for them, sc. the necessary room: equivalent to, it will not be sufficient for them (as in Josh. 17:16).

Zechariah 10:11, 12. V. 11. *“And he goes through the sea of affliction, and smites the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the river dry up; and the pride of Asshur will be cast down, and the staff of Egypt will depart.* V. 12. *And I make them strong in Jehovah; and they will walk in His name, is the saying of Jehovah.”* The subject in v. 11 is Jehovah. He goes, as once He went in the pillar of cloud as the angel of the Lord in the time of Moses, through the sea of affliction. צָרָה, which has been interpreted in very different ways, we take as in apposition to יָם, though not as a permutative, “through the sea, viz., the affliction” (C. B. Mich., Hengst.); but in this sense, “the sea, which caused distress or confinement,” so that the simple reason why צָרָה is not connected with יָם in the construct state, but placed in apposition, is that the sea might not be described as a straitened sea, or sea of anxiety. This apposition points to the fact

which floated before the prophet’s mind, namely, that the Israelites under Moses were so confined by the Red Sea that they thought they were lost (Ex. 14:10ff.). The objection urged by Koehler against this view—namely, that צָרָה as a noun is not used in the sense of local strait or confinement—is proved to be unfounded by Jonah 2:3 and Zeph. 1:15. All the other explanations of *tsârâh* are much more unnatural, being either unsuitable, like the suggestion of Koehler to take it as an exclamation, “O distress!” or grammatically untenable, like the rendering adopted by Maurer and Kliefoth, after the Chaldaean usage, “he splits.” The smiting of the waves in the sea does indeed play upon the division of the waves of the sea when the Israelites passed through the Red Sea (Ex. 14:16, 21; cf. Josh. 3:13, Ps. 77:17; 114:5); but it affirms still more, as the following clause shows, namely, a binding or constraining of the waves, by which they are annihilated, or a drying up of the floods, like הַחֲרִים in Isa. 11:15. Only the floods of the Nile (יְאוּר) are mentioned, because the allusion to the slavery of Israel in Egypt predominates, and the redemption of the Israelites out of all the lands of the nations is represented as bringing out of the slave-house of Egypt. The drying up of the flood-depths of the Nile is therefore a figure denoting the casting down of the imperial power in all its historical forms; Asshur and Egypt being mentioned by name in the last clause answering to the declaration in v. 10, and the tyranny of Asshur being characterized by גִּאוּן, pride, haughtiness (cf. Isa. 10:7ff.), and that of Egypt by the rod of its taskmasters. in v. 12 the promise for Ephraim is brought to a close with the general thought that they will obtain strength in the Lord, and walk in the power of His name. With וְגִבַּרְתִּים the address reverts to its starting-point in v. 6. בִּי יְהוָה stands for בִּי, to point emphatically to the Lord, in whom Israel as the people of God had its strength. Walking in the name of Jehovah is to be taken as in Mic. 4:5, and to be understood not as relating to the

attitude of Israel towards God, or to the “self-attestation of Israel” (Koehler), but to the result, viz., walking in the strength of the Lord. If, in conclusion, we survey the whole promise from Zech. 9:11 onwards, there are two leading thoughts developed in it: (a) That those members of the covenant nation who were still scattered among the heathen should be redeemed out of their misery, and gathered together in the kingdom of the King who was coming for Zion, i.e., of the Messiah; (b) That the Lord would endow all His people with power for the conquest of the heathen. They were both fulfilled, in weak commencements only, in the times immediately following and down to the coming of Christ, by the return of many Jews out of captivity and into the land of the fathers, particularly when Galilee was strongly peopled by Israelites; and also by the protection and care which God bestowed upon the people in the contests between the powers of the world for supremacy in Palestine. The principal fulfilment is of a spiritual kind, and was effected through the gathering of the Jews into the kingdom of Christ, which commenced in the times of the apostles, and will continue till the remnant of Israel is converted to Christ its Saviour.

Zechariah 11

Israel Under the Good Shepherd and the Foolish One

Zechariah 11. In the second half of the “burden” upon the world-power, which is contained in this chapter, the thought indicated in Zech. 10:3—namely, that the wrath of Jehovah is kindled over the shepherds when He visits His flock, the house of Judah—is more elaborately developed, and an announcement is made of the manner in which the Lord visits His people, and rescues it out of the hands of the world-powers who are seeking to destroy it, and then, because it repays His pastoral fidelity with ingratitude, gives it up into the hands of the foolish shepherd, who will destroy it, but who will also fall under judgment himself in consequence. The picture sketched in Zech.

9:8–10, 12, of the future of Israel is thus completed, and enlarged by the description of the judgment accompanying the salvation; and through this addition an abuse of the proclamation of salvation is prevented. But in order to bring out into greater prominence the obverse side of the salvation, there is appended to the announcement of salvation in Zech. 10 the threat of judgment in vv. 1–3, without anything to explain the transition; and only after that is the attitude of the Lord towards His people and the heathen world, out of which the necessity for the judgment sprang, more fully described. Hence this chapter divides itself into three sections: viz., the threat of judgment (vv. 1–3); the description of the good shepherd (vv. 4–14); and the sketch of the foolish shepherd (vv. 15–17).

Zechariah 11:1–3. The Devastation of the Holy Land.—V. 1. *“Open thy gates, O Lebanon, and let fire devour thy cedars! V. 2. Howl, cypress; for the cedar is fallen, for the glory is laid waste! Howl, ye oaks of Bashan; for the inaccessible forest is laid low! V. 3. A loud howling of the shepherds; for their glory is laid waste! A loud roaring of the young lions; for the splendour of Jordan is laid waste!”* That these verses do not form the commencement of a new prophecy, having no connection with the previous one, but that they are simply a new turn given to that prophecy, is evident not only from the omission of any heading or of any indication whatever which could point to the commencement of a fresh word of God, but still more so from the fact that the allusion to Lebanon and Bashan and the thickets of Judah points back unmistakeably to the land of Gilead and of Lebanon (Zech. 10:10), and shows a connection between Zech. 11 and 10, although this retrospect is not decided enough to lay a foundation for the view that vv. 1–3 form a conclusion to the prophecy in Zech. 10, to which their contents by no means apply. For let us interpret the figurative description in these verses in what manner we will, so much at any rate is clear, that they are of a threatening character, and as a threat not only form an antithesis to the announcement of salvation in Zech. 10, but are substantially

connected with the destruction which will overtake the “flock of the slaughter,” and therefore serve as a prelude, as it were, to the judgment announced in vv. 4–7.; The undeniable relation in which Lebanon, Bashan, and the Jordan stand to the districts of Gilead and Lebanon, also gives us a clue to the explanation; since it shows that Lebanon, the northern frontier of the holy land, and Bashan, the northern part of the territory of the Israelites to the east of the Jordan, are synecdochical terms, denoting the holy land itself regarded in its two halves, and therefore that the cedars, cypresses, and oaks in these portions of the land cannot be figurative representations of heathen rulers (Targ., Eph. Syr., Kimchi, etc.); but if powerful men and tyrants are to be understood at all by these terms, the allusion can only be to the rulers and great men of the nation of Israel (Hitzig, Maurer, Hengst., Ewald, etc.). But this allegorical interpretation of the cedars, cypresses, and oaks, however old and widely spread it may be, is not so indisputable as that we could say with Kliefoth: “The words themselves do not allow of our finding an announcement of the devastation of the holy land therein.” For even if the words themselves affirm nothing more than “that the very existence of the cedars, oaks, shepherds, lions, is in danger; and that if these should fall, Lebanon will give way to the fire, the forest of Bashan will fall, the thicket of Jordan be laid waste;” yet through the destruction of the cedars, oaks, etc., the soil on which these trees grow is also devastated and laid waste. The picture is a dramatic one. Instead of the devastation of Lebanon being announced, it is summoned to open its gates, that the fire may be able to enter in and devour its cedars. The cypresses, which hold the second place among the celebrated woods of Lebanon, are then called upon to howl over the fall of the cedars, not so much from sympathy as because the same fate is awaiting them.

The words **אֲשֶׁר אֲדִירָם שְׂדָדוּ** contain a second explanatory clause. **אֲשֶׁר** is a conjunction (for,

because), as in Gen. 30:18; 31:49. *'Addīrīm* are not the glorious or lofty ones among the people (Hengst., Kliefoth), but the glorious ones among the things spoken of in the context,—namely, the noble trees, the cedars and cypresses. The oaks of Bashan are also called upon to howl, because they too will fall like “the inaccessible forest,” i.e., the cedar forest of Lebanon. The *keri habbâtsîr* is a needless correction, because the article does not compel us to take the word as a substantive. If the adjective is really a participle, the article is generally attached to it alone, and omitted from the noun (cf. Ges. § 111, 2, a). **קוֹל יִלְלָהּ**, voice of howling, equivalent to a loud howling. The shepherds howl, because *'addartâm*, their glory, is laid waste. We are not to understand by this their flock, but their pasture, as the parallel member **גְּאוֹן הַיַּרְדֵּן** and the parallel passage Jer. 25:26 show, where the shepherds howl, because their pasture is destroyed. What the pasture, i.e., the good pasture ground of the land of Bashan, is to the shepherds, that is the pride of Jordan to the young lions,—namely, the thicket and reeds which grew so luxuriantly on the banks of the Jordan, and afforded so safe and convenient a lair for lions (cf. Jer. 12:5; 49:9; 50:44). V. 3 announces in distinct terms a devastation of the soil or land. It follows from this that the cedars, cypresses, and oaks are not figures representing earthly rulers. No conclusive arguments can be adduced in support of such an allegory. It is true that in Isa. 10:34 the powerful army of Assyria is compared to Lebanon; and in Jer. 22:6 the head of the cedar forest is a symbol of the royal house of Judah; and that in Jer. 22:23 it is used as a figurative term for Jerusalem (see at Hab. 2:17); but neither men generally, nor individual earthly rulers in particular, are represented as cedars or oaks. The cedars and cypresses of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan are simply figures denoting what is lofty, glorious, and powerful in the world of nature and humanity, and are only to be referred to persons so far as their lofty position in the state is concerned. Consequently we get the following as the thought of these

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verses: The land of Israel, with all its powerful and glorious creatures, is to become desolate. Now, inasmuch as the desolation of a land also involves the desolation of the people living in the land, and of its institutions, the destruction of the cedars, cypresses, etc., does include the destruction of everything lofty and exalted in the nation and kingdom; so that in this sense the devastation of Lebanon is a figurative representation of the destruction of the Israelitish kingdom, or of the dissolution of the political existence of the ancient covenant nation. This judgment was executed upon the land and people of Israel by the imperial power of Rome. This historical reference is evident from the description which follows of the facts by which this catastrophe is brought to pass.

Zechariah 11:4–14. This section contains a symbolical act. By the command of Jehovah the prophet assumes the office of a shepherd over the flock, and feeds it, until he is compelled by its ingratitude to break his shepherd's staff, and give up the flock to destruction. This symbolical act is not a poetical fiction, but is to be regarded in strict accordance with the words, as an internal occurrence of a visionary character and of prophetic importance, through which the faithful care of the Lord for His people is symbolized and exhibited. V. 4. *"Thus said Jehovah my God: Feed the slaughtering-flock; V. 5. whose purchasers slay them, and bear no blame, and their sellers say, Blessed be Jehovah! I am getting rich, and their shepherds spare them not. V. 6. For I shall no more spare the inhabitants of the earth, is the saying of Jehovah; and behold I cause the men to fall into one another's hands, and into the king's hand; and they will smite the land, and I shall not deliver out of their hand."* The person who receives the commission to feed the flock is the prophet. This is apparent, both from the expression "my God" (v. 5, comp. with vv. 7ff.), and also from v. 15, according to which he is to take the instruments of a foolish shepherd. This latter verse also shows clearly enough, that the prophet does not come forward here as performing these acts in his own person, but that he represents another, who does things in

vv. 8, 12, and 13, which in truth neither Zechariah nor any other prophet ever did, but only God through His Son, and that in v. 10 He is identified with God, inasmuch as here the person who breaks the staff is the prophet, and the person who has made the covenant with the nations is God. These statements are irreconcilable, both with Hofmann's assumption, that in this symbolical transaction Zechariah represents the prophetic office, and with that of Koehler, that he represents the mediatorial office. For apart from the fact that such abstract notions are foreign to the prophet's announcement, these assumptions are overthrown by the fact that neither the prophetic office nor the mediatorial office can be identified with God, and also that the work which the prophet carries out in what follows was not accomplished through the prophetic office. "The destruction of the three shepherds, or world-powers (v. 8), is not effected through the prophetic word or office; and the fourth shepherd (v. 15) is not instituted through the prophetic office and word" (Kliefoth). The shepherd depicted by the prophet can only be Jehovah Himself, or the angel of Jehovah, who is equal in nature to Himself, i.e., the Messiah. But since the angel of Jehovah, who appears in the visions, is not mentioned in our oracle, and as the coming of the Messiah is also announced elsewhere as the coming of Jehovah to His people, we shall have in this instance also to understand Jehovah Himself by the shepherd represented in the prophet. He visits His flock, as it is stated in Zech. 10; 3 and Ezek. 34:11, 12, and assumes the care of them. The distinction between the prophet and Jehovah cannot be adduced as an argument against this; for it really belongs to the symbolical representation of the matter, according to which God commissions the prophet to do what He Himself intends to do, and will surely accomplish. The more precise definition of what is here done depends upon the answer to be given to the question, Who are the slaughtering flock, which the prophet undertakes to feed? Does it denote the whole of the human race, as Hofmann supposes; or the

nation of Israel, as is assumed by the majority of commentators? צֹאן הַהֲרָגָה, flock of slaughtering, is an expression that may be applied either to a flock that is being slaughtered, or to one that is destined to be slaughtered in the future. In support of the latter sense, Kliefoth argues that so long as the sheep are being fed, they cannot have been already slaughtered, or be even in process of slaughtering, and that v. 6 expressly states, that the men who are intended by the flock of slaughtering will be slaughtered in future when the time of sparing is over, or be treated in the manner described in v. 5. But the first of these arguments proves nothing at all, inasmuch as, although feeding is of course not equivalent to slaughtering, a flock that is being slaughtered by its owners might be transferred to another shepherd to be fed, so as to rescue it from the caprice of its masters. The second argument rests upon the erroneous assumption that יִשְׁבִי הָאָרֶץ in v. 6 is identical with the slaughtering flock. The epithet הַהֲרָגָה, i.e., lit., flock of strangling—as *hârag* does not mean to slay, but to strangle—is explained in v. 5. The flock is so called, because its present masters are strangling it, without bearing guilt, to sell it for the purpose of enriching themselves, and its shepherds treat it in an unsparing manner; and v. 6 does not give the reason why the flock is called the flock of strangling or of slaughtering (as Kliefoth supposes), but the reason why it is given up by Jehovah to the prophet to feed. לֹא יִאָשְׁמוּ does not affirm that those who are strangling it do not think themselves to blame—this is expressed in a different manner (cf. Jer. 50:7): nor that they do not actually incur guilt in consequence, or do not repent of it; for Jehovah transfers the flock to the prophet to feed, because He does not wish its possessors to go on strangling it, and אָשָׁם never has the meaning, to repent. לֹא יִאָשְׁמוּ refers rather to the fact that these men have hitherto gone unpunished, that they still continue to prosper. So that *'âshēm* means to bear or

expiate the guilt, as in Hos. 5:15; 14:1 (Ges., Hitzig, Ewald, etc.).

What follows also agrees with this,—namely, that the sellers have only their own advantage in view, and thank God that they have thereby become rich. The singular יֵאֱמַר is used distributively: every one of them says so. וְאֵעָשֶׂר, a syncopated form for וְאֵעָשֶׂר (Ewald, § § 73, b), and וְ expressing the consequence, that I enrich myself (cf. Ewald, § 235, b). רֵעֵיהֶם are the former shepherds. The imperfects are not futures, but express the manner in which the flock was accustomed to be treated at the time when the prophet undertook to feed it. Jehovah will put an end to this capricious treatment of the flock, by commanding the prophet to feed it. The reason for this He assigns in v. 6: For I shall not spare the inhabitants of the earth any longer. יִשְׁבִי הָאָרֶץ cannot be the inhabitants of the land, i.e., those who are described as the “flock of slaughtering” in v. 4; for in that case “feeding” would be equivalent to slaughtering, or making ready for slaughtering. But although a flock is eventually destined for slaughtering, it is not fed for this purpose only, but generally to yield profit to its owner. Moreover, the figure of feeding is never used in the Scriptures in the sense of making ready for destruction, but always denotes fostering and affectionate care for the preservation of anything; and in the case before us, the shepherd feeds the flock entrusted to him, by slaying the three bad shepherds; and it is not till the flock has become weary of his tending that he breaks the shepherd’s staves, and lays down his pastoral office, to give them up to destruction. Consequently the יִשְׁבִי הָאָרֶץ are different from צֹאן הַהֲרָגָה, and are those in the midst of whom the flock is living, or in whose possession and power it is. They cannot be the inhabitants of a land, however, but since they have kings (in the plural), as the expression “every one into the hand of his king” clearly shows, the inhabitants of the earth, or the world-powers; from which it also follows that the “flock of

slaughtering” is not the human race, but the people of Israel, as we may clearly see from what follows, especially from vv. 11–14. Israel was given up by Jehovah into the hands of the nations of the world, or the imperial powers, to punish it for its sin. But as these nations abused the power entrusted to them, and sought utterly to destroy the nation of God, which they ought only to have chastised, the Lord takes charge of His people as their shepherd, because He will no longer spare the nations of the world, i.e., will not any longer let them deal with His people at pleasure, without being punished. The termination of the sparing will show itself in the fact that God causes the nations to destroy themselves by civil wars, and to be smitten by tyrannical kings. *הַמְצִיא בְיַד רַ*, to cause to fall into the hand of another, i.e., to deliver up to his power (cf. 2 Sam. 3:8). *הַאֲדָם* is the human race; and *מַלְכוֹ*, the king of each, is the king to whom each is subject. The subject of *כְּתָתוּ* is *רַעֲוֵהוּ* and *מַלְכוֹ*, the men and the kings who tyrannize over the others. These smite them in pieces, i.e., devastate the earth by civil war and tyranny, without any interposition on the part of God to rescue the inhabitants of the earth, or nations beyond the limits of Israel, out of their hand, or to put any restraint upon tyranny and self-destruction.

Zechariah 11:7, 8a. From v. 7 onwards the feeding of the flock is described. V. 7. *“And I fed the slaughtering flock, therewith the wretched ones of the sheep, and took to myself two staves: the one I called Favour, the other I called Bands; and so I fed the flock. V. 8a. And I destroyed three of the shepherds in one month.”* The difficult expression *לָכַן*, of which very different renderings have been given (lit., with the so-being), is evidently used here in the same sense as in Isa. 26:14; 61:7, Jer. 2:33, etc., so as to introduce what occurred *eo ipso* along with the other event which took place. When the shepherd fed the slaughtering flock, he thereby, or at the same time, fed the wretched ones of the sheep. *עֲנֵי הַצֹּאֵן*, not the most wretched of the sheep, but the wretched ones among the

sheep, like *צִעִירֵי הַצֹּאֵן* in Jer. 49:20; 50:45, the small, weak sheep. *עֲנֵי הַצֹּאֵן* therefore form one portion of the *הַרְגָה*, as Hofmann and Kliefoth have correctly explained; whereas, if they were identical, the whole of the appended clause would be very tautological, since the thought that the flock was in a miserable state was already expressed clearly enough in the predicate *הַרְגָה*, and the explanation of it in v. 5. This view is confirmed by v. 11, where *עֲנֵי הַצֹּאֵן* is generally admitted to be simply one portion of the flock. To feed the flock, the prophet takes two shepherds’ staves, to which he gives names, intended to point to the blessings which the flock receives through his pastoral activity. The fact that he takes two staves does not arise from the circumstance that the flock consists of two portions, and cannot be understood as signifying that he feeds one portion of the flock with the one staff, and the other portion with the other. According to v. 7, he feeds the whole flock with the first staff; and the destruction to which, according to v. 9, it is to be given up when he relinquishes his office, is only made fully apparent when the two staves are broken. The prophet takes two staves for the simple purpose of setting forth the double kind of salvation which is bestowed upon the nation through the care of the good shepherd. The first staff he calls *נֶעַם*, i.e., loveliness, and also favour (cf. Ps. 90:17, *נֶעַם יְהוָה*). It is in the latter sense that the word is used here; for the shepherd’s staff shows what Jehovah will thereby bestow upon His people. The second staff he calls *חֹבְלִים*, which is in any case a *kal* participle of *חָבַל*. Of the two certain meanings which this verb has in the *kal*, viz., to bind (hence *chebhel*, a cord or rope) and to ill-treat (cf. Job 34:31), the second, upon which the rendering staff-woe is founded, does not suit the explanation which is given in v. 14 of the breaking of this staff. The first is the only suitable one, viz., the binding ones, equivalent to the bandage or connection. Through the staff *nō’am* (Favour), the favour of God, which protects it from being injured by the

heathen nations, is granted to the flock (v. 10); and through the staff *chōbhlīm* the wretched sheep receive the blessing of fraternal unity or binding (v. 14). The repetition of the words אָתְּהִצֵּא וְאָרְעָה אֶת־הַצֹּאֵן (end of v. 7) expresses the idea that the feeding is effected with both staves. The first thing which the shepherd appointed by God does for the flock is, according to v. 8, to destroy three shepherds. הַכְּהִיד, the *hiphil* of כָּחַד, signifies ἀφανίζειν, to annihilate, to destroy (as in Ex. 23:23).

אֶת־שְׁלֹשֶׁת הָרֹעִים may be rendered, the three shepherds (τοὺς τρεῖς ποιμένας, LXX), or three of the shepherds, so that the article only refers to the genitive, as in Ex. 26:3, 9, Josh. 17:11, 1 Sam. 20:20, Isa. 30:26, and as is also frequently the case when two nouns are connected together in the construct state (see Ges. § 111, Anm.). We agree with Koehler in regarding the latter as the only admissible rendering here, because in what precedes shepherds only have been spoken of, and not any definite number of them. The shepherds, of whom three are destroyed, are those who strangled the flock according to v. 5, and who are therefore destroyed in order to liberate the flock from their tyranny. But who are these three shepherds? It was a very widespread and ancient opinion, and one which we meet with in Theodoret, Cyril, and Jerome, that the three classes of Jewish rulers are intended,—namely, princes (or kings), priests, and prophets. But apart from the fact that in the times after the captivity, to which our prophecy refers, prophesying and the prophetic office were extinct, and that in the vision in Zech. 4:14 Zechariah only mentions two classes in the covenant nation who were represented by the prince Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua; apart, I say, from this, such a view is irreconcilable with the words themselves, inasmuch as it requires us to dilute the destruction into a deposition from office, or, strictly speaking, into a counteraction of their influence upon the people; and this is quite sufficient to overthrow it. What Hengstenberg says in vindication of it—namely, that “an

actual extermination cannot be intended, because the shepherds appear immediately afterwards as still in existence”—is founded upon a false interpretation of the second half of the verse. So much is unquestionably correct, that we have not to think of the extermination or slaying of three particular individuals, and that not so much because it cannot be shown that three rulers or heads of the nation were ever destroyed in the space of a month, either in the times before the captivity or in those which followed, as because the persons occurring in this vision are not individuals, but classes of men. As the רֹעִים mentioned in v. 5 as not sparing the flock are to be understood as signifying heathen rulers, so here the three shepherds are heathen liege-lords of the covenant nation. Moreover, as it is unanimously acknowledged by modern commentators that the definite number does not stand for an indefinite plurality, it is natural to think of the three imperial rulers into whose power Israel fell, that is to say, not of three rulers of one empire, but of the rulers of the three empires. The statement as to time, “in one month,” which does not affirm that the three were shepherds within one month, as Hitzig supposes, but that the three shepherds were destroyed in one month, may easily be reconciled with this, if we only observe that, in a symbolical transaction, even the distinctions of time are intended to be interpreted symbolically. There can be no doubt whatever that “a month” signifies a comparatively brief space of time. At the same time, it is equally impossible to deny that the assumption that “in a month” is but another way of saying in a very short time, is not satisfactory, inasmuch as it would have been better to say “in a week,” if this had been the meaning; and, on the other hand, a year would not have been a long time for the extermination of three shepherds. Nor can Hofmann’s view be sustained,—namely, that the one month (= 30 days) is to be interpreted on the basis of Dan. 9:24, as a prophetic period of $30 \times 7 = 120$ years, and that this definition of the time refers to the fact that the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Macedonian empires were destroyed

within a period of 210 years. For there is no tenable ground for calculating the days of a month according to sabbatical periods, since there is no connection between the *yerach* of this verse and the שָׁבָעִים of Daniel, to say nothing of the fact that the time which intervened between the conquest of Babylon and the death of Alexander the Great was not 210 years, but 215. The only way in which the expression “in one month” can be interpreted symbolically is that proposed by Kliefoth and Koehler,—namely, by dividing the month as a period of thirty days into three times ten days according to the number of the shepherds, and taking each ten days as the time employed in the destruction of a shepherd. Ten is the number of the completion or the perfection of any earthly act or occurrence. If, therefore, each shepherd was destroyed in ten days, and the destruction of the three was executed in a month, i.e., within a space of three times ten days following one another, the fact is indicated, on the one hand, that the destruction of each of these shepherds followed directly upon that of the other; and, on the other hand, that this took place after the full time allotted for his rule had passed away. The reason why the prophet does not say three times ten days, nor even thirty days, but connects the thirty days together into a month, is that he wishes not only to indicate that the time allotted for the duration of the three imperial monarchies is a brief one, but also to exhibit the unwearied activity of the shepherd, which is done more clearly by the expression “one month” than by “thirty days.”

Zechariah 11:8–11. The description of the shepherd’s activity is followed, from v. 8*b* onwards, by a description of the attitude which the flock assumed in relation to the service performed on its behalf. V. 8*b*. “*And my soul became impatient over them, and their soul also became weary of me.*” V. 9. “*Then I said, I will not feed you any more; what dieth may die, and what perisheth may perish; and those which remain may devour one another’s flesh.*” V. 10. “*And I took my staff Favour, and broke it in pieces, to destroy*

my covenant which I had made with all nations. V. 11. “*And it was destroyed in that day; and so the wretched of the sheep, which gave heed to me, perceived that it was the word of Jehovah.*” The way in which v. 8*a* and v. 8*b* are connected in the Masoretic text, has led the earlier commentators, and even Hengstenberg, Ebrard, and Kliefoth, to take the statement in v. 8*b* as also referring to the shepherds. But this is grammatically impossible, because the imperfect *c. Vav. sonec.* וְתִקְצֹר in this connection, in which the same verbal forms both before and after express the sequence both of time and thought, cannot be used in the sense of the pluperfect. And this is the sense in which it must be taken, if the words referred to the shepherds, because the prophet’s becoming impatient with the shepherds, and the shepherds’ dislike to the prophet, must of necessity have preceded the destruction of the shepherds. Again, it is evident from v. 9, as even Hitzig admits, that the prophet “did not become disgusted with the three shepherds, but with his flock, which he resolved in his displeasure to leave to its fate.” As the suffix אֶתְכֶם in v. 9 is taken by all the commentators (except Kliefoth) as referring to the flock, the suffixes בָּהֶם and נִפְשָׁם in v. 8 must also point back to the flock (וְהַצֹּאֵן, v. 7). קִצְרָה נִפְשָׁה, to become impatient, as in Num. 21:4. בָּחַל, which only occurs again in Prov. 20:21 in the sense of the Arabic *bchl*, to be covetous, is used here in the sense of the Syriac, to experience vexation or disgust. In consequence of the experience which the shepherd of the Lord had had, according to v. 8*b*, he resolves to give up the feeding of the flock, and relinquish it to its fate, which is described in v. 9*b* as that of perishing and destroying one another. The participles מִתָּה, נִבְחָדָה, and נִשְׁאָרוֹת are present participles, that which dies is destroyed (perishes) and remains; and the imperfects תָּמוּת, תִּבְחַד, and תִּאכְלֶנָּה are not jussive, as the form תָּמוּת clearly proves, but are expressive of that which can be or may happen (Ewald, § 136, *d, b*).

As a sign of this, the shepherd breaks one staff in pieces, viz., the *nō'am*, to intimate that the good which the flock has hitherto received through this staff will be henceforth withdrawn from it; that is to say, that the covenant which God has made with all nations is to be repealed or destroyed. This covenant is not the covenant made with Noah as the progenitor of all men after the flood (Kliefoth), nor a relation entered into by Jehovah with all the nationalities under which each nationality prospered, inasmuch as the shepherd continued again and again to remove its flock-destroying shepherds out of the way (Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, p. 607). For in the covenant with Noah, although the continuance of this earth was promised, and the assurance given that there should be no repetition of a flood to destroy all living things, there was no guarantee of protection from death or destruction, or from civil wars; and history has no record of any covenant made by Jehovah with the nationalities, which secured to the nations prosperity on the one hand, or deliverance from oppressors on the other. The covenant made by God with all nations refers, according to the context of this passage, to a treaty made with them by God in favour of His flock the nation of Israel, and is analogous to the treaty made by God with the beasts, according to Hos. 2:20, that they should not injure His people, and the treaty made with the stones and the beasts of the field (Job 5:23, cf. Ezek. 34:25). This covenant consisted in the fact that God imposed upon the nations of the earth the obligation not to hurt Israel or destroy it, and was one consequence of the favour of Jehovah towards His people. Through the abrogation of this covenant Israel is delivered up to the nations, that they may be able to deal with Israel again in the manner depicted in v. 5. It is true that Israel is not thereby delivered up at once or immediately to that self-immolation which is threatened in v. 9, nor is this threat carried into effect through the breaking in pieces of one staff, but is only to be fully realized when the second staff is broken, whereby the shepherd entirely relinquishes the feeding of the flock. So long as the shepherd

continues to feed the flock with the other staff, so long will utter destruction be averted from it, although by the breaking of the staff Favour, protection against the nations of the world is withdrawn from it. V. 11. From the abrogation of this covenant the wretched among the sheep perceived that this was Jehovah's word. כֵּן, so, i.e., in consequence of this. The wretched sheep are characterized as הַשְּׂמֵרִים אֵתִי, "those which give heed to me." אֵתִי refers to the prophet, who acts in the name of God, and therefore really to the act of God Himself, What is affirmed does not apply to one portion, but to all, וְעַנְיֵי הַצֹּאן, and proves that we are to understand by these the members of the covenant nation who give heed to the word of God. What these godly men recognised as the word of Jehovah, is evident from the context, viz., not merely the threat expressed in v. 9, and embodied in the breaking of the staff Favour, but generally speaking the whole of the prophet's symbolical actions, including both the feeding of the flock with the staves, and the breaking of the one staff. The two together were an embodied word of Jehovah; and the fact that it was so was discerned, i.e., discovered by the righteous, from the effect produced upon Israel by the breaking of the staff Favour, i.e., from the consequences of the removal of the obligation imposed upon the heathen nations to do no hurt to Israel.

Zechariah 11:12-14. With the breaking of the staff Favour, the shepherd of the Lord has indeed withdrawn one side of his pastoral care from the flock that he had to feed, but his connection with it is not yet entirely dissolved. This takes place first of all in vv. 12-14, when the flock rewards him for his service with base ingratitude. V. 12. *"And I said to them, If it seem good to you, give me my wages; but if not, let it alone: and they weighed me as wages thirty silverlings.* V. 13. *Then Jehovah said to me, Throw it to the potter, the splendid price at which I am valued by them; and so I took the thirty silverlings, and threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter.* V. 14. *And I broke my*

second staff Bands, to destroy the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.” אֶלֵיהֶם (to them), so far as the grammatical construction is concerned, might be addressed to the wretched among the sheep, inasmuch as they were mentioned last. But when we bear in mind that the shepherd began to feed not only the wretched of the sheep, but the whole flock, and that he did not give up any one portion of the flock by breaking the staff Favour, we are forced to the conclusion that the words are addressed to the whole flock, and that the demand for wages is only intended to give the flock an opportunity for explaining whether it is willing to acknowledge his feeding, and appreciate it rightly. The fact that the prophet asks for wages from the sheep may be explained very simply from the fact that the sheep represent men. The demand for wages is not to be understood as implying that the shepherd intended to lay down his office as soon as he had been paid for his service; for in that case he would have asked for the wages before breaking the first staff. But as he does not ask for it till afterwards, and leaves it to the sheep to say whether they are willing to give it or not (“if it seem good to you”), this demand cannot have any other object than to call upon the sheep to declare whether they acknowledge his service, and desire it to be continued. By the wages the commentators have very properly understood repentance and faith, or piety of heart, humble obedience, and heartfelt, grateful love. These are the only wages with which man can discharge his debt to God. They weighed him now as wages thirty shekels of silver (on the omission of *sheqel* or *kesepeh*, see Ges. § 120, 4 Anm. 2). “Thirty,”—not to reward him for the one month, or for thirty days—that is to say, to give him a shekel a day for his service (Hofm., Klief.): for, in the first place, it is not stated in v. 8 that he did not feed them longer than a month; and secondly, a shekel was not such very small wages for a day’s work, as the wages actually paid are represented as being in v. 13. They rather pay him thirty shekels, with an allusion to the fact that this sum was the compensation for a slave that had been killed

(Ex. 21:32), so that it was the price at which a bond-slave could be purchased (see at Hos. 3:2). By paying thirty shekels, they therefore give him to understand that they did not estimate his service higher than the labour of a purchased slave. To offer such wages was in fact “more offensive than a direct refusal” (Hengstenberg). Jehovah therefore describes the wages ironically as “a splendid value that has been set upon me.”

As the prophet fed the flock in the name of Jehovah, Jehovah regards the wages paid to His shepherd as paid to Himself, as the value set upon His personal work on behalf of the nation, and commands the prophet to throw this miserable sum to the potter. But the verb *hishlīkh* (throw) and the contemptuous expression used in relation to the sum paid down, prove unmistakably that the words “throw to the potter” denote the actual casting away of the money. And this alone is sufficient to show that the view founded upon the last clause of the verse, “I threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter,” viz., that *hayyōtsēr* signifies the temple treasury, and that *yōtsēr* is a secondary form or a copyist’s error for אוֹצֵר, is simply a mistaken attempt to solve the real difficulty. God could not possibly say to the prophet, They wages paid for my service are indeed a miserable amount, yet put it in the temple treasury, for it is at any rate better than nothing. The phrase “throw to the potter” (for the use of *hishlīkh* with *‘el pers.* compare 1 Kings 19:19) is apparently a proverbial expression for contemptuous treatment (= to the knacker), although we have no means of tracing the origin of the phrase satisfactorily. Hengstenberg’s assumption, that “to the potter” is the same as to an unclean place, is founded upon the assumption that the potter who worked for the temple had his workshop in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which, having been formerly the scene of the abominable worship of Moloch, was regarded with abhorrence as an unclean place after its defilement by Josiah (2 Kings 23:10), and served as the slaughter-house for the city. But it by no means follows

from Jer. 18:2 and 19:2, that this potter dwelt in the valley of Ben-Hinnom; whereas Jer. 19:1 and 2 lead rather to the opposite conclusion. If, for example, God there says to Jeremiah, "Go and buy a pitcher of the potter (v. 1), and go out into the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which lies in front of the potter's gate" (v. 2), it follows pretty clearly from these words that the pottery itself stood within the city gate. But even if the potter had had his workshop in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which was regarded as unclean, he would not have become unclean himself in consequence, so that men could say "to the potter," just as we should say "*zum Schinder*" (to the knacker); and if he had been looked upon as unclean in this way, he could not possibly have worked for the temple, or supplied the cooking utensils for use in the service of God—namely, for boiling the holy sacrificial flesh. The attempts at an explanation made by Grotius and Hofmann are equally unsatisfactory. The former supposes that throwing anything before the potter was equivalent to throwing it upon the heap of potsherds; the latter, that it was equivalent to throwing it into the dirt. But the potter had not to do with potsherds only, and potter's clay is not street mire. The explanation given by Koehler is more satisfactory; namely, that the meaning is, "The amount is just large enough to pay a potter for the pitchers and pots that have been received from him, and which are thought of so little value, that men easily comfort themselves when one or the other is broken." But this does not do justice to *hishlīkh* involves the idea of contempt, and earthen pots were things of insignificant worth. The execution of the command, "I threw it (*'ōthō*, the wages paid me) into the house of Jehovah to the potter," cannot be understood as signifying "into the house of Jehovah, that it might be taken thence to the potter" (Hengstenberg). If this were the meaning, it should have been expressed more clearly. As the words read, they can only be understood as signifying that the potter was in the house of Jehovah when the money was thrown to him; that he had either some work to do there, or that he had come there to bring

some earthenware for the temple kitchens (cf. 14:20). This circumstance is not doubt a significant one; but the meaning is not merely to show that it was as the servant of the Lord, or in the name and by the command of Jehovah, that the prophet did this, instead of keeping the money (Koehler); for Zechariah could have expressed this in two or three words in a much simpler and clearer manner. The house of Jehovah came into consideration here rather as the place where the people appeared in the presence of their God, either to receive or to solicit the blessings of the covenant from Him. What took place in the temple, was done before the face of God, that God might call His people to account for it.

Zechariah 11:14. In consequence of this shameful payment for his service, the shepherd of the Lord breaks his second staff, as a sign that he will no longer feed the ungrateful nation, and but leave it to its fate. The breaking of this staff is interpreted, in accordance with its name, as breaking or destroying the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. With these words, which are chosen with reference to the former division of the nation into two hostile kingdoms, the dissolution of the fraternal unity of the nation is depicted, and the breaking up of the nation into parties opposing and destroying one another is represented as the result of a divine decree. Hofmann, Ebrard (*Offenbarung Johannis*), and Kliefoth have erroneously supposed that this relates to the division of the covenant nation into two parties, one of which, answering to the earlier Judah, would receive Christ, and remain the people of God; whilst the other, answering to the Ephraim or Israel of the times after Solomon, would reject Christ, and therefore be exposed to hardening and judgment. According to the evident meaning of the symbolical representation, the whole flock paid the good shepherd wages, which were tantamount to a rejection of his pastoral care, and was therefore given up by him; so that by falling into parties it destroyed itself, and, as the shepherd tells it in v. 9, one devoured the flesh of the other. This is not at variance with the fact that by this self-

destroying process they did not all perish, but that the miserable ones among the sheep who gave heed to the Lord, i.e., discerned their Saviour in the shepherd, and accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah, were saved. This is simply passed over in our description, which treats of the fate of the whole nation as such, as for example in Rom. 9:31; 11:11-15, because the number of these believers formed a vanishing minority in comparison with the whole nation. The breaking up of the nation into parties manifested itself, however, in a terrible manner soon after the rejection of Christ, and accelerated its ruin in the Roman war.

There is this difference, however, in the interpretation which has been given to this symbolical prophecy, so far as the historical allusion or fulfilment is concerned, by expositors who believe in revelation, and very properly understand it as referring to the times of the second temple: namely, that some regard it as setting forth the whole of the conduct of God towards the covenant nation under the second temple; whilst others take it to be merely a symbol of one single attempt to save the nation when on the verge of ruin, namely, that of the pastoral office of Christ.

Hengstenberg, with many of the older commentators, has decided in favour of the latter view. But all that he adduces in proof of the exclusive correctness of this explanation does not touch the fact itself, but simply answers weak arguments by which the first view has been defended by its earlier supporters; whilst the main argument which he draws from v. 8, to prove that the symbolical action of the prophet sets forth one single act of pastoral fidelity on the part of the Lord, to be accomplished in a comparatively brief space of time, rests upon a false interpretation of the verse in question. By the three shepherds, which the shepherd of Jehovah destroyed in a month, we are to understand, as we have shown at v. 8, not the three classes of Jewish rulers, but the three imperial rulers, in whose power Israel continued from the times of the captivity to the time of Christ. But the

supposition that this section refers exclusively to the work of Christ for the salvation of Israel during His life upon earth, is quite irreconcilable with this. We cannot therefore come to any other conclusion than that the first view, which has been defended by Calvin and others, and in the most recent times by Hofmann, Kliefoth, and Koehler, is the correct one, though we need not therefore assume with Calvin that the prophet "represents in his own person all the shepherds, by whose hand God ruled the people;" or discern, as Hofmann does, in the shepherd of the Lord merely a personification of the prophetic order; or, according to the form in which Koehler expresses the same view, a representation of the mediatorial work in the plan of salvation, of which Daniel was the first representative, and which was afterwards exhibited on the one hand by Haggai and Zechariah, and on the other hand by Zerubbabel and his successors, as the civil rulers of Israel, and by Joshua and those priests who resumed the duties of their office along with him. For the extermination or overthrow of the three imperial rulers or imperial powers was no more effected or carried out by the prophets named, than by the civil rulers and priesthood of Israel. The destruction was effected by Jehovah without the intervention of either the prophets, the priest, or the civil authorities of the Jews; and what Jehovah accomplished in this respect as the Shepherd of His people, was wrought by Him in that form of revelation by which He prepared the way for His coming to His people in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, namely as the Angel of Jehovah, although this form is not more precisely indicated in the symbolical action described in the chapter before us. In that action the shepherd, to whom thirty silverlings are weighed out as his wages, is of far from being regarded as distinct from Jehovah, that Jehovah Himself speaks of these wages as the price at which He was valued by the people; and it is only from the gospel history that we learn that it was not Jehovah the superterrestrial God, but the Son of God, who became incarnate in Christ, i.e., the

Messiah, who was betrayed and sold for such a price as this.

What the Evangelist Matthew observes in relation to the fulfilment of vv. 12 and 13, presents various difficulties. After describing in Matt. 26 the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, the taking of Jesus, and His condemnation to death by the Roman governor Pontius Pilate at the instigation of the high priests and elders of the Jews; and having still further related that Judas, feeling remorse at the condemnation of Jesus, brought back to the high priests and elders the thirty silverlings paid to him for the betrayal, with the confession that he had betrayed innocent blood, and that having thrown down the money in the temple, he went and hanged himself, whereupon the high priests resolved to apply the money to the purchase of a potter's field as a burial-ground for pilgrims; he adds in Matt. 27:9, 10: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." The smallest difficulty of all is occasioned by the fact that the thirty silverlings were weighed, according to the prophecy, as wages for the shepherd; whereas, according to the fulfilment, they were paid to Judas for the betrayal of Jesus. For, as soon as we trace back the form of the prophecy to its idea, the difference is resolved into harmony. The payment of the wages to the shepherd in the prophetic announcement is simply the symbolical form in which the nation manifests its ingratitude for the love and fidelity shown towards it by the shepherd, and the sign that it will no longer have him as its shepherd, and therefore a sign of the blackest ingratitude, and of hard-heartedness in return for the love displayed by the shepherd. The same ingratitude and the same hardness of heart are manifested in the resolution of the representatives of the Jewish nation, the high priests and elders, to put Jesus their Saviour to death, and to take Him prisoner by bribing the betrayer. The payment of thirty silverlings to the betrayer was in fact the wages

with which the Jewish nation repaid Jesus for what He had done for the salvation of Israel; and the contemptible sum which they paid to the betrayer was an expression of the deep contempt which they felt for Jesus. There is also no great importance in this difference, that here the prophet throws the money into the house of Jehovah to the potter; whereas, according to Matthew's account, Judas threw the silverlings into the temple, and the high priests would not put the money into the divine treasury, because it was blood-money, but applied it to the purchase of a potter's field, which received the name of a field of blood. For by this very fact not only was the prophecy almost literally fulfilled; but, so far as the sense is concerned, it was so exactly fulfilled, that every one could see that the same God who had spoken through the prophet, had by the secret operation of His omnipotent power, which extends even to the ungodly, so arranged the matter that Judas threw the money into the temple, to bring it before the face of God as blood-money, and to call down the vengeance of God upon the nation, and that the high priest, by purchasing the potter's field for this money, which received the name of "field of blood" in consequence "unto this day" (Matt. 27:8), perpetuated the memorial of the sin committed against their Messiah. Matthew indicates this in the words "as the Lord commanded me," which correspond to וַיִּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי in v. 13 of our prophecy; on which H. Aug. W. Meyer has correctly observed, "that the words 'as the Lord commanded me' express the fact, that the application of wages of treachery to the purchase of the potter's field took place *'in accordance with the purpose of God,'* whose command the prophet had received. As God had directed the prophet (μoι) how to proceed with the thirty silverlings, so was it with the antitypical fulfilment of the prophecy by the high priests, and thus was the purpose of the divine will accomplished." The other points in which the quotation in Matthew differs from the original text (for the LXX have adopted a totally different rendering) may be explained from the fact that the passage is quoted

memoriter, and that the allusion to the mode of fulfilment has exerted some influence upon the choice of words. This involuntary allusion shows itself in the reproduction of נִאֶקְחָהּ וְגוֹ, "I took the thirty silverlings, and threw them to the potter," by "they took the thirty pieces of silver, ... and gave them for the potter's field;" whilst "the price of him that was valued" is only a free rendering of אֶדְרַח הַיָּקָר, and "of the children of Israel" an explanation of מְעַלְיָהֶם.

The only real and important difficulty in the quotation is to be found in the fact that Matthew quotes the words of *Zechariah* as "that which was spoken by *Jeremy* the prophet," whereas all that he quotes is taken simply and solely from the prophet *Zechariah*. The reading Ἰερεμίου in Matthew is critically unassailable; and the assumption that Matthew refers to some lost scripture, or to a saying of *Jeremiah* handed down by oral tradition, and others of a similar kind, are simply arbitrary loopholes, which cannot come into any further consideration at all. On the other hand, the attempts made to explain the introduction of *Jeremiah's* name in the place of that of *Zechariah*, on the ground that, so far as the principal features are concerned, our prophecy is simply a resumption of the prophecy in Jer. 19, and that *Zechariah* announces a second fulfilment of this prophecy (*Hengstenberg*), or that it rests upon the prophecy of Jer. 18, in which the potter is also introduced, and that its fulfilment goes beyond *Zechariah's* prophecy in those features which deviate from the words of *Zechariah*, so that Jer. 18, 19 was fulfilled at the same time (*Kliefoth*), are deserving of serious consideration. Matthew, it is supposed, intended to point to this relation by mentioning *Jeremiah* instead of *Zechariah*. We would support this view without reserve, if the connection assumed to exist between our prophecy and the prophecies of Jer. 18 and 19 could only be shown to be a probable one. But the proof adduced by *Hengstenberg* that our prophecy rests upon Jer. 18 reduces itself to these two remarks: (1) That the potter, of whom *Jeremiah* purchased a pot (Jer. 19) to

break it in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, had his workshop in this valley, which was regarded with abhorrence, as being unclean; and (2) that *Zechariah* was to throw the bad wages into the valley of Ben-Hinnom precisely at the spot where this potter's workshop was. This he supposes to have taken place with a distinct allusion to the prophecy in Jer. 19, and with the assumption that the readers would have this prophecy before their minds. But in our exposition of v. 13 we have already shown that *Jeremiah* did not purchase his pot in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, but of the potter who dwelt within the city gate; and also that the words of *Zechariah*, "I threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter," do not affirm that the prophet threw the wages paid him into the valley of Ben-Hinnom. But with these false assumptions, the view founded upon them—namely, that our prophecy is a resumption of that of *Jeremiah*—necessarily falls to the ground. The symbolical action enjoined upon *Jeremiah*, and carried out by him, viz., the breaking to pieces in the valley of Ben-Hinnom of the pot purchased of the potter in the city, does not stand in any perceptible relation to the word of the Lord to *Zechariah*, to throw the wages paid to him into the house of Jehovah to the potter, so as to lead us to take this word as a resumption of that prophecy of *Jeremiah*. *Kliefoth* appears to have seen this also, inasmuch as he gives up the idea of finding the proof that our prophecy rests upon that of *Jeremiah* in the prophecy itself. He therefore bases this view upon the simple fact that Matthew (Matt. 27:9) does not quote our passage as a word of *Zechariah*, but as a word of *Jeremiah*, and therefore at any rate regarded it as such; and that our passage has nothing independent in its contents, but is rather to be completed or explained from *Jeremiah*, though not from Jer. 19, but from Jer. 18, where the potter who makes a pot, and breaks it in pieces because it is marred, represents God, who is doing just the same with Israel as the potter with the pot that is marred. Consequently even in *Zechariah* we are to understand by the potter, to whom the prophet throws the wages in the temple, Jehovah Himself, who dwells in

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the temple. But apart from the impossibility of understanding the words of God in v. 13, “Throw the splendid price at which I have been valued by them to the potter,” as meaning “Throw this splendid price *to me*,” this view founders on the simple fact that it necessitates the giving up of the agreement between the prophecy and its historical fulfilment, inasmuch as in the fulfilment the price of the betrayal of Jesus is paid, not to the potter, Jehovah, but to a common potter for his field in the valley of Ben-Hinnom. If, therefore, it is impossible to show any connection between our prophecy and the prophecies of Jeremiah, there is no other course left than to follow the example of Luther,—namely, either to attribute the introduction of Jeremiah’s name in Matt. 27:9 in the place of that of Zechariah to a failure of memory, or to regard it as a very old copyist’s error, of a more ancient date than any of the critical helps that have come down to us.

Zechariah 11:15–17. The Foolish Shepherd.—V. 15. *“And Jehovah said to me, Take to thee yet the implement of a foolish shepherd. V. 16. For, behold, I raise up to myself a shepherd in the land: that which is perishing will he not observe, that which is scattered will he not seek, and that which is broken will he not heal; that which is standing will he not care for; and the flesh of the fat one will he eat, and tear their claws in pieces. V. 17. Woe to the worthless shepherd, who forsakes the flock! sword over his arm, and over his right eye: his arm shall wither, and his right eye be extinguished.”* After Israel has compelled the good shepherd to lay down his shepherd’s office, in consequence of its own sin, it is not to be left to itself, but to be given into the hand of a foolish shepherd, who will destroy it. This is the thought in the fresh symbolical nation. By עָד, “yet (again) take the instruments,” etc., this action is connected with the previous one (vv. 4ff.); for עָד implies that the prophet had already taken a shepherd’s instruments once before in his hand. The shepherd’s instruments are the shepherd’s staff, and taking it in his hand is a figurative representation of the feeding of a flock. This time he is to take the

implement of a foolish shepherd, i.e., to set forth the action of a foolish shepherd. Whether the pastoral staff of the foolish shepherd was of a different kind from that of the good shepherd, is a matter of indifference, so far as the meaning of the symbol is concerned. Folly, according to the Old Testament view, is synonymous with ungodliness and sin (cf. Ps. 14:1ff.). The reason for the divine command is given in v. 16 by a statement of the meaning of the new symbolical action. God will raise up a shepherd over the land, who will not tend, protect, and care for the flock, but will destroy it. That we are not to understand by this foolish shepherd all the evil native rulers of the Jewish people collectively, as Hengstenberg supposes, is as evident from the context as it possibly can be. If the good shepherd represented by the prophet in vv. 4–14 is no other than Jehovah in His rule over Israel, the foolish shepherd who is raised up over the land in the place of the good shepherd, who had been despised and rejection, can only be the possessor of the imperial power, into whose power the nation is given up after the rejection of the good shepherd sent to it in Christ, i.e., the Roman empire, which destroyed the Jewish state. The rule of the foolish shepherd is depicted not only as an utter neglect, but as a consuming of the flock, as in Ezek. 34:3, 4, Jer. 23:1, 2. The perishing sheep he will not seek, i.e., will not take charge of them (cf. v. 9). הַנְּעִר cannot be the young or tender one; for not only is *na’ar*, the boy, not used of animals, but even when used of men it has not the meaning tender or weak. The word is a substantive formation from *nâ’ar*, to shake, *piel* to disperse, used in the sense of *dispulsio*, and the abstract being used for the concrete, the dispersed, the scattered, as the early translators rendered it. *Hannishbereth*, that which is broken, i.e., injured through the fracture of a limb. The opposite of *nishbereth* is הַנְּצִבָה, that which stands upon its feet, and therefore is still strong. But not only will he neglect the flock: he will also seize upon it, and utterly consume it, not only devouring the flesh of the fat one, but even tearing in pieces the

claws of the sheep. Not indeed by driving them along bad and stony roads (Tarn., Ewald, Hitzig), for this does no great harm to sheep, but so that when he consumes the sheep, he even splits or tears in pieces the claws, to seize upon the swallow the last morsel of flesh of fat. But this tyrant will also receive his punishment for doing so. The judgment which is to fall upon him is set forth in accordance with the figure of the shepherd, as punishment through the loss of the arm and of the right eye. These two members are mentioned, because with the arm he ought to have protected and provided for the flock, and with the eye to have watched over them. The *Yod* in רָעִי and עֲזָבִי is not the suffix of the first person, but the so-called *Yod campaginis* with the construct state (see at Hos. 10:11). הַאֲלִיל is a substantive, as in Job 13:4; it does not mean worthlessness, however, but nothingness. A worthless shepherd is one who is the opposite of what the shepherd should be, and will be: one who does not feed the flock, but leaves it to perish (עֲזָבִי הַצֹּאֵן). The words from *cherebh* to *ymīnō* are a sentence in the form of a proclamation. The sword is called to come upon the arm and the right eye of the worthless shepherd, i.e., to hew off his arm, to smite his right eye. The further threat that the arm is to wither, the eye to become extinct, does not appear to harmonize with this. But the sword is simply mentioned as the instrument of punishment, and the connecting together of different kinds of punishment simply serves to exhibit the greatness and terrible nature of the punishment. With this threat, the threatening word concerning the imperial power of the world (Zech. 9–11) is very appropriately brought to a close, inasmuch as the prophecy thereby returns to its starting-point.

Zechariah 12

Israel's Conflict and Victory, Conversion and Sanctification—Ch. 12:1–13:6

Zechariah 12:1–13:6. This section forms the first half of the second prophecy of Zechariah concerning the future of Israel and of the

nations of the world, viz., the prophecy contained in Zech. 12–14, which, as a side-piece to Zech. 9–11, treats of the judgment by which Israel, the nation of God, will be refined, sifted, and led on to perfection through conflict with the nations of the world. This first section announces how the conflict against Jerusalem and Judah will issue in destruction to the nations of the world (Zech. 12:1–4). Jehovah will endow the princes of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem with marvellous strength to overcome all their foes (vv. 5–9), and will pour out His Spirit of grace upon them, so that they will bitterly repent the death of the Messiah (vv. 10–14), and purify themselves from all ungodliness (Zech. 13:1–6).

Zechariah 12:1. *“Burden of the word of Jehovah over Israel. Saying of Jehovah, who stretches out the heaven, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.”* This heading, which belongs to the whole prophecy in Zech. 12–14, corresponds in form and contents to that in Zech. 9:1. The burden of Jehovah over Israel stands by the side of the burden of Jehovah over the land of Hadrach, the seat of the heathen power of the world (Zech. 9:1). And as the reason assigned for the latter was that the eye of Jehovah looks at mankind and all the tribes of Israel, so the former is explained here by an allusion to the creative omnipotence of Jehovah. Only there is nothing in our heading to answer to the words “and Damascus is his rest,” which are added to the explanation of the symbolical name Hadrach in Zech. 9:1, because Israel, as the name of the covenant nation, needed no explanation. The other formal differences are very inconsiderable. עַל answers substantially to the כּ (in בְּאֶרֶץ, Zech. 9:1), and signifies, notwithstanding the fact that *massa'* announces a threatening word, not “again” but “over,” as we may see by comparing it with מִשָּׂא אֶל יִשׂ in Mal. 1:1. The reason for the *massa'* announced is given here in the form of an apposition, נִאֲמַר יְהוָה standing first like a heading, as in Ps. 11:1, 2 Sam. 23:1, Num. 24:3, 15. The predicates of

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God are formed after Isa. 42:5 (see also Amos 4:13), and describe God as the creator of the universe, and the former of the spirits of all men, to remove all doubt as to the realization of the wonderful things predicted in what follows. יִצַר רוּחַ וּגוֹ, the forming of the spirit within man, does not refer to the creation of the spirits of souls of men once for all, but denotes the continuous creative formation and guidance of the human spirit by the Spirit of God. Consequently we cannot restrict the stretching out of the heaven and the laying of the foundation of the earth to the creation of the universe as an act accomplished once for all at the beginning of all things (Gen. 2:1), but must take these words also as referring to the upholding of the world as a work of the continuously creative providence of God. According to the biblical view (cf. Ps. 104:2–4), “God stretches out the heavens every day afresh, and every day He lays the foundation of the earth, which, if His power did not uphold it, would move from its orbit, and fall into ruin” (Hengst.).

Zechariah 12:2. *“Behold, I make Jerusalem a reeling-basin for all the nations round about, and upon Judah also will it be at the siege against Jerusalem. V. 3. And it will come to pass on that day, I will make Jerusalem a burden-stone to all nations: all who lift it up will tear rents for themselves; and all the nations of the earth will gather together against it. V. 4. In that day, is the saying of Jehovah, will I smite every horse with shyness, and its rider with madness, and over the house of Judah will I open my eyes, and every horse of the nations will I smite with blindness.”* These verses allude to an attack on the part of the nations upon Jerusalem and Judah, which will result in injury and destruction to those who attack it. The Lord will make Jerusalem a reeling-basin to all nations round about. *Saph* does not mean threshold here, but basin, or a large bowl, as in Ex. 12:22. רַעַל is equivalent to תַּרְעֵלָה in Isa. 51:17 and Ps. 60:5, viz., reeling. Instead of the goblet, the prophet speaks of a basin, because many persons can put their mouths to this at the same time, and drink out

of it (Schmieder). The “cup of reeling,” i.e., a goblet filled with intoxicating drink, is a figure very frequently employed to denote the divine judgment, which intoxicates the nations, so that they are unable to stand any longer, and therefore fall to the ground and perish (see at Isa. 51:17).

Zechariah 12:2b. V. 2b has been explained in very different ways. It is an old and widespread view, that the words “also upon Judah will it be,” etc., express the participation of Judah in the siege of Jerusalem. The Chaldee and Jerome both adopt this explanation, that in the siege of Jerusalem Judah will be constrained by the nations to besiege the capital of its own land. The grammatical reason assigned for this view is, that we must either take הָיָה with עַל in the sense of obligation (it will also be the duty of Judah: Mich., Ros., Ewald), or supply סֶפֶר־רַעַל as the subject to הָיָה: the reeling-basin will also come upon Judah. But there is great harshness in both explanations. With the former, לְהִלָּחֵם, or some other infinitive, would hardly have been omitted; and with the latter, the preposition לְ would stand before הַיְהוּדָה, instead of עַל.

Moreover, in what follows there is no indication whatever of Judah’s having made common cause with the enemy against Jerusalem; on the contrary, Judah and Jerusalem stand together in opposition to the nations, and the princes of Judah have strength in the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v. 5), and destroy the enemy to save Jerusalem (v. 6). Moreover, it is only by a false interpretation that any one can find a conflict between Judah and Jerusalem indicated in Zech. 14:14. And throughout it is incorrect to designate the attitude of Judah towards Jerusalem in these verses as “opposition,”—a notion upon which Ebrard (*Offenb. Joh.*) and Kliefoth have founded the marvellous view, that by Jerusalem with its inhabitants and the house of David we are to understand the unbelieving portion of Israel; and by Judah with its princes, Christendom, or the true people of God, formed of believing Israelites, and increased by believing Gentiles. Judah is not opposed to

Jerusalem, but simply distinguished from it, just as the Jewish kingdom or people is frequently designated by the prophets as Jerusalem and Judah. The גַּם, which does not separate, but adds, is of itself inapplicable to the idea of opposition. Consequently we should expect the words 'עַל יְהוָה to express the thought, that Judah will be visited with the same fate as Jerusalem, as Luther, Calvin, and many others follow the Peshito in supposing that they do. 'עַל הַיְהוָה has then the meaning to happen, to come over a person; and the only question is, What are we to supply in thought as the subject? The best course is probably to take it from the previous clause, "that which passes over Jerusalem;" for the proposal of Koehler to supply *mâtsôr* as the subject is precluded by the circumstance that *mâtsôr*, a siege, can only affect a city or fortress (cf. Deut. 20:20), and not a land. The thought is strengthened in v. 3. Jerusalem is to become a burden-stone for all nations, which inflicts contusions and wounds upon those who try to lift it up or carry it away ("experiencing no hurt itself, it causes great damage to them:" Marck). The figure is founded upon the idea of the labour connected with building, and not upon the custom, which Jerome speaks of as a very common one in his time among the youth of Palestine, of testing and exercising their strength by lifting heavy stones. There is a gradation in the thought, both in the figure of the burdensome stone, which wounds whoever tries to lift it, whilst intoxicating wine only makes one powerless and incapable of any undertaking, and also in the description given of the object, viz., in v. 2 all nations round about Jerusalem, and in v. 3 all peoples and all nations of the earth. It is only in the last clause of v. 3 that the oppression of Jerusalem indicated in the two figures is more minutely described, and in v. 4 that its overthrow by the help of God is depicted. The Lord will throw the mind and spirit of the military force of the enemy into such confusion, that instead of injuring Jerusalem and Judah, it will rush forward to its own destruction. Horses and riders individualize the warlike forces of

the enemy. The rider, smitten with madness, turns his sword against his own comrades in battle (cf. Zech. 14:3, Judg. 7:22, 1 Sam. 14:20). On the other hand, Jehovah will open His eyes upon Judah for its protection (1 Kings 8:29; Neh. 1:6; Ps. 32:8). This promise is strengthened by the repetition of the punishment to be inflicted upon the enemy. Not only with alarm, but with blindness, will the Lord smite their horses. We have an example of this in 2 Kings 6:18, where the Lord smote the enemy with blindness in answer to Elisha's prayer, i.e., with mental blindness, so that, instead of seizing the prophet, they fell into the hands of Israel. The three plagues, *timmâhôn*, *shiggâ'ôn*, and *'ivvârôn*, are those with which rebellious Israelites are threatened in Deut. 28:28. The "house of Judah" is the covenant nation, the population of Judah including the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as we may see from what follows.

Zechariah 12:5-7. V. 5. *"And the princes of Judah will say in their hearts, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are strength to me, in Jehovah of hosts their God.* V. 6. *On that day will I make the princes of Judah as a basin of fire under logs of wood, and like a torch of fire under sheaves; and they will devour all nations round about, on the right and on the left; and Jerusalem will dwell still further in its place, at Jerusalem.* V. 7. *And Jehovah will save the tents of Judah first, that the splendour of the house of David and the splendour of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not lift itself up over Judah."* The princes of Judah are mentioned as the leaders of the people in war. What they say is the conviction of the whole nation (*'allûph*, as in Zech. 9:7). מְצָרָה (in this form ἄπ. λεγ.) is a substantive = מְצָרָה, strength (Job 17:9). The singular *lî* (to me) expresses the fact that every individual says or thinks this, as with the expression "should I weep" in Zech. 7:3. The princes of Judah recognise in the inhabitants of Jerusalem their strength or might, not in this sense, that Judah, being crowded together before Jerusalem, expects help against the foe from the strength of the city and the assistance of its inhabitants,

as Hofmann and Koehler maintain, for “their whole account of the inhabitants of the land being shut up in the city (or crowded together before the walls of Jerusalem, and covered by them) is a pure invention” (Koehler), and has no foundation in the text; but in this sense, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem are strong through Jehovah their God, i.e., through the fact that Jehovah has chosen Jerusalem, and by virtue of this election will save the city of His sanctuary (compare 10:12 with 3:2; 1:17; 2:16). Because the princes of Judah put their trust in the divine election of Jerusalem, the Lord makes them into a basin of fire under logs of wood, and a burning torch under sheaves, so that they destroy all nations round about like flames of fire, and Jerusalem therefore remains unconquered and undestroyed in its place at Jerusalem. In this last sentence *Jerusalem* is first of all the population personified as a woman, and in the second instance the city as such. From the fact that Jerusalem is still preserved, in consequence of the destruction of the enemy proceeding from the princes of Judah it is very evident that the princes of Judah are the representatives of the whole nation, and that the whole of the covenant nation (Judah with Jerusalem) is included in the house of Judah in v. 4. And v. 7 may easily be reconciled with this. The statement that the Lord will “save the tents of Judah first, that the splendour of the house of David may not lift itself up above Judah,” contains the simple thought that the salvation will take place in such a manner that no part of the nation will have any occasion to lift itself up above another, and that because the salvation is effected not by human power, but by the omnipotence of God alone. “The tents of Judah, i.e., its huts, form an antithesis to the splendid buildings of the capital, and probably (?) also point to the defenceless condition of Judah, through which it was absolutely cast upon the help of God” (Hengstenberg). תִּפְאֶרֶת, the splendour or glory, not the boasting. The house of David is the royal line, which was continued in Zerubbabel and his family, and culminated in Christ. Its splendour consists in the glorification promised in Zech. 4:6–10 and 14, and Hag.

2:23; and the splendour of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is the promises which this city received through its election to be the city of God, in which Jehovah would be enthroned in His sanctuary, and also through the future glorification predicted for it in consequence (Zech. 1:16, 17; 2:8, 14, ff.). The antithesis between Jerusalem and the house of David on the one hand, and the tents of Judah on the other, does not serve to express the thought that “the strong ones will be saved by the weak, in order that the true equilibrium may arise between the two” (Hengst.), for Judah cannot represent the weak ones if its princes consume the enemy like flames of fire; but the thought is simply this: At the deliverance from the attack of the foe, Jerusalem will have no pre-eminence over Judah; but the promises which Jerusalem and the house of David have received will benefit Judah, i.e., the whole of the covenant nation, in like manner. This thought is expressed in the following way: The defenceless land will be delivered sooner than the well-defended capital, that the latter may not lift itself up above the former, but that both may humbly acknowledge “that the victory in both cases is the Lord’s” (Jerome); for, according to v.8, Jerusalem will enjoy in the fullest measure the salvation of God.

Zechariah 12:8, 9. V. 8. *“On that day Jehovah will shelter the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that stumbleth among them will be as David on that day; and the house of David as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them. V. 9. And it will come to pass on that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”* In the conflict with the heathen nations, the Lord will endow the inhabitants of Jerusalem with marvellous strength with which to overcome all their foes. The population of Jerusalem is divided into two classes, the weak and the strong. The weak are designated as *hannikhshâl*, the stumbling one, who cannot stand firmly upon his feet (1 Sam. 2:4). These are to become like David, the bravest hero of Israel (cf. 1 Sam. 17:34ff., 2 Sam. 17:8). The strong ones, designated as the house, i.e., the household or family of David, are to be like

Elohim, i.e., not angels, but God, the Deity, i.e., a superhuman being (cf. Ps. 8:6), yea, like the angel of Jehovah, who goes before Israel (לְפָנֵיהֶם), or the revealer of the invisible God, who is essentially the equal of Jehovah (see at Zech. 1:8). The point of comparison lies in the power and strength, not in moral resemblance to God, as Kliefoth supposes, who takes *Elohim* as equivalent to *Jehovah*, and identifies it with the angel of Jehovah, as some of the earlier commentators have done, and places the graduation of *Elohim* into the angel of Jehovah in the appearance of God in human form, in which case, however, לְפָנֵיהֶם has no meaning. This shows rather that the “angel of Jehovah” is simply referred to here in connection with his appearance in the history of Israel, when he went at the head of Israel and smote the Egyptians and all the enemies of Israel (Ex. 23:20ff.; Josh. 5:13ff.). This is evident from the antithesis in v. 9. Whilst Jehovah endows the inhabitants of Jerusalem with supernatural strength, He will seek to destroy all the nations which attack Jerusalem. *Biqqēsh*, followed by an infinitive with *Lamed*, to strive after anything, as in Zech. 6:7. עָל בּוֹא applied to the advance of the enemy against a city (= עָלָה עָל, Isa. 7:1).

Zechariah 12:10–14. But the Lord will do still more than this for His people. He will renew it by pouring out His spirit of grace upon it, so that it will come to the knowledge of the guilt it has incurred by the rejection of the Saviour, and will bitterly repent of its sin. V. 10. “*And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they will look upon me, whom they have pierced, and will mourn over him like the mourning over an only one, and will grieve bitterly over him, as one grieves bitterly over the first-born.*” This new promise is simply attached to the previous verse by ו consec.

(וְשִׁפְכֵהָ). Through this mode of attachment such connections as that suggested by Kliefoth, “But such glory can only be enjoyed by rebellious Israel when it is converted, and acknowledges and bewails Him whom it has rejected,” are

precluded, as at variance with the text. There is not a word in the text about conversion as the condition on which the glory set before them in vv. 3–9 was to be obtained; on the contrary, conversion is represented as one fruit of the outpouring of the spirit of prayer upon the nation; and this outpouring of the Spirit is introduced by וְשִׁפְכֵהָ, which corresponds to וְשִׁבְקָהּ in v. 9, as a new feature in the salvation, to be added to the promise of the destruction of the nations which fight against Jerusalem. The fact that only the inhabitants of Jerusalem are named, and not those of Judah also, is explained correctly by the commentators from the custom of regarding the capital as the representative of the whole nation. And it follows *eo ipso* from this, that in v. 8 also the expression “inhabitants of Jerusalem” is simply an individualizing epithet for the whole of the covenant nation. But just as in v. 8 the house of David is mentioned emphatically along with these was the princely family and representative of the ruling class, so is it also in v. 10, for the purpose of expressing the thought that the same salvation is to be enjoyed by the whole nation, in all its ranks, from the first to the last. The outpouring of the Spirit points back to Joel 3:1ff., except that there the Spirit of Jehovah generally is spoken of, whereas here it is simply the spirit of grace and of supplication. *Chēn* does not mean “prayer,” nor emotion, or goodness, or love (Hitzig, Ewald), but simply grace or favour; and here, as in Zech. 4:7, the grace of God; not indeed in its objectivity, but as a principle at work in the human mind. The spirit of grace is the spirit which produces in the mind of man the experience of the grace of God. But this experience begets in the soul of sinful man the knowledge of sin and guilt, and prayer for the forgiveness of sin, i.e., supplication; and this awakens sorrow and repentance. הִבִּיטוּ אֵלַי, they look upon me.

Hibbīt, used of bodily sight as well as spiritual (cf. Num. 21:9). The suffix in אֵלַי (to me) refers to the speaker. This is *Jehovah*, according to v. 1, the creator of the heaven and the earth. אֶת־אֲשֶׁר

דָּקְרוּ, not “Him whom they pierced,” but simply “whom they pierced.” אָת, that is to say, is not governed by *hibbītū* as a second object, but simply refers to אֲלֵי, to me, “whom they pierced,” אֶת־אֲשֶׁר is chosen here, as in Jer. 38:9, in the place of the simple אֲשֶׁר, to mark אֲשֶׁר more clearly as an accusative, since the simple אֲשֶׁר might also be rendered “who pierced (me):” cf. Ges. § 123, 2, Not. 1. *Dâqar* does not mean to ridicule, or scoff at, but only to pierce, thrust through, and to slay by any kind of death whatever (cf. Lam. 4:9). And the context shows that here it signifies to put to death. With reference to the explanation proposed by Calvin, “whom they have harassed with insults,” Hitzig has very properly observed: “If it were nothing more than this, wherefore such lamentation over him, which, according to the use of סָפַד, with עַל governing the person, and from the similes employed, is to be regarded as a lamentation for the dead?” It is true that we have not to think of a slaying of Jehovah, the creator of the heaven and the earth, but simply of the slaying of the *Maleach* Jehovah, who, being of the same essence with Jehovah, became man in the person of Jesus Christ. As Zechariah repeatedly represents the coming of the Messiah as a coming of Jehovah in His *Maleach* to His people, he could, according to this view, also describe the slaying of the *Maleach* as the slaying of Jehovah. And Israel having come to the knowledge of its sin, will bitterly bewail this deed. עָלָיו does not mean thereat, i.e., at the crime, but is used personally, over him whom they have pierced. Thus the transition from the first person (אֲנִי) to the third (עָלָיו) points to the fact that the person slain, although essentially one with Jehovah, is personally distinct from the Supreme God. The lamentation for the only son (*yâchîd*: cf. Amos 8:10) and for the first-born is the deepest and bitterest death-wail. The *inf. abs. hāmēr*, which is used in the place of the finite verb, signifies making bitter, to which *mispēd* is to be supplied

from the previous sentence (cf. מְסַפֵּד תַּמְרוּרִים, Jer. 6:26).

The historical fulfilment of this prophecy commenced with the crucifixion of the Son of God, who had come in the flesh. The words אֲלֵי אֶת־אֲשֶׁר דָּקְרוּ are quoted in the Gospel of John (John 19:37), according to the Greek rendering ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξέκέντησαν, which probably emanated not from the LXX, but from Aquila, or Theodotion, or Symmachus, as having been fulfilled in Christ, by the fact that a soldier pierced His side with a lance as He was hanging upon the cross (vid., John 19:34). If we compare this quotation with the fact mentioned in v. 36, that they did not break any of His bones, there can be no doubt that John quotes this passage with distinct allusion to this special circumstance; only we must not infer from this, that the evangelist regarded the meaning of the prophecy as exhausted by this allusion. The piercing with the spear is simply looked upon by him as the climax of all the mortal sufferings of Christ; and even with Zechariah the piercing is simply an individualizing expression for putting to death, the instrument used and the kind of death being of very subordinate importance. This is evident from a comparison of our verse with Zech. 13:7, where the sword is mentioned as the instrument employed, whereas *dâqar* points rather to a spear. What we have observed at p. 578 respecting the fulfilment of Zech. 9:9 by the entry of Christ into Jerusalem, also applies to this special fulfilment, viz., that the so to speak literal fulfilment in the outward circumstances only served to make the internal concatenation of the prophecy with its historical realization so clear, that even unbelievers could not successfully deny it. Luke (Luke 23:48) indicates the commencement of the fulfilment of the looking at the slain one by these words: “And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts.” (For the smiting of the breasts, comp. Isa. 32:12, קָפַד עַל שְׂדֵי.) “The crowds, who had just before been

crying out, Crucify him, here smite upon their breasts, being overpowered with the proofs of the superhuman exaltation of Jesus, and lament over the crucified one, and over their own guilt" (Hengst.). The true and full commencement of the fulfilment, however, shows itself in the success which attended the preaching of Peter on the first day of Pentecost,—namely, in the fact that three thousand were pricked in their heart with penitential sorrow on account of the crucifixion of their Saviour, and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:37–41), and in the further results which followed the preaching of the apostles for the conversion of Israel (Acts 3–4). The fulfilment has continued with less striking results through the whole period of the Christian church, in conversions from among the Jews; and it will not terminate till the remnant of Israel shall turn as a people to Jesus the Messiah, whom its fathers crucified. On the other hand, those who continue obstinately in unbelief will see Him at last when He returns in the clouds of heaven, and shriek with despair (Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:30).

Zechariah 12:11–14. In vv. 11–14 the magnitude and universality of the mourning are still further depicted. V. 11. *"In that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo.* V. 12. *And the land will mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart.* V. 13. *The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeite apart, and their wives apart.* V. 14. *All the rest of the families, every family apart, and their wives apart.*" In v. 11, the depth and bitterness of the pain on account of the slain Messiah are depicted by comparing it to the mourning of Hadad-rimmon. Jerome says with regard to this: "Adad-remmon is a city near Jerusalem, which was formerly called by this name, but is now called Maximianopolis, in the field of Mageddon, where the good king Josiah was wounded by Pharaoh Necho." This statement of Jerome is confirmed by the fact that the ancient

Canaanitish or Hebrew name of the city has been preserved in *R muni*, a small village three-quarters of an hour to the south of Lejun (*Legio = Megiddo*: see at Josh. 12:21; and V. de Velde, *Reise*, i. p. 267). The mourning of Hadad-rimmon is therefore the mourning for the calamity which befel Israel at Hadad-rimmon in the death of the good king Josiah, who was mortally wounded in the valley Megiddo, according to 2 Chron. 35:22ff., so that he very soon gave up the ghost. The death of this most pious of all the kings of Judah was bewailed by the people, especially the righteous members of the nation, so bitterly, that not only did the prophet Jeremiah compose an elegy on his death, but other singers, both male and female, bewailed him in dirges, which were placed in a collection of elegiac songs, and preserved in Israel till long after the captivity (2 Chron. 35:25). Zechariah compares the lamentation for the putting of the Messiah to death to this great national mourning. All the other explanations that have been given of these words are so arbitrary, as hardly to be worthy of notice. This applies, for example, to the idea mentioned by the Chald., that the reference is to the death of the wicked Ahab, and also to Hitzig's hypothesis, that *Hadad-rimmon* was the one name of the god *Adonis*. For, apart from the fact that it is only from this passage that Movers has inferred that there ever was an idol of that name, a prophet of Jehovah could not possibly have compared the great lamentation of the Israelites over the death of the Messiah to the lamentation over the death of Ahab the ungodly king of Israel, or to the mourning for a Syrian idol. But the mourning will not be confined to Jerusalem; the land (*hâ'ârets*), i.e., the whole nation, will also mourn. This universality of the lamentation is individualized in vv. 12–14, and so depicted as to show that all the families and households of the nation mourn, and not the men only, but also the women. To this end the prophet mentions four distinct leading and secondary families, and then adds in conclusion, "all the rest of the families, with their wives." Of the several families named, two can be determined with certainty,—namely, the

family of the house of David, i.e., the posterity of king David, and the family of the house of Levi, i.e., the posterity of the patriarch Levi. But about the other two families there is a difference of opinion. The rabbinical writers suppose that *Nathan* is the well known prophet of that name, and the family of *Shimei* the tribe of Simeon, which is said, according to the rabbinical fiction, to have furnished teachers to the nation. But the latter opinion is overthrown, apart from any other reason, by the fact that the patronymic of *Simeon* is not written שִׁמְעוֹן, but שִׁמְעוֹנִי, in Josh. 21:4, 1 Chron. 27:16. Still less can the Benjamite Shimei, who cursed David (2 Sam. 16:5ff.), be intended. מְשִׁפְּחַת הַשִּׁמְעוֹן is the name given in Num. 3:21 to the family of the son of Gershon and the grandson of Levi (Num. 3:17ff.). This is the family intended here, and in harmony with this *Nathan* is not the prophet of that name, but the son of David, from whom Zerubbabel was descended (Luke 3:27, 31). Luther adopted this explanation: "Four families," he says, "are enumerated, two from the royal line, under the names of David and Nathan, and two from the priestly line, as Levi and Shimei; after which he embraces all together." Of two tribes he mentions one leading family and one subordinate branch, to show that not only are all the families of Israel in general seized with the same grief, but all the separate branches of those families. Thus the word *mishpâchâh* is used here, as in many other cases, in the wider and more restricted meaning of the leading and the subordinate families.

Zechariah 13

Zechariah 13:1–6. The penitential supplication of Israel will lead to a thorough renewal of the nation, since the Lord will open to the penitent the fountain of His grace for the cleansing away of sin and the sanctifying of life. V. 1. "In that day will a fountain be opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness." As the Lord Himself pours out the spirit of supplication upon Israel, so does He also provide the means of purification

from sin. A fountain is opened, when its stream of water bursts forth from the bosom of the earth (see Isa. 41:18; 35:6). The water, which flows from the fountain opened by the Lord, is a water of sprinkling, with which sin and uncleanness are removed. The figure is taken partly from the water used for the purification of the Levites at their consecration, which is called מֵי הַטָּאֵת, sin-water, or alter of absolution, in Num. 8:7, and partly from the sprinkling-water prepared from the sacrificial ashes of the red heifer for purification from the defilement of death, which is called מֵי נֹדֶה, water of uncleanness, i.e., water which removed uncleanness, in Num. 19:9. Just as bodily uncleanness is a figure used to denote spiritual uncleanness, the defilement of sin (cf. Ps. 51:9), so is earthly sprinkling-water a symbol of the spiritual water by which sin is removed. By this water we have to understand not only grace in general, but the spiritual sprinkling-water, which is prepared through the sacrificial death of Christ, through the blood that He shed for sin, and which is sprinkled upon us for the cleansing away of sin in the gracious water of baptism. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin (1 John 1:7; compare 5:6).

Zechariah 13:2–6. The house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem represent the whole nation here, as in Zech. 12:10. This cleansing will be following by a new life in fellowship with God, since the Lord will remove everything that could hinder sanctification. This renewal of life and sanctification is described in vv. 2–7. V. 2. "And it will come to pass in that day, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, they shall be remembered no more; and the prophets also and the spirit of uncleanness will I remove out of the land. V. 3. And it will come to pass, if a man prophesies any more, his father and his mother, they that begat him, will say to him, Thou must not live, for thou hast spoken deceit in the name of Jehovah: and his father and his mother, they that begat him, will pierce him through because of his prophesying. V. 4. And it will come to pass on that day, the prophets will be ashamed every

one of his vision, at his prophesying, and will no more put on a hairy mantle to lie. V. 5. And he will say, I am no prophet, I am a man who cultivates the land; for a man bought me from my youth. V. 6. And if they shall say to him, What scars are these between thy hands? he will say, These were inflicted upon me in the house of my loves." The new life in righteousness and holiness before God is depicted in an individualizing form as the extermination of idols and false prophets out of the holy land, because idolatry and false prophecy were the two principal forms in which ungodliness manifested itself in Israel. The allusion to idols and false prophets by no means points to the times before the captivity; for even of gross idolatry, and therefore false prophecy, did not spread any more among the Jews after the captivity, such passages as Neh. 6:10, where lying prophets rise up, and even priests contract marriages with Canaanitish and other heathen wives, from whom children sprang who could not even speak the Jewish language (Ezra 9; 2ff.; Neh. 13:23), show very clearly that the danger of falling back into gross idolatry was not a very remote one. Moreover, the more refined idolatry of pharisaic self-righteousness and work-holiness took the place of the grosser idolatry, and the prophets generally depict the future under the forms of the past. The cutting off of the names of the idols denotes utter destruction (cf. Hos. 2:19). The prophets are false prophets, who either uttered the thoughts of their hearts as divine inspiration, or stood under the demoniacal influence of the spirit of darkness. This is evident from the fact that they are associated not only with idols, but with the "spirit of uncleanness." For this, the opposite of the spirit of grace (Zech. 12:10), is the evil spirit which culminates in Satan, and works in the false prophets as a lying spirit (1 Kings 22:21-23; Rev. 16:13, 14).

The complete extermination of this unclean spirit is depicted thus in vv. 3-6, that not only will Israel no longer tolerate any prophet in the midst of it (v. 3), but even the prophets themselves will be ashamed of their calling (vv. 4-6). The first case is to be explained from the

law in Deut. 13:6-11 and 18:20, according to which a prophet who leads astray to idolatry, and one who prophesies in his own name or in the name of false gods, are to be put to death. This commandment will be carried out by the parents upon any one who shall prophesy in the future. They will pronounce him worthy of death as speaking lies, and inflict the punishment of death upon him (*dâqar*, used for putting to death, as in c. 12:10). This case, that a man is regarded as a false prophet and punished in consequence, simply because he prophesies, rests upon the assumption that at that time there will be no more prophets, and that God will not raise them up or send them any more. This assumption agrees both with the promise, that when God concludes a new covenant with His people and forgives their sins, no one will teach another any more to know the Lord, but all, both great and small, will know Him, and all will be taught of God (Jer. 31:33, 34; Isa. 54:13); and also with the teaching of the Scriptures, that the Old Testament prophecy reached to John the Baptist, and attained its completion and its end in Christ (Matt. 11:13; Luke 16:16, cf. Matt. 5:17). At that time will those who have had to do with false prophecy no longer pretend to be prophets, or assume the appearance of prophets, or put on the hairy garment of the ancient prophets, of Elias for example, but rather give themselves out as farm-servants, and declare that the marks of wound inflicted upon themselves when prophesying in the worship of heathen gods are the scars of wounds which they have received (vv. 4-6). בוש מן, to be ashamed on account of (cf. Isa. 1:29), not to desist with shame. The form הַנְּבִיאָתוֹ in v. 4 instead of הַנְּבִיאִי (v. 3) may be explained from the fact that the verbs לִיָּא and לִיָּה frequently borrow forms from one another (Ges. § 75, Anm. 20-22). On אֲדַרְתָּ שְׁעָרַי, see at 2 Kings 1:8. לִמְעַן כְּחַשׁ, to lie, i.e., to give themselves the appearance of prophets, and thereby to deceive the people. The subject to וְאָמַר in v. 5 is אִישׁ

from v. 4; and the explanation given by the man is not to be taken as an answer to a question asked by another concerning his circumstances, for it has not been preceded by any question, but as a confession made by his own spontaneous impulse, in which he would repudiate his former calling. The verb הִקְנָה is not a *denom.* of מִקְנָה, *servum facere, servo uti* (Maurer, Koehler, and others), for *miqneh* does not mean slave, but that which has been acquired, or an acquisition. It is a simple *hiphil* of *qānâh* in the sense of acquiring, or acquiring by purchase, not of selling. That the statement is an untruthful assertion is evident from v. 6, the two clauses of which are to be taken as speech and reply, or question and answer. Some one asks the prophet, who has given himself out as a farm-servant, where the stripes (*makkôth*, strokes, marks of strokes) between his hands have come from, and he replies that he received them in the house of his lovers. אָשַׁר הִבִּיתִי הַבַּיִת, ἄς (sc., πλῆγὰς) ἐπλήγην: cf. Ges. § 143, 1. The questioner regards the stripes or wounds as marks of wounds inflicted upon himself, which the person addressed had made when prophesying, as is related of the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:28 (see the comm.). The expression "between the hands" can hardly be understood in any other way than as relating to the palms of the hands and their continuation up; the arms, since, according to the testimony of ancient writers (Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 682), in the self-mutilations connected with the Phrygian, Syrian, and Cappadocian forms of worship, the arms were mostly cut with swords or knives. The meaning of the answer given by the person addressed depends upon the view we take of the word מִאֲהַבִּים. As this word is generally applied to paramours, Hengstenberg retains this meaning here, and gives the following explanation of the passage: namely, that the person addressed confesses that he has received the wounds in the temples of the idols, which he had followed with adulterous love, so that he admits his former folly with the deepest shame. But the context appears rather to

indicate that this answer is also nothing more than an evasion, and that he simply pretends that the marks were scars left by the chastisements which he received when a boy in the house of either loving parents or some other loving relations.

Judgment of Refinement for Israel, and Glorious End of Jerusalem—Ch. 13:7–14:21

Zechariah 13:7–14:21. The prophecy takes a new turn at v. 7, and announces the judgment, through which Israel will be refined from the dross still adhering to it, and transformed into the truly holy people of the Lord by the extermination of its spurious and corrupt members. This second half of the prophecy is really an expansion of the first (Zech. 12:1–13:6). Whereas the first announces how the Lord will protect Israel and Jerusalem against the pressure of the powers of the world, how He will smite the enemy, and not only endow His people with miraculous power which ensures their victory, but also by pouring out His Spirit of grace, lead it to a knowledge of the guilt it has contracted by putting the Messiah to death, and to repentance and renovation of life; the second half depicts the judgment which will fall upon Jerusalem, to sever the ungodly from the righteous, to exterminate the former out of the land of the Lord, to purify and preserve the latter, and by completing this separation, to perfect His kingdom in glory. This second half is divisible again into two parts, the former of which (Zech. 13:7–9) gives a summary of the contents, whilst the latter (Zech. 14) expands it into fuller detail.

Zechariah 13:7–9. V. 7. "Arise, O sword, over my shepherd, and over the man who is my neighbour, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts: smite the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; and I will bring back my hand over the little ones. V. 8. And it will come to pass in all the land, is the saying of Jehovah; two parts therein shall be cut off, shall die, and the third remains therein. V. 9. And the third will I bring into the fire, and melt them as silver is melted, and will refine them as gold is refined: it will call upon my name, and I will answer it; I say, It is my people;

and it will say, Jehovah my God." The summons addressed to the sword, to awake and smite, is a poetical turn to express the thought that the smiting takes place with or according to the will of God. For similar personification of the sword, see Jer. 47:6. רעי is the shepherd of Jehovah, since the summons comes from Jehovah. In what sense the person to be smitten is called the shepherd of Jehovah, we may see from the clause על-גִּבּוֹר עֲמִיתִי. The word עֲמִית, which only occurs in the Pentateuch and in Zechariah, who has taken it thence, is only used as a synonym of אָח (cf. Lev. 25:15) in the concrete sense of the nearest one. And this is the meaning which it has in the passage before us, where the construct state expresses the relation of apposition, as for example in אִישׁ חֲסִידִיךָ (Deut. 33:8; cf. Ewald, § 287, e), the man who is my nearest one. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom Jehovah describes as a man who is His next one (neighbour), cannot of course be a bad shepherd, who is displeasing to Jehovah, and destroys the flock, or the foolish shepherd mentioned in Zech. 11:15–17, as Grotius, Umbr., Ebrard, Ewald, Hitzig, and others suppose; for the expression "man who is my nearest one" implies much more than unity or community of vocation, or that he had to feed the flock like Jehovah. No owner of a flock or lord of a flock would call a hired or purchased shepherd his 'āmīth. And so God would not apply this epithet to any godly or ungodly man whom He might have appointed shepherd over a nation. The idea of nearest one (or fellow) involves not only similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent, according to which he whom God calls His neighbour cannot be a mere man, but can only be one who participates in the divine nature, or is essentially divine. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom the sword is to smite, is therefore no other than the Messiah, who is also identified with Jehovah in Zech. 12:10; or the good shepherd, who says of Himself, "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). The masculine form דָּךְ in the summons addressed to the

sword, although חֶרֶב itself is feminine, may be accounted for from the personification of the sword; compare Gen. 4:7, where sin (חַטָּאת, fem.) is personified as a wild beast, and construed as a masculine. The sword is merely introduced as a weapon used for killing, without there being any intention of defining the mode of death more precisely. The smiting of the shepherd is also mentioned here simply for the purpose of depicting the consequences that would follow with regard to the flock. The thought is therefore merely this: Jehovah will scatter Israel or His nation by smiting the shepherd; that is to say, He will give it up to the misery and destruction to which a flock without a shepherd is exposed. We cannot infer from this that the shepherd himself is to blame; nor does the circumstance that the smiting of the shepherd is represented as the execution of a divine command, necessarily imply that the death of the shepherd proceeds directly from God. According to the biblical view, God also works, and does that which is done by man in accordance with His counsel and will, and even that which is effected through the sin of men. Thus in Isa. 53:10 the mortal sufferings of the Messiah are described as inflicted upon Him by God, although He had given up His soul to death to bear the sin of the people. In the prophecy before us, the slaying of the shepherd is only referred to so far as it brings a grievous calamity upon Israel; and the fact is passed over, that Israel has brought this calamity upon itself by its ingratitude towards the shepherd (cf. Zech. 11:8, 12). The flock, which will be dispersed in consequence of the slaying of the shepherd, is the covenant nation, i.e., neither the human race nor the Christian church as such, but the flock which the shepherd in Zech. 11:4ff. had to feed. At the same time, Jehovah will not entirely withdraw His hand from the scattered flock, but "bring it back over the small ones." The phrase הָשִׁיב יָדְ עַל, to bring back the hand over a person (see at 2 Sam. 8:3), i.e., make him the object of his active care once more, is used to express the employment of the hand upon a person either for judgment or

salvation. It occurs in the latter sense in Isa. 1:25 in relation to the grace which the Lord will manifest towards Jerusalem, by purifying it from its dross; and it is used here in the same sense, as vv. 8, 9 clearly show, according to which the dispersion to be inflicted upon Israel will only be the cause of ruin to the greater portion of the nation, whereas it will bring salvation to the remnant.

Verses 8b and 9 add the real explanation of the bringing back of the hand over the small ones. צַעְרִים (lit., a participle of צָעַר, which only occurs here) is synonymous with צָעִיר or צְעוּר (Jer. 14:3; 48:4, *chethib*), the small ones in a figurative sense, the miserable ones, those who are called עַנְיֵי הַעֲצָאן in Zech. 11:7. It naturally follows from this, that the צַעְרִים are not identical with the whole flock, but simply form a small portion of it, viz., “the poor and righteous in the nation, who suffer injustice” (Hitzig). “The assertion that the flock is to be scattered, but that God will bring back His hand to the small ones, evidently implies that the small ones are included as one portion of the entire flock, for which God will prepare a different fate from that of the larger whole which is about to be dispersed” (Kliefoth).

On the fulfilment of this verse, we read in Matt. 26:31, 32, and Mark 14:27, that the bringing back of the hand of the Lord over the small ones was realized first of all in the case of the apostles. After the institution of the Lord’s Supper, Christ told His disciples that that same night they would all be offended because of Him; for it was written, “I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.” The quotation is made freely from the original text, the address to the sword being resolved into its actual meaning, “I will smite.” The offending of the disciples took place when Jesus was taken prisoner, and they all fled. This flight was a prelude to the dispersion of the flock at the death of the shepherd. But the Lord soon brought back His hand over the disciples. The

promise, “But after my resurrection I will go before you into Galilee,” is a practical exposition of the bringing back of the hand over the small ones, which shows that the expression is to be understood here in a good sense, and that it began to be fulfilled in the whole of the nation of Israel, to which we shall afterwards return. This more general sense of the words is placed beyond the reach of doubt by vv. 8 and 9; for v. 8 depicts the misery which the dispersion of the flock brings upon Israel, and v. 9 shows how the bringing back of the hand upon the small ones will be realized in the remnant of the nation. The dispersion of the flock will deliver two-thirds of the nation in the whole land to death, so that only one-third will remain alive. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is not the whole earth, but the whole of the holy land, as in Zech. 14:9, 10; and הָאָרֶץ, in Zech. 12:12, the land in which the flock, fed by the shepherds of the Lord, i.e., the nation of Israel, dwells. פִּי־שָׁנִים is taken from Deut. 21:17, as in 2 Kings 2:9; it is used there for the double portion inherited by the first-born. That it is used here to signify two-thirds, is evident from the remaining הַשְּׁלִישִׁית. “The whole of the Jewish nation,” says Hengstenberg, “is introduced here, as an inheritance left by the shepherd who has been put to death, which inheritance is divided into three parts, death claiming the privileges of the first-born, and so receiving *two* portions, and life one,—a division similar to that which David made in the case of the Moabites (2 Sam. 8:2).” יִגְעוּ is added to יִכְרְתוּ, to define יִכְרַת more precisely, as signifying not merely a cutting off from the land by transportation (cf. Zech. 14:2), but a cutting off from life (Koehler). גָּוַע, *expirare*, is applied both to natural and violent death (for the latter meaning, compare Gen. 7:21, Josh. 22:20). The remaining third is also to be refined through severe afflictions, to purify it from everything of a sinful nature, and make it into a truly holy nation of God. For the figure of melting and refining, compare Isa. 1:25; 48:10, Jer. 9:6, Mal. 3:3, Ps. 66:10. For the expression in v. 9b, compare Isa. 65:24; and for the thought of the

whole verse, Zech. 8:8, Hos. 2:25, Jer. 24:7; 30:22. The cutting off of the two-thirds of Israel commenced in the Jewish war under Vespasian and Titus, and in the war for the suppression of the rebellion led by the pseudo-Messiah *Bar Cochba*. It is not to be restricted to these events, however, but was continued in the persecutions of the Jews with fire and sword in the following centuries. The refinement of the remaining third cannot be taken as referring to the sufferings of the Jewish nation during the whole period of its present dispersion, as C. B. Michaelis supposes, nor generally to the tribulations which are necessary in order to enter into the kingdom of God, to the seven conflicts which the true Israel existing in the Christian church has to sustain, first with the two-thirds, and then and more especially with the heathen (Zech. 12:1–9, 14). For whilst Hengstenberg very properly objects to the view of Michaelis, on the ground that in that case the unbelieving portion of Judaism would be regarded as the legitimate and sole continuation of Israel; it may also be argued, in opposition to the exclusive reference in the third to the Christian church, that it is irreconcilable with the perpetuation of the Jews, and the unanimous entrance of all Israel into the kingdom of Christ, as taught by the Apostle Paul. Both views contain elements of truth, which must be combined, as we shall presently show.

Zechariah 14

All nations will be gathered together by the Lord against Jerusalem, and will take the city and plunder it, and lead away the half of its inhabitants into captivity (vv. 1, 2). The Lord will then take charge of His people; He will appear upon the Mount of Olives, and by splitting this mountain, prepare a safe way for the rescue of those that remain, and come with all His saints (vv. 3–5) to complete His kingdom. From Jerusalem a stream of salvation and blessing will pour over the whole land (vv. 6–11); the enemies who have come against Jerusalem will be miraculously smitten, and destroy one another (vv. 12–15). The remnant

of the nations, however, will turn to the Lord, and come yearly to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of Tabernacles (vv. 16–19); and Jerusalem will become thoroughly holy (vv. 20, 21). From this brief description of the contents, it is perfectly obvious that our chapter contains simply a further expansion of the summary announcement of the judgment upon Israel, and its refinement (Zech. 13:7–9). Vv. 1, 2 show how the flock is dispersed, and for the most part perishes; vv. 2b–5, how the Lord brings back His hand over the small ones; vv. 6–21, how the rescued remnant of the nation is endowed with salvation, and the kingdom of God completed by the reception of the believers out of the heathen nations. There is no essential difference in the fact that the nation of Israel is the object of the prophecy in Zech. 13:7–9, and Jerusalem in Zech. 14. Jerusalem, as the capital of the kingdom, is the seat of Israel, the nation of God; what happens to it, happens to the people and kingdom of God.

Zechariah 14:1–5. The judgment and the deliverance.—V. 1. *“Behold, a day cometh for Jehovah, and thy spoil is divided in the midst of thee. V. 2. And I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to war, and the city will be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished, and half the city will go out into captivity; but the remnant of the nation will not be cut off out of the city.”* A day comes to the Lord, not inasmuch as He brings it to pass, but rather because the day belongs to Him, since He will manifest His glory upon it (cf. Isa. 2:12). This day will at first bring calamity or destruction upon Israel; but this calamity will furnish occasion to the Lord to display His divine might and glory, by destroying the enemies of Israel and saving His people. In the second hemistich of v. 1, Jerusalem is addressed. “Thy spoil” is the booty taken by the enemy in Jerusalem. The prophet commences directly with the main fact, in a most vivid description, and only gives the explanation afterwards in v. 2. The *Vav consec.* attached to **וַיִּקְרַח** is also a *Vav explicativum*. The Lord gathers all nations together to war against Jerusalem, and gives up the city into

their power, that they may conquer it, and let loose all their barbarity upon it, plundering the houses and ravishing the women (cf. Isa. 13:16, where the same thing is affirmed of Babylon). Just as in the Chaldaean conquest the people had been obliged to wander into captivity, so will it be now, though not all the people, but only the half of the city. The remaining portion will not be cut off out of the city, i.e., be transported thence, as was the case at that time, when even the remnant of the nation was carried into exile (2 Kings 25:22). It is obvious at once from this, that the words do not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as Theodoret, Jerome, and others have supposed.

Zechariah 14:3-5. This time the Lord will come to the help of His people. V. 3. *“And Jehovah will go forth and fight against those nations, as in His day of battle, on the day of slaughter. V. 4. And His feet will stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which lies to the east before Jerusalem; and the Mount of Olives will split in the centre from east to west into a very great valley, and half of the mountain will remove to the north, and its (other) half to the south. V. 5. And ye will flee into the valley of my mountains, and the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel, and ye will flee as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. And Jehovah my God will come, all the saints with Thee.”* Against those nations which have conquered Jerusalem the Lord will fight **בְּיוֹם וְגוֹר**, as the day, i.e., as on the day, of His fighting, to which there is added, for the purpose of strengthening the expression, “on the day of the slaughter.” The meaning is not “according to the day when He fought in the day of the war,” as Jerome and many others suppose, who refer the words to the conflict between Jehovah and the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Ex. 14:14); for there is nothing to support this special allusion. According to the historical accounts in the Old Testament, Jehovah went out more than once to fight for His people (cf. Josh. 10:14, 42; 23:3; Judg. 4:15; 1 Sam. 7:10; 2 Chron. 20:15). The simile is therefore to be taken in a more general sense, as signifying “as He is accustomed to

fight in the day of battle and slaughter,” and to be understood as referring to all the wars of the Lord on behalf of His people. In vv. 4 and 5 we have first of all a description of what the Lord will do to save the remnant of His people. He appears upon the Mount of Olives, and as His feet touch the mountain it splits in half, so that a large valley is formed. The splitting of the mountain is the effect of the earthquake under the footsteps of Jehovah, before whom the earth trembles when He touches it (cf. Ex. 19:18; Judg. 5:5; Ps. 68:8; Nah. 1:5, etc.). The more precise definition of the situation of the Mount of Olives, viz., “before Jerusalem eastwards,” is not introduced with a geographical purpose—namely, to distinguish it from other mountains upon which olives trees grow—but is connected with the means employed by the Lord for the salvation of His people, for whom He opens a way of escape by splitting the mountain in two. The mountain is split **מִחֲצִיּוֹ** **מִזְרְחָהּ וְיָמָה**, from the half (i.e., the midst) of it to the east and to the west, i.e., so that a chasm ensues, which runs from the centre of the mountain both eastwards and westwards; so that the mountain is split latitudinally, one half (as is added to make it still more clear) removing to the south, the other to the north, and a great valley opening between them.

Into this valley the half of the nation that is still in Jerusalem will flee. **יָצֵא הָרִי** is the accusative of direction (Luther and others render it incorrectly, “before the valley of my mountains”). This valley is not the valley of the *Tyropaeon*, or the valley between Moriah and Zion (Jerome, Drus., Hofm.), but the valley which has been formed by the splitting of the Mount of Olives; and Jehovah calls the two mountains which have been formed through His power out of the Mount of Olives *hârai*, “my mountains.” Nor is it connected with the valley of Jehoshaphat; for the opinion that the newly-formed valley is merely an extension of the valley of Jehoshaphat has no foundation in the text, and is not in harmony with the direction taken by the new valley—namely, from east to west. The explanatory clause which follows,

“for the (newly-formed) valley of the mountains will reach אֶל אֲצֵל,” shows that the flight of the people into the valley is not to be understood as signifying that the valley will merely furnish the fugitives with a level road for escape, but that they will find a secure place of shelter in the valley. *’El ’Atsal* has been taken by different commentators, after Symm. and Jerome, in an appellative sense, “to very near,” which Koehler interprets as signifying that the valley will reach to the place where the fugitives are. This would be to Jerusalem, for that was where the fugitives were then. But if Zechariah had meant to say this, he could not have spoken more obscurely. *’Atsal*, the form in pause for *’âtsēl*, as we may see by comparing 1 Chron. 8:38 and 9:44 with 1 Chron. 8:39 and 9:43 (cf. Olsh. *Gramm.* § 91, *d*), is only met with elsewhere in the form אֲצֵל, not merely as a preposition, but also in the name בֵּית־הָאֲצֵל, and is here a proper name, as most of the ancient translators perceived,—namely, a contracted form of בֵּית־הָאֲצֵל, since בֵּית is frequently omitted from names of places constructed with it (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 193). This place is to be sought for, according to Mic. 1:11, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and according to the passage before us to the east of the Mount of Olives, as Cyril states, though from mere hearsay, κώμη δὲ αὐτῆς πρὸς ἐσχατιαῖς ὡς λόγος τοῦ ὄρους κειμένη. The fact that Jerome does not mention the place is no proof that it did not exist. A small place not far from Jerusalem, on the other side of the Mount of Olives, might have vanished from the earth long before this father lived. The comparison of the flight to the flight from the earthquake in the time of king Uzziah, to which reference is made in Amos 1:1, is intended to express not merely the swiftness and universality of the flight, but also the cause of the flight,—namely, that they do not merely fly from the enemy, but also for fear of the earthquake which will attend the coming of the Lord. In the last clause of v. 5 the object of the coming of the Lord is indicated. He has not only gone forth to fight against the enemy in Jerusalem, and deliver His people; but He

comes with His holy angels, to perfect His kingdom by means of the judgment, and to glorify Jerusalem. This coming is not materially different from His going out to war (v. 3); it is not another or a second coming, but simply a visible manifestation. For this coming believers wait, because it brings them redemption (Luke 21:28). This joyful waiting is expressed in the address “my God.” The holy ones are the angels (cf. Deut. 33:2, 3; Dan. 7:9, 10; Matt. 25:31), not believers, or believers as well as the angels. In what follows, Zechariah depicts first of all the completion secured by the coming of the Lord (vv. 6–11), and then the judgment upon the enemy (vv. 12–15), with its fruits and consequences (vv. 16–21).

Zechariah 14:6–11. Complete salvation.—V. 6. *“And it will come to pass on that day, there will not be light, the glorious ones will melt away.* V. 7. *And it will be an only day, which will be known to Jehovah, not day nor night: and it will come to pass, at evening time it will be light.”* The coming of the Lord will produce a change on the earth. The light of the earth will disappear. The way in which לֹא יְהִי אֹר is to be understood is indicated more precisely by יְקָרוֹת יִקְפְּאוּן. These words have been interpreted, however, from time immemorial in very different ways. The difference of gender in the combination of the feminine יְקָרוֹת with the masculine verb יִקְפְּאוּן, and the rarity with which the two words are met with, have both contributed to produce the *keri* יְקָרוֹת יִקְפְּאוּן, in which יְקָרוֹת has either been taken as a substantive formation from קָרַר, or the reading יְקָרוֹת with *Vav cop.* has been adopted in the sense of cold, and קָפְּאוּן (contraction, rigidity) taken to signify ice. The whole clause has then been either regarded as an antithesis to the preceding one, “It will not be light, but (sc., there will be) cold and ice” (thus Targ., Pesh., Symm., Itala, Luther, and many others); or taken in this sense, “There will not be light, and cold, and ice, i.e., no alternation of light, cold, and ice will occur” (Ewald, Umbr., Bunsen). But there is intolerable harshness in

both these views: in the first, on account of the insertion of יְהִיָּה without a negation for the purpose of obtaining an antithesis; in the second, because the combination of light, cold, and ice is illogical and unparalleled in the Scriptures, and cannot be justified even by an appeal to Gen. 8:22, since light is no more equivalent to day and night than cold and ice are to frost and heat, or summer and winter. We must therefore follow Hengstenberg, Hofmann, Koehler, and Kliefoth, who prefer the *chethib* יִקְפְּאוּ, and read it יִקְפְּאוּ, the imperf. *kal* of קָפָא. קָפָא signifies to congeal, or curdle, and is applied in Ex. 15:8 to the heaping up of the waters as it were in solid masses. יִקְרוּת, the costly or splendid things are the stars, according to Job 31:26, where the moon is spoken of as יִקְר הוֹלֵךְ, walking in splendour. The words therefore describe the passing away or vanishing of the brightness of the shining stars, answering to the prophetic announcement, that on the day of judgment, sun, moon, and stars will lose their brightness or be turned into darkness (Joel 4:15; Isa. 13:10; Ezek. 32:7, 8, Matt. 24:29; Rev. 6:12). In v. 7 this day is still more clearly described: first, as solitary in its kind; and secondly, as a marvellous day, on which the light dawns at evening time. The four clauses of this verse contain only two thoughts; each so expressed in two clauses that the second explains the first. יוֹם אֶחָד, *unus dies*, is not equivalent to *tempus non longum* (Cocceius, Hengst.), nor to “only one day, not two or more” (Koehler), but solitary in its kind, unparalleled by any other, because no second of the kind ever occurs (for the use of *’echâd* in this sense, compare v. 9, Ezek. 7:5, Song of Sol. 6:9). It is necessary to take the words in this manner on account of the following clause, “it will be known to the Lord;” i.e., not “it will be singled out by Jehovah in the series of days as the appropriate one” (Hitzig and Koehler), nor “it stands under the supervision and guidance of the Lord, so that it does not come unexpectedly, or interfere with His plans” (Hengstenberg), for neither of these is expressed in נוֹדֵעַ; but simply,

it is known to the Lord according to its true nature, and therefore is distinguished above all other days. The following definition, “not day and not night,” does not mean that “it will form a turbid mixture of day and night, in which there will prevail a mongrel condition of mysterious, horrifying twilight and gloom” (Koehler); but it will resemble neither day nor night, because the lights of heaven, which regulate day and night, lose their brightness, and at evening time there comes not darkness, but light. The order of nature is reversed: the day resembles the night, and the evening brings light. At the time when, according to the natural course of events, the dark night should set in, a bright light will dawn. The words do not actually affirm that the alternation of day and night will cease (Jerome, Neumann, Kliefoth); but this may be inferred from a comparison of Rev. 21:23 and 25.

Zechariah 14:8-11. V. 8. *“And it will come to pass in that day, that living waters will go out from Jerusalem; by half into the eastern sea, and by half into the western sea: in summer and in winter will it be.* V. 9. *And Jehovah will be King over all the land; in that day will Jehovah be one, and His name one.* V. 10. *The whole land will turn as the plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and this will be high, and dwell in its place, from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Chananeel to the king’s wine-presses.* V. 11. *And men will dwell therein, and there will be no more curse (ban); and Jerusalem will dwell securely.”* The living water which issues from Jerusalem, and pours over the land on both sides, flowing both into the eastern or Dead Sea, and into the hinder (i.e., western) or Mediterranean Sea (see at Joel 2:20), is, according to Joel 3:18 and Ezek. 47:1-12, a figurative representation of the salvation and blessing which will flow out of Jerusalem, the centre of the kingdom of God, over the holy land, and produce vigorous life on every hand. According to Joel and Ezekiel, the water issues from the temple (see at Joel 3:18). Zechariah adds, that this will take place in summer and winter, i.e., will proceed without interruption

throughout the whole year, whereas natural streams dry up in summer time in Palestine. To this blessing there is added the higher spiritual blessing, that Jehovah will be King over all the land, and His name alone will be mentioned and revered. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ does not mean the whole earth, but, as in vv. 8 and 10, the whole of the land of Canaan or of Israel, which is bounded by the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. It by no means follows from this, however, that Zechariah is simply speaking of a glorification of Palestine. For Canaan, or the land of Israel, is a type of the kingdom of God in the full extent which it will have on the earth in the last days depicted here. Jehovah's kingship does not refer to the kingdom of nature, but to the kingdom of grace,—namely, to the perfect realization of the sovereignty of God, for which the old covenant prepared the way; whereas the old Israel continually rebelled against Jehovah's being King, both by its sin and its idolatry. This rebellion, i.e., the apostasy of the nation from its God, is to cease, and the Lord alone will be King and God of the redeemed nation, and be acknowledged by it; His name alone will be mentioned, and not the names of idols as well.

The earthly soil of the kingdom of God will then experience a change. The whole land will be levelled into a plain, and Jerusalem will be elevated in consequence; and Jerusalem, when thus exalted, will be restored in its fullest extent. יָסַב (imperf. *kal*, not *niph'al*; see Ges. § 67, 5), to change like the plain, i.e., to change so as to become like the plain. הָעֲרֵבָה is not a plain generally, in which case the article would be used generically, but *the* plain, so called κατ' ἐξοχήν, the plain of the Jordan, or the Ghor (see at Deut. 1:1). The definition "from Geba to Rimmon" does not belong to כְּעֲרֵבָה (Umbreit, Neum., Klief.), but to כָּל־הָאָרֶץ; for there was no plain between Geba and Rimmon, but only an elevated, hilly country. *Geba* is the present *Jeba*, about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. 18:24), and was the northern frontier city of the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 23:8). *Rimmon*, which is distinguished by the

clause "to the south of Jerusalem" from the Rimmon in Galilee, the present *Rummaneh* to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. 19:13), and from the rock of Rimmon, the present village of *Rummon*, about fifteen Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem (see Judg. 20:45), is the *Rimmon* situated on the border of Edom, which was given up by the tribe of Judah to the Simeonites (Josh. 15:32; 19:7), probably on the site of the present ruins of *Um er Rummanim*, four hours to the north of Beersheba (see at Josh. 15:32). To וְיִרְאֶמָה וְגו' we must supply as the subject *Jerusalem*, which has been mentioned just before. רֵאמָה is probably only an outwardly expanded form of רָמָה from רוּם, like קָאם in Hos. 10:14. The whole land will be lowered, that Jerusalem alone may be high. This is, of course, not to be understood as signifying a physical elevation caused by the depression of the rest of the land; but the description is a figurative one, like the exaltation of the temple mountain above all the mountains in Mic. 4:1. Jerusalem, as the residence of the God-King, is the centre of the kingdom of God; and in the future this is to tower high above all the earth. The figurative description is attached to the natural situation of Jerusalem, which stood upon a broad mountain ridge, and was surrounded by mountains, which were loftier than the city (see Robinson, *Palestine*). The exaltation is a figurative representation of the spiritual elevation and glory which it is to receive. Moreover, Jerusalem is to dwell on its ancient site (יָשַׁב תְּהִתִּיחַ, as in Zech. 12:6). The meaning of this is not that the exaltation above the surrounding land will be the only alteration that will take place in its situation (Koehler); but, as a comparison with Jer. 31:38 clearly shows, that the city will be restored or rebuilt in its former extent, and therefore is to be completely recovered from the ruin brought upon it by conquest and plunder (v. 1). The boundaries of the city that are mentioned here cannot be determined with perfect certainty. The first definitions relate to the extent of the city from east to west. The starting-point (for

the use of לָמֶן, see Hag. 2:18) is Benjamin's gate, in the north wall, through which the road to Benjamin and thence to Ephraim ran, so that it was no doubt the same as Ephraim's gate mentioned in 2 Kings 14:13 and Neh. 8:16. The *terminus ad quem*, on the other hand, is doubtful, viz., "to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate." According to the grammatical construction, עַד־שַׁעַר הַפְּנִים is apparently in apposition to שַׁעַר הָרַי, or a more precise description of the position of the first gate; and Hitzig and Kliefoth have taken the words in this sense. Only we cannot see any reason why the statement "to the place of the first gate" should be introduced at all, if the other statement "to the corner gate" describes the very same terminal point, and that in a clearer manner. We must therefore assume, as the majority of commentators have done, that the two definitions refer to two different terminal points; in other words, that they define the extent both eastwards and westwards from the Benjamin's gate, which stood near the centre of the north wall. The corner gate (*sha'ar happinnîm* is no doubt the same as *sha'ar happinnâh* in 2 Kings 14:13 and Jer. 31:38) was at the western corner of the north wall. "The first gate" is supposed to be identical with שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה, the gate of the old (city), in Neh. 3:6 and 12:39, and its place at the north-eastern corner of the city. The definitions which follow give the extent of the city from north to south. We must supply מִן before מִגְדָּל. The tower of *Hananeel* (Jer. 31:38; Neh. 3:1; 12:39) stood at the north-east corner of the city (see at Neh. 3:1). The king's wine-presses were unquestionably in the king's gardens at the south side of the city (Neh. 3:15). In the city so glorified the inhabitants dwell (יָשְׁבוּ) in contrast to going out as captives or as fugitives, vv. 2 and 5), and that as a holy nation, for there will be no more any ban in the city. The ban presupposes sin, and is followed by extermination as a judgment (cf. Josh. 6:18). The city and its inhabitants will therefore be no more exposed to destruction, but will dwell

safely, and have no more hostile attacks to fear (cf. Isa. 65:18ff. and Rev. 22:3).

Zechariah 14:12–15. Punishment of the hostile nations.—V. 12. "And this will be the stroke wherewith Jehovah will smite all the nations which have made war upon Jerusalem: its flesh will rot while it stands upon its feet, and its eyes will rot in their sockets, and its tongue will rot in their mouth. V. 13. And it will come to pass in that day, the confusion from Jehovah will be great among them, and they will lay hold of one another's hand, and his hand will rise up against the hand of his neighbour. V. 14. And Judah will also fight at Jerusalem, and the riches of all nations will be gathered together round about, gold and silver and clothes in great abundance. V. 15. And so will be the stroke of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the cattle, that shall be in the same tents, like this stroke." To the description of the salvation there is appended here as the obverse side the execution of the punishment upon the foe, which was only indicated in v. 3. The nations which made war against Jerusalem shall be destroyed partly by the rotting away of their bodies even while they are alive (v. 12), partly by mutual destruction (v. 13), and partly by Judah's fighting against them (v. 14). To express the idea of their utter destruction, all the different kinds of plagues and strokes by which nations can be destroyed are grouped together. In the first rank we have two extraordinary strokes inflicted upon them by God. *Maggēphâh* always denotes a plague or punishment sent by God (Ex. 9:14; Num. 14:37; 1 Sam. 6:4). הִמְקָה, the inf. abs. *hiphil* in the place of the finite verb: "He (Jehovah) makes its flesh rot while it stands upon its feet," i.e., He causes putrefaction to take place even while the body is alive. The singular suffixes are to be taken distributively: the flesh of every nation or every foe. To strengthen the threat there is added the rotting of the eyes which spied out the nakednesses of the city of God, and of the tongue which blasphemed God and His people (cf. Isa. 37:6). The other kind of destruction is effected by a panic terror, through which the

foes are thrown into confusion, so that they turn their weapons against one another and destroy one another,—an occurrence of which several examples are furnished by the Israelitish history (compare Judg. 7:22, 1 Sam. 14:20, and especially that in 2 Chron. 20:23, in the reign of Jehoshaphat, to which the description given by our prophet refers). The grasp of the other's hand is a hostile one in this case, the object being to seize him, and, having lifted his hand, to strike him dead. V. 14a is translated by Luther and many others, after the Targum and Vulgate, "Judah will fight *against* Jerusalem," on the ground that **לְיָהוָה** generally signifies "to fight against a person." But this by no means suits the context here, since those who fight against Jerusalem are "all the heathen" (v. 2), and nothing is said about any opposition between Jerusalem and Judah. **וְ** is used here in a local sense, as in Ex. 17:8, with **וְלָחֵם**, and the thought is this: Not only will Jehovah smite the enemies miraculously with plagues and confusion, but Judah will also take part in the conflict against them, and fight against them in Jerusalem, which they have taken. *Judah* denotes the whole of the covenant nation, and not merely the inhabitants of the country in distinction from the inhabitants of the capital. Thus will Judah seize as booty the costly possessions of the heathen, and thereby visit the heathen with ample retribution for the plundering of Jerusalem (v. 2). And the destruction of the enemy will be so complete, that even their beasts of burden, and those used in warfare, and all their cattle, will be destroyed by the same plague as the men; just as in the case of the ban, not only the men, but also their cattle, were put to death (cf. Josh. 7:24). Moreover, there is hardly any need for the express remark, that this description is only a rhetorically individualizing amplification of the thought that the enemies of the kingdom of God are to be utterly destroyed,—namely, those who do not give up their hostility and turn unto God. For the verses which follow show very clearly that it is only to these that the threat of punishment refers.

Zechariah 14:16–19. Conversion of the heathen.—V. 16. "And it will come to pass, that every remnant of all the nations which came against Jerusalem will go up year by year to worship the King Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. V. 17. And it will come to pass, that whoever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King Jehovah of hosts, upon them there will be no rain. V. 18. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, then also not upon them; there will be (upon them) the plague with which Jehovah will plague all nations which do not go up to keep the feast of tabernacles. V. 19. This will be the sin of Egypt, and the sin of all the nations, which do not go up to keep the feast of tabernacles." The heathen will not be all destroyed by the judgment; but a portion of them will be converted. This portion is called "the whole remnant of those who marched against Jerusalem" (**עַל בּוֹא עַל**) as in Zech. 12:9). It will turn to the worship of the Lord. The construction in v. 16 is anacolouthic: **כָּל-הַגּוֹתֵר**, with its further definition, is placed at the head absolutely, whilst the predicate is attached in the form of an apodosis with **וְעָלֵי**. The entrance of the heathen into the kingdom of God is depicted under the figure of the festal journeys to the sanctuary of Jehovah, which had to be repeated year by year. Of the feasts which they will keep there every year (on **מִדֵּי** see Delitzsch on Isa. 66:23), the feast of tabernacles is mentioned, not because it occurred in the autumn, and the autumn was the best time for travelling (Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Grot., Ros.), or because it was the greatest feast of rejoicing kept by the Jews, or for any other outward reason, but simply on account of its internal significance, which we must not seek for, however, as Koehler does, in its agrarian importance as a feast of thanksgiving for the termination of the harvest, and of the gathering in of the fruit; but rather in its historical allusion as a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious protection of Israel in its wanderings through the desert, and its introduction into the promised land with its abundance of glorious blessings, whereby it

foreshadowed the blessedness to be enjoyed in the kingdom of God (see my *bibl. Archäologie*, i. p. 414ff.). This feast will be kept by the heathen who have come to believe in the living God, to thank the Lord for His grace, that He has brought them out of the wanderings of this life into the blessedness of His kingdom of peace. With this view of the significance of the feast of tabernacles, it is also possible to harmonize the punishment threatened in v. 17 for neglecting to keep this feast,—namely, that the rain will not be (come) upon the families of the nations which absent themselves from this feast. For rain is an individualizing expression denoting the blessing of God generally, and is mentioned here with reference to the fact, that without rain the fruits of the land, on the enjoyment of which our happiness depends, will not flourish. The meaning of the threat is, therefore, that those families which do not come to worship the Lord, will be punished by Him with the withdrawal of the blessings of His grace. The Egyptians are mentioned again, by way of example, as those upon whom the punishment will fall. So far as the construction of this verse is concerned, וְלֹא בָאָהּ is added to strengthen לֹא תֵעָלֶה and לֹא עֲלֵיהֶם contains the apodosis to the conditional clause introduced with אִם, to which יִהְיֶה הַגֶּשֶׁם is easily supplied from v. 17. The positive clause which follows is then appended as an asyndeton: It (the fact that the rain does not come) will be the plague, etc. The prophet mentions Egypt especially, not because of the fact in natural history, that this land owes its fertility not to the rain, but to the overflowing of the Nile,—a notion which has given rise to the most forced interpretations; but as the nation which showed the greatest hostility to Jehovah and His people in the olden time, and for the purpose of showing that this nation was also to attain to a full participation in the blessings of salvation bestowed upon Israel (cf. Isa. 19:19ff.). In v. 19 this thought is rounded off by way of conclusion. זֹאת, this, namely the fact that no rain falls, will be the sin of Egypt, etc. חַטָּאת, the sin, including its consequences,

or in its effects, as in Num. 32:23, etc. Moreover, we must not infer from the way in which this is carried out in vv. 17–19, that at the time of the completion of the kingdom of God there will still be heathen, who will abstain from the worship of the true God; but the thought is simply this: there will then be no more room for heathenism within the sphere of the kingdom of God. To this there is appended the thought, in vv. 20 and 21, that everything unholy will then be removed from that kingdom.

Zechariah 14:20, 21. V. 20. *“In that day there will stand upon the bells of the horses, Holy to Jehovah; and the pots in the house of Jehovah will be like the sacrificial bowls before the altar. V. 21. And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to Jehovah of hosts, and all who sacrifice will come and take of them, and boil therein; and there will be no Canaanite any more in the house of Jehovah of hosts in that day.”* The meaning of v. 20a is not exhausted by the explanation given by Michaelis, Ewald, and others, that even the horses will then be consecrated to the Lord. The words קִדְשׁ לַיהוָה were engraven upon the gold plate on the tiara of the high priest, in the characters used in engravings upon a seal (Ex. 28:36). If, then, these words are (i.e., are to stand) upon the bells of the horses, the meaning is, that the bells of the horses will resemble the head-dress of the high priest in holiness. This does not merely express the fact that the whole of the ceremonial law will be abolished, but also that the distinction between holy and profane will cease, inasmuch as even the most outward things, and things having no connection whatever with worship, will be as holy as those objects formerly were, which were dedicated to the service of Jehovah by a special consecration. In vv. 20b and 21a, the graduated distinction between the things which were more or less holy is brought prominently out. The pots in the sanctuary, which were used for boiling the sacrificial flesh, were regarded as much less holy than the sacrificial bowls in which the blood of the sacrificial animals was received, and out of which it was sprinkled or poured

upon the altar. In the future these pots will be just as holy as the sacrificial bowls; and indeed not merely the boiling pots in the temple, but all the boiling pots in Jerusalem and Judah, which have hitherto been only clean and not holy, so that men will use them at pleasure for boiling the sacrificial flesh. In this priestly-levitical drapery the thought is expressed, that in the perfected kingdom of God not only will everything without exception be holy, but all will be equally holy. The distinction between holy and profane can only cease, however, when the sin and moral defilement which first evoked this distinction, and made it necessary that the things intended for the service of God should be set apart, and receive a special consecration, have been entirely removed and wiped away. To remove this distinction, to prepare the way for the cleansing away of sin, and to sanctify once more that which sin had desecrated, was the object of the sacred institutions appointed by God. To this end Israel was separated from the nations of the earth; and in order to train it up as a holy nation, and to secure the object described, a law was given to it, in which the distinction between holy and profane ran through all the relations of life. And this goal will be eventually reached by the people of God; and sin with all its consequences be cleansed away by the judgment. In the perfected kingdom of God there will be no more sinners, but only such as are righteous and holy. This is affirmed in the last clause: there will be no Canaanite any more in the house of Jehovah. The Canaanites are mentioned here, not as merchants, as in Zeph. 1:11, Hos. 12:8 (as Jonathan, Aquila, and others suppose), but as a people laden with sin, and under the curse (Gen. 9:25; Lev. 18:24ff.; Deut. 7:2; 9:4, etc.), which has been exterminated by the judgment. In this sense, as the expression קַיִן אֱלֹהִים implies, the term Canaanite is used to denote the godless members of the covenant nation, who came to the temple with sacrifices, in outward self-righteousness. As קַיִן אֱלֹהִים presupposes that there were Canaanites in the temple of Jehovah in the time of the prophet,

the reference cannot be to actual Canaanites, because they were prohibited by the law from entering the temple, but only to Israelites, who were Canaanites in heart. Compare Isa. 1:10, where the princes of Judah are called princes of Sodom (Ezek. 16:3; 44:9). The "house of Jehovah" is the temple, as in the preceding verse, and not the church of Jehovah, as in Zech. 9:8, although at the time of the completion of the kingdom of God the distinction between Jerusalem and the temple will have ceased, and the whole of the holy city, yea, the whole of the kingdom of God, will be transformed by the Lord into a holy of holies (see Rev. 21:22, 27). Thus does our prophecy close with a prospect of the completion of the kingdom of God in glory. All believing commentators are agreed that the final fulfilment of vv. 20 and 21 lies before us in Rev. 21:27 and 22:15, and that even Zech. 12 neither refers to the Chaldaean catastrophe nor to the Maccabean wars, but to the Messianic times, however they may differ from one another in relation to the historical events which the prophecy foretels. Hofmann and Koehler, as well as Ebrard and Kliefoth, start with the assumption, that the prophecy in Zech. 12-14 strikes in where the preceding one in Zech. 9-11 terminates; that is to say, that it commences with the time when Israel was given up to the power of the fourth empire, on account of its rejection of the good shepherd, who appeared in Christ. Now since Hofmann and Koehler understand by Israel only the chosen people of the old covenant, or the Jewish nation, and by Jerusalem the capital of this nation in Palestine, they find this prophecy in Zech. 12, that when Jehovah shall eventually bring to pass the punishment of the bad shepherd, i.e., of the imperial power, with its hostility to God, it will assemble together again in its members the nations of the earth, to make war upon the material Jerusalem and Israel, which has returned again from its dispersion in all the world into the possession of the holy land (Palestine), and will besiege the holy city; but it will there be smitten by Jehovah, and lose its power over Israel. At that time will Jehovah also bring the previous hardening of Israel to an

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end, open its eyes to its sin against the Saviour it has put to death, and effect its conversion. But they differ in opinion as to Zech. 14. According to Koehler, this chapter refers to a future which is still in the distance—to a siege and conquest of Jerusalem which are to take place after Israel's conversion, through which the immediate personal appearance of Jehovah will be brought to pass, and all the effects by which that appearance is necessarily accompanied. According to Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. p. 610ff.), Zech. 14:1ff. refers to the same occurrence as Zech. 12:2ff., with this simple difference, that in Zech. 12 the prophet states what that day, in which the whole of the world of nations attacks Jerusalem, will do with the people of God, and in Zech. 14 to what extremity it will be brought. Ebrard and Kliefoth, on the other hand, understand by *Israel*, with its capital Jerusalem, and the house of David (in Zech. 12:1–13:6), rebellious Judaism after the rejection of the Messiah; and by *Judah* with its princes, Christendom. Hence the prophecy in this section announces what calamities will happen to Israel according to the flesh—that has become rebellious through rejecting the Messiah—from the first coming of Christ onwards, until its ultimate conversion after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in. The section Zech. 13:7–9 (the smiting of the shepherd) does not refer to the crucifixion of Christ, because this did not lead to the consequences indicated in v. 8, so far as the whole earth was concerned, but to the “cutting off of the Messiah” predicted in Dan. 9:26, the great apostasy which forms the beginning of the end, according to Luke 17:25, 2 Thess. 2:3, 1 Tim. 4:1, and 2 Time. 3:1, and through which Christ in His church is, according to the description in Rev. 13:17, so cut off from historical life, that it cannot be anything on earth. Lastly, Zech. 14 treats of the end of the world and the general judgment.

Of these two views, we cannot look upon either as well founded. For, in the first place, the assumption common to the two, and with which they set out, is erroneous and untenable,—namely, that the prophecy in Zech.

12ff. strikes in where the previous one in Zech. 9–11 terminated, and therefore that Zech. 12–14 is a direct continuation of Zech. 9–11. This assumption is at variance not only with the relation in which the two prophecies stand to one another, as indicated by the correspondence in their headings, and as unfolded in Zech. 12:1 and 2 (p. 605f., comp. p. 568), but also with the essence of the prophecy, inasmuch as it is not a historical prediction of the future according to its successive development, but simply a spiritual intuition effected by inspiration, in which only the leading features of the form which the kingdom of God would hereafter assume are set forth, and that in figures drawn from the circumstances of the present and the past. Again, the two views can only be carried out by forcing the text. If the prophecy in Zech. 12 started with the period when Israel came into power of the Roman empire after the rejection of the Messiah, it could not leap so abruptly to the last days, as Hofmann and Koehler assume, and commence with the description of a victorious conflict on the part of Israel against the nations of the world that were besieging Jerusalem, but would certainly first of all predict, if not the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans (which is merely indicated in Zech. 11), at all events the gathering together of the Jews, who had been scattered by the Romans over all the world, into Palestine and Jerusalem, before an attack of the nations of the world upon Israel could possibly be spoken of. Moreover, even the difference between Hofmann and Koehler with regard to the relation between Zech. 12:1–9 and Zech. 14:1–5 shows that the transference of the whole to the last times cannot be reconciled with the words of these sections. The hypothesis of Koehler, that after the gathering together of Israel out of its dispersion, the nations of the world would make an attack upon Jerusalem in which they would be defeated, and that this conflict would for the first time bring Israel to the recognition of its guilt in putting Christ to death, is at variance with the whole of the prophecy and teaching of

both the Old and New Testaments. For, according to these, Israel is not to be gathered together from its dispersion among the nations till it shall return with penitence to Jehovah, whom it has rejected. But Hofmann's statement as to the relation between the two sections is so brief and obscure, that it is more like a concealment than a clearing up of the difficulties which it contains. Lastly, when Hofmann correctly observes, that "by the *Israel* of the heading in Zech. 12:1 we can only understand the people of God, in contradistinction to the world of nations, which is estranged from God," this cannot apply to the unbelieving Jews, who have been given into the power of the last empire on account of their rejection of Christ, or Israel according to the flesh, for that Israel is rejected by God. The people of God exists, since the rejection of Christ, only in Christendom, which has been formed out of believing Jews and believing Gentiles, or the church of the New Testament, the stem and kernel of which were that portion of Israel which believingly accepted the Messiah when He appeared, and into whose bosom the believing Gentile peoples were received. Ebrard and Kliefoth are therefore perfectly right in their rejection of the Jewish chiliasm of Hofmann and Koehler; but when they understand by the *Israel* of the heading belonging to Zech. 12–14, which we find in Zech. 12:1–9, only the unbelieving carnal Israel, and by that in Zech. 14 the believing Israel which has been converted to Christ, and also introduce into Zech. 12:1–9 an antithesis between Israel and Judah, and then understand by Jerusalem and the house of David in Zech. 12 the hardened Jews, and by Judah, Christendom; and, on the other hand, by Jerusalem and Judah in Zech. 14 the Christendom formed of believing Jews and believing Gentiles,—we have already shown at Zech. 12:10 (p. 609) that these distinctions are arbitrarily forced upon the text.

Our prophecy treats in both parts—Zech. 12:1–13:6 and Zech. 13:7–14:21—of Israel, the people of God, and indeed the people of the new covenant, which has grown out of the Israel

that believed in Christ, and believers of the heathen nations incorporated into it, and refers not merely to the church of the new covenant in the last times, when all the old Israel will be liberated by the grace of God from the hardening inflicted upon it, and will be received again into the kingdom of God, and form a central point thereof (Vitranga, C. B. Mich., etc.), but to the whole development of the church of Christ from its first beginning till its completion at the second coming of the Lord, as Hengstenberg has in the main discovered and observed. As the *Israel* of the heading (Zech. 12:1) denotes the people of God in contradistinction to the peoples of the world, the inhabitants of Jerusalem with the house of David, and Judah with its princes, as the representatives of Israel, are typical epithets applied to the representatives and members of the new covenant people, viz., the Christian church; and Jerusalem and Judah, as the inheritance of Israel, are types of the seats and territories of Christendom. The development of the new covenant nation, however, in conflict with the heathen world, and through the help of the Lord and His Spirit, until its glorious completion, is predicted in our oracle, not according to its successive historical course, but in such a manner that the first half announces how the church of the Lord victoriously defeats the attacks of the heathen world through the miraculous help of the Lord, and how in consequence of this victory it is increased by the fact that the hardened Israel comes more and more to the acknowledgment of its sin and to belief in the Messiah, whom it has put to death, and is incorporated into the church; whilst the second half, on the other hand, announces how, in consequence of the slaying of the Messiah, there falls upon the covenant nation a judgment through which two-thirds are exterminated, and the remainder is tested and refined by the Lord, so that, although many do indeed fall and perish in the conflicts with the nations of the world, the remnant is preserved, and in the last conflict will be miraculously delivered through the coming of the Lord, who will come with His saints to

complete His kingdom in glory by the destruction of the enemies of His kingdom, and by the transformation and renewal of the earth. As the believing penitential look at the pierced One (Zech. 12:10) will not take place for the first time at the ultimate conversion of Israel at the end of the days, but began on the day of Golgotha, and continues through all the centuries of the Christian church, so did the siege of Jerusalem by all nations (Zech. 12:1-9), i.e., the attack of the heathen nations upon the church of God, commence even in the days of the apostles (cf. Acts 4:25ff.), and continues through the whole history of the Christian church to the last great conflict which will immediately precede the return of our Lord to judgment. And again, just as the dispersion of the flock after the slaying of the shepherd commenced at the arrest and death of Christ, and the bringing back of the hand of the Lord upon the small ones at the resurrection of Christ, so have they both been repeated in every age of the Christian church, inasmuch as with every fresh and powerful exaltation of antichristian heathenism above the church of Christ, those who are weak in faith flee and are scattered; but as soon as the Lord shows Himself alive in His church again, they let Him gather them together once more. And this will continue, according to the word of the Lord in Matt. 24:10ff., till the end of the days, when Satan will go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, and to gather together Gog and Magog to battle against the camp of the saints and the holy city; whereupon the Lord from heaven will destroy the enemy, and perfect His kingdom in the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. 20-22).

So far as the relation between Zech. 12:2-9 and Zech. 14:1-5 is concerned, it is evident from the

text of both these passages that they do not treat of two different attacks upon the church of God by the imperial power, occurring at different times; but that, whilst Zech. 12 depicts the constantly repeated attack in the light of its successful overthrow, Zech. 14 describes the hostile attack according to its partial success and final issue in the destruction of the powers that are hostile to God. This issue takes place, no doubt, only at the end of the course of this world, with the return of Christ to the last judgment; but the fact that Jerusalem is conquered and plundered, and the half of its population led away into captivity, proves indisputably that the siege of Jerusalem predicted in Zech. 14 must not be restricted to the last attack of Antichrist upon the church of the Lord, but that all the hostile attacks of the heathen world upon the city of God are embraced in the one picture of a siege of Jerusalem. In the attack made upon Jerusalem by Gog and Magog, the city is not conquered and plundered, either according to Ezek. 38 and 39, or according to Rev. 20:7-9; but the enemy is destroyed by the immediate interposition of the Lord, without having got possession of the holy city. But to this ideal summary of the conflicts and victories of the nations of the world there is appended directly the picture of the final destruction of the ungodly power of the world, and the glorification of the kingdom of God; so that in Zech. 14 (from vv. 6 to 21) there is predicted in Old Testament form the completion of the kingdom of God, which the Apostle John saw and described in Rev. 20-22 in New Testament mode under the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem.