

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 1

This chapter contains an account of the creation of the universe, and all things in it; asserts the creation of the heaven and earth in general, and describes the state and condition of the earth in its first production, (~~<0001>~~Genesis 1:1-2) and then proceeds to declare the work of each of the six days of creation, and to give an account of light, its separation from darkness and the names of both, the work of the first day, (~~<0003>~~Genesis 1:3-5) of the firmament, its use and name, the work of the second day, (~~<0006>~~Genesis 1:6-8) of the appearance of the earth, and the production of grass, herbs, and trees in the earth, the work of the third day, (~~<0009>~~Genesis 1:9-13) of the sun, moon, and stars, their situation, and use, the work of the fourth day, (~~<0014>~~Genesis 1:14-19) of the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the sea, the work of the fifth day, (~~<0019>~~Genesis 1:19-23) of all kinds of cattle, and beasts, and creeping things, (~~<0024>~~Genesis 1:24-25) and then of man, created male and female, after the image of God, having a grant of dominion over the rest of the creatures, the fruit of divine consultation, (~~<0026>~~Genesis 1:26-28) and of a provision of food for man and beast, (~~<0029>~~Genesis 1:29-30). And the chapter is concluded with a survey God took of all his works, and his approbation of them; all which were the work of the sixth day, and closes the account of the creation in that space of time, (~~<0031>~~Genesis 1:31).

Ver. 1. *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*] By the heaven some understand the supreme heaven, the heaven of heavens, the habitation of God, and of the holy angels; and this being made perfect at once, no mention is after made of it, as of the earth; and it is supposed that the angels were at this time created, since they were present at the laying of the foundation of the earth, (~~<183016>~~Job 38:6-7) but rather the lower and visible heavens are meant, at least are not excluded, that is, the substance of them; as yet being imperfect and unadorned; the expanse not yet made, or the ether and air not yet stretched out; nor any light placed in them, or adorned with the sun, moon, and stars: so the earth is to be understood, not of that properly so called, as separated from the waters, that is, the dry land

afterwards made to appear; but the whole mass of earth and water before their separation, and when in their unformed and unadorned state, described in the next verse: in short, these words represent the visible heavens and the terraqueous globe, in their chaotic state, as they were first brought into being by almighty power. The **h** prefixed to both words is, as Aben Ezra observes, expressive of notification or demonstration, as pointing at “those” heavens, and “this earth”; and shows that things visible are here spoken of, whatever is above us, or below us to be seen: for in the Arabic language, as he also observes, the word for “heaven”, comes from one which signifies high or above ^{f4}; as that for “earth” from one that signifies low and beneath, or under ^{f5}. Now it was the matter or substance of these that was first created; for the word **ta** set before them signifies substance, as both Aben Ezra and ^{f6} Kimchi affirm. Maimonides ^{f7} observes, that this particle, according to their wise men, is the same as “with”; and then the sense is, God created with the heavens whatsoever are in the heavens, and with the earth whatsoever are in the earth; that is, the substance of all things in them; or all things in them were seminally together: for so he illustrates it by an husbandman sowing seeds of divers kinds in the earth, at one and the same time; some of which come up after one day, and some after two days, and some after three days, though all sown together. These are said to be “created”, that is, to be made out of nothing; for what pre-existent matter to this chaos could there be out of which they could be formed? And the apostle says, “through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear”, (^{<8108>}Hebrews 11:3). And though this word is sometimes used, and even in this chapter, of the production of creatures out of pre-existent matter, as in (^{<0021>}Genesis 1:21,27) yet, as Nachmanides observes, there is not in the holy language any word but this here used, by which is signified the bringing anything into being out of nothing; and many of the Jewish interpreters, as Aben Ezra, understand by creation here, a production of something into being out of nothing; and Kimchi says ^{f8} that creation is a making some new thing, and a bringing something out of nothing: and it deserves notice, that this word is only used of God; and creation must be the work of God, for none but an almighty power could produce something out of nothing. The word used is “Elohim”, which some derive from another, which signifies power, creation being an act of almighty power: but it is rather to be derived from the root in the Arabic language, which signifies to worship ^{f9}, God being the object of all religious worship and adoration; and very properly does Moses make

use of this appellation here, to teach us, that he who is the Creator of the heavens and the earth is the sole object of worship; as he was of the worship of the Jewish nation, at the head of which Moses was. It is in the plural number, and being joined to a verb of the singular, is thought by many to be designed to point unto us the mystery of a plurality, or trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence: but whether or no this is sufficient to support that doctrine, which is to be established without it; yet there is no doubt to be made, that all the three Persons in the Godhead were concerned in the creation of all things, (see ^{<1316>}Psalm 33:6). The Heathen poet Orpheus has a notion somewhat similar to this, who writes, that all things were made by one Godhead of three names, and that this God is all things^{f10}: and now all these things, the heaven and the earth, were made by God “in the beginning”, either in the beginning of time, or when time began, as it did with the creatures, it being nothing but the measure of a creature’s duration, and therefore could not be until such existed; or as Jarchi interprets it, in the beginning of the creation, when God first began to create; and is best explained by our Lord, “the beginning of the creation which God created”, (^{<1319>}Mark 13:19) and the sense is, either that as soon as God created, or the first he did create were the heavens and the earth; to which agrees the Arabic version; not anything was created before them: or in connection with the following words, thus, “when first”, or “in the beginning”, when “God created the heavens and the earth”, then “the earth was without form”, etc^{f11}. The Jerusalem Targum renders it, “in wisdom God created”; (see ^{<1319>}Proverbs 3:19) and some of the ancients have interpreted it of the wisdom of God, the Logos and Son of God. From hence we learn, that the world was not eternal, either as to the matter or form of it, as Aristotle, and some other philosophers, have asserted, but had a beginning; and that its being is not owing to the fortuitous motion and conjunction of atoms, but to the power and wisdom of God, the first cause and sole author of all things; and that there was not any thing created before the heaven and the earth were: hence those phrases, before the foundation of the world, and before the world began, etc. are expressive of eternity: this utterly destroys the notion of the pre-existence of the souls of men, or of the soul of the Messiah: false therefore is what the Jews say^{f12}, that paradise, the righteous, Israel, Jerusalem, etc. were created before the world; unless they mean, that these were foreordained by God to be, which perhaps is their sense.

Ver. 2. *And the earth was without form, and void*, etc.] It was not in the form it now is, otherwise it must have a form, as all matter has; it was a fluid matter, the watery parts were not separated from the earthy ones; it was not put into the form of a terraqueous globe it is now, the sea apart, and the earth by itself, but were mixed and blended together; it was, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, a waste and desert, empty and destitute of both men and beasts; and it may be added, of fishes and fowls, and also of trees, herbs, and plants. It was, as Ovid^{f13} calls it, a chaos and an indigested mass of matter; and Hesiod^{f14} makes a chaos first to exist, and then the wide extended earth, and so Orpheus^{f15}, and others; and this is agreeably to the notion of various nations. The Chinese make a chaos to be the beginning of all things, out of which the immaterial being (God) made all things that consist of matter, which they distinguish into parts they call Yin and Yang, the one signifying hidden or imperfect, the other open or perfect^{f16}; and so the Egyptians, according to Diodorus Siculus^{f17}, whose opinion he is supposed to give, thought the system of the universe had but one form; the heaven and earth, and the nature of them, being mixed and blended together, until by degrees they separated and obtained the form they now have: and the Phoenicians, as Sanchoniatho^{f18} relates, supposed the principle of the universe to be a dark and windy air, or the blast of a dark air, and a turbid chaos surrounded with darkness, as follows;

and darkness was upon the face of the deep: the whole fluid mass of earth and water mixed together. This abyss is explained by waters in the next clause, which seem to be uppermost; and this was all a dark turbid chaos, as before expressed, without any light or motion, till an agitation was made by the Spirit, as is next observed:

and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, which covered the earth, (⁹⁴⁴⁶Psalm 104:6) the earthy particles being heaviest sunk lower, and the waters being lighter rose up above the others: hence Thales^{f19} the philosopher makes water to be the beginning of all things, as do the Indian Brahmins^{f20}: and Aristotle^{f21} himself owns that this was the most ancient opinion concerning the origin of the universe, and observes, that it was not only the opinion of Thales, but of those that were the most remote from the then present generation in which he lived, and of those that first wrote on divine things; and it is frequent in Hesiod and Homer to make Oceanus, or the ocean, with Tethys, to be the parents of generation: and so the Scriptures represent the original earth as standing out of the water, and

consisting of it, (~~GRB~~ 2 Peter 3:5) and upon the surface of these waters, before they were drained off the earth, “the Spirit of God moved”; which is to be understood not of a wind, as Onkelos, Aben Ezra, and many Jewish writers, as well as Christians, interpret it; since the air, which the wind is a motion of, was not made until the second day. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it the spirit of mercies; and by it is meant the Spirit of the Messiah, as many Jewish writers ^{f22} call him; that is, the third Person in the blessed Trinity, who was concerned in the creation of all things, as in the garnishing of the heavens, so in bringing the confused matter of the earth and water into form and order; (see ~~GRB~~ Job 26:13 ~~PAB~~ Psalm 104:30 ~~GRB~~ Psalm 33:6). This same Spirit “moved” or brooded ^{f23} upon the face of the waters, to impregnate them, as an hen upon eggs to hatch them, so he to separate the parts which were mixed together, and give them a quickening virtue to produce living creatures in them. This sense and idea of the word are finely expressed by our poet ^{f24}. Some traces of this appear in the *νοῦς* or mind of Anaxagoras, which when all things were mixed together came and set them in order ^{f25}; and the “mens” of Thales he calls God, which formed all things out of water ^{f26}; and the “spiritus intus alit”, etc. of Virgil; and with this agrees what Hermes says, that there was an infinite darkness in the abyss or deep, and water, and a small intelligent spirit, endued with a divine power, were in the chaos ^{f27}: and perhaps from hence is the mundane egg, or egg of Orpheus ^{f28}: or the firstborn or first laid egg, out of which all things were formed; and which he borrowed from the Egyptians and Phoenicians, and they perhaps from the Jews, and which was reckoned by them a resemblance of the world. The Egyptians had a deity they called Cneph, out of whose mouth went forth an egg, which they interpreted of the world ^{f29}: and the Zophasemin of the Phoenicians, which were heavenly birds, were, according to Sanchoniatho ^{f30}, of the form of an egg; and in the rites of Bacchus they worshipped an egg, as being an image of the world, as Macrobius ^{f31} says; and therefore he thought the question, whether an hen or an egg was oldest, was of some moment, and deserved consideration: and the Chinese say ^{f32}, that the first man was produced out of the chaos as from an egg, the shell of which formed the heavens, the white the air, and the yolk the earth; and to this incubation of the spirit, or wind, as some would have it, is owing the windy egg of Aristophanes ^{f33}.

Thomas Chamlers (1780-1847) in 1814 was the first to purpose that there is a gap between verse 1 and 2. Into this gap he places a pre-Adamic age, about which the scriptures say nothing. Some great catastrophe took place,

which left the earth “without form and void” or ruined, in which state it remained for as many years as the geologist required. ^{f34}

This speculation has been popularised by the 1917 Scofield Reference Bible. However, the numerous rock layers that are the supposed proof for these ages, were mainly laid down by Noah’s flood. In (~~<0211>~~ Exodus 20:11) we read of a literal six day creation. No gaps, not even for one minute, otherwise these would not be six normal days. Also, in (~~<0152>~~ Romans 5:12) we read that death is the result of Adam’s sin. Because the rock layers display death on a grand scale, they could not have existed before the fall of Adam. There is no direct evidence that the earth is much older than six thousand years. However, we have the direct eyewitness report of God himself that he made everything in six days. Tracing back through the biblical genealogies we can determine the age of the universe to be about six thousand years with an error of not more than two per cent.. Editor.)

Ver. 3. *And God said*, etc.] This phrase is used, nine times in this account of the creation; it is admired by Longinus the Heathen in his treatise “of the Sublime”, as a noble instance of it; and it is most beautifully paraphrased and explained in (~~<0306>~~ Psalm 33:6) as expressive of the will, power, authority, and efficacy of the divine Being; whose word is clothed with power, and who can do, and does whatever he will, and as soon as he pleases; his orders are always obeyed. Perhaps the divine Person speaking here is the Logos or Word of God, which was in the beginning with God, and was God, and who himself is the light that lightens every creature. The words spoke were,

let there be light, and there was light: it at once appeared; “God commanded light to shine out of darkness”; as the apostle says, (~~<0006>~~ 2 Corinthians 4:6) this was the first thing made out of the dark chaos; as in the new creation, or work of grace in the heart, light is the first thing produced there: what this light was is not easy to say. Some of the Jewish Rabbins, and also some Christian writers, think the angels are designed by it, which is not at all probable, as the ends and use of this light show: others of them are of opinion, that it is the same with the sun, of which a repetition is made on the fourth day, because of its use and efficacy to the earth, and its plants; but others more rightly take it to be different from the sun, and a more glimmering light, which afterwards was gathered into and perfected in the body of the sun ^{f35}. It is the opinion of Zanchius ^{f36}, and which is approved of by our countryman, Mr. Fuller ^{f37}, that it was a lucid

body, or a small lucid cloud, which by its circular motion from east to west made day and night ^{f38}; perhaps somewhat like the cloudy pillar of fire that guided the Israelites in the wilderness, and had no doubt heat as well as light; and which two indeed, more or less, go together; and of such fiery particles this body may well be thought to consist. The word “Ur” signifies both fire and light.

Ver. 4. *And God saw the light, that it was good*, etc.] Very pleasant and delightful, useful and beneficial; that is, he foresaw it would be good, of great service, as Picherellus ^{f39} interprets it; for as yet there were no inhabitants of the earth to receive any advantage by it; (see ²¹¹⁰⁷ Ecclesiastes 11:7) besides, it was doubtless good to answer some present purposes, to prepare for the work of the two following days, before the great luminary was formed; as to dispel the darkness of heaven, and that which covered the deep; to rarefy, exhale, and draw up the lighter parts of the chaos, in order to form the wide extended ether, the expanded air, and the surrounding atmosphere, while the Spirit of God was agitating the waters, and separating them from the earthy parts; and which also might serve to unite and harden those which were to form the dry land, and also to warm that when it appeared, that it might bring forth grass, herbs, and fruit trees:

and God divided the light from the darkness: by which it should seem that they were mixed together, the particles of light and darkness; but “by what way is the light parted”, severed and divided from darkness, is a question put to men by the Lord himself, who only can answer it, (⁸⁸³²⁴ Job 38:24) he has so divided one from the other that they are not together at the same place and time; when light is in one hemisphere, darkness is in the other ^{f40}; and the one by certain constant revolutions is made to succeed the other; and by the motion of the one, the other gives way; as well as also God has divided and distinguished them by calling them by different names, as Aben Ezra, and is what next follows:

Ver. 5. *And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night*, etc.] Either by the circulating motion of the above body of light, or by the rotation of the chaos on its own axis towards it, in the space of twenty four hours there was a vicissitude of light and darkness; just as there is now by the like motion either of the sun, or of the earth; and which after this appellation God has given, we call the one, day, and the other, night:

and the evening and the morning were the first day: the evening, the first part of the night, or darkness, put for the whole night, which might be

about the space of twelve hours; and the morning, which was the first part of the day, or light, put also for the whole, which made the same space, and both together one natural day, consisting of twenty four hours; what Daniel calls an “evening morning”, (²⁰⁸⁶Daniel 8:26) and the apostle νυκθημερον, a “night day”, (⁴¹²⁵2 Corinthians 11:25). Thales being asked which was first made, the night or the day, answered, the night was before one day^{f41}. The Jews begin their day from the preceding evening; so many other nations: the Athenians used to reckon their day from sun setting to sun setting^{f42}; the Romans from the middle of the night, to the middle of the night following, as Gellius^{f43} relates; and Tacitus^{f44} reports of the ancient Germans, that they used to compute not the number of days, but of nights, reckoning that the night led the day. Caesar^{f45} observes of the ancient Druids in Britain, that they counted time not by the number of days, but nights; and observed birthdays, and the beginnings of months and years, so as that the day followed the night; and we have some traces of this still among us, as when we say this day se’nnight, or this day fortnight. This first day of the creation, according to James Capellus, was the eighteenth of April; but, according to Bishop Usher, the twenty third of October; the one beginning the creation in the spring, the other in autumn. It is a notion of Mr. Whiston’s, that the six days of the creation were equal to six years, a day and a year being one and the same thing before the fall of man, when the diurnal rotation of the earth about its axis, as he thinks, began; and in agreement with this, very remarkable is the doctrine Empedocles taught, that when mankind sprung originally from the earth, the length of the day, by reason of the slowness of the sun’s motion, was equal to ten of our present months^{f46}. The Hebrew word br [, “Ereb”, rendered “evening”, is retained by some of the Greek poets, as by Hesiod^{f47}, who says, out of the “chaos” came “Erebus”, and black night, and out of the night ether and the day; and Aristophanes^{f48}, whose words are,

“chaos, night, and black “Erebus” were first, and wide Tartarus, but there were neither earth, air, nor heaven, but in the infinite bosom of Erebus, black winged night first brought forth a windy egg, etc.”

And Orpheus^{f49} makes night to be the beginning of all things.

Ver. 6. *And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters,* etc.] On which the Spirit of God was sitting and moving, (⁰⁰⁰²Genesis 1:2) part of which were formed into clouds, and drawn up into heaven by the force of the body of fire and light already produced; and the other part left

on the earth, not yet gathered into one place, as afterwards: between these God ordered a “firmament to be”, or an “expanse” ^{f51}; something stretched out and spread like a curtain, tent, or canopy: and to this all those passages of Scripture refer, which speak of the stretching out of the heavens, as this firmament or expanse is afterwards called; (see ^{<19412>}Psalm 104:2 ^{<2302>}Isaiah 40:22 42:5) and by it is meant the air, as it is rendered by the Targum on (^{<1900>}Psalm 19:1) we call it the “firmament” from the ^{f51} word which the Greek interpreter uses, because it is firm, lasting, and durable: and it has the name of an expanse from its wide extent, it reaching from the earth to the third heaven; the lower and thicker parts of it form the atmosphere in which we breathe; the higher and thinner parts of it, the air in which fowls fly, and the ether or sky in which the sun, moon, and stars are placed; for all these are said to be in the firmament or expanse, (^{<0017>}Genesis 1:17,20). These are the stories in the heavens the Scriptures speak of, (^{<3006>}Amos 9:6) and the air is divided by philosophers into higher, middle, and lower regions: and so the Targum of Jonathan places this firmament or expanse between the extremities of the heaven, and the waters of the ocean. The word in the Syriac language has the sense of binding and compressing ^{f52}; and so it is used in the Syriac version of (^{<0038>}Luke 6:38) and may denote the power of the air when formed in compressing the chaos, and dividing and separating the parts of it; and which it now has in compressing the earth, and the several parts that are in it, and by its compression preserves them and retains them in their proper places ^{f53}:

and let it divide the waters from the waters; the waters under it from those above it, as it is explained in the next verse; of which more there.

Ver. 7. *And God made the firmament*, etc.] By a word speaking, commanding it into being, producing it out of the chaos, and spreading it in that vast space between the heaven of heavens and our earth ^{f54}.

And divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament; the lower part of it, the atmosphere above, which are the clouds full of water, from whence rain descends upon the earth; and which divided between them and those that were left on the earth, and so under it, not yet gathered into one place; as it now does between the clouds of heaven and the waters of the sea. Though Mr. Gregory ^{f55} is of opinion, that an abyss of waters above the most supreme orb is here meant; or a great deep between the heavens and the heaven of heavens, where, as in storehouses, the depth is laid up; and God has his

treasures of snow, hail, and rain, and from whence he brought out the waters which drowned the world at the universal deluge. Others suppose the waters above to be the crystalline heaven, which for its clearness resembles water; and which Milton ^{f56} calls the “crystalline ocean”.

And it was so: the firmament was accordingly made, and answered this purpose, to divide the waters below it from those above it; or “it was firm” ^{f57}, stable and durable; and so it has continued.

Ver. 8. *And God called the firmament heaven*, etc.] Including the starry and airy heavens: it has its name from its height in the Arabic language, it being above the earth, and reaching to the third heaven; though others take the word “shamaim” to be a compound of two words, “sham” and “maim”, that is, there are waters, namely, in the clouds of heaven:

and the evening; and the morning were the second day; these together made up the space of twenty four hours, which was another natural day; the body of light, created on the first day, having again moved round the chaos in that space of time; or else the chaos had turned round on its own axis in that time, which revolution produced a second day; and which, according to Capellus, was the nineteenth of April, and according to Bishop Usher the twenty fourth of October. It is an observation that everyone may make, that the phrase,

and God saw that it was good, is not used at the close of this day’s work, as of the rest: the reason some Jewish writers give is, because the angels fell on this day; but it is a much better which Jarchi gives, and that is, because the work of the waters was not finished; it was begun on the second day, and perfected on the third ^{f58}; and therefore the phrase is twice used in the account of the third day’s work: the Septuagint version adds it here indeed, but without any foundation.

Ver. 9. *And God said, let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place*, etc.] Which are before called the waters under the firmament; and which were either on the surface of the earth, or in the bowels of it, or mixed with it, which by the compressure of the expanse or air were separated from it and these, by apertures and channels made, were caused to flow as by a straight line, as the word ^{f59} used signifies, unto the decreed place that was broke up for them, the great hollow or channel which now contains the waters of the ocean: this was done by the word of the Lord, at his rebuke; and when it seems there was a clap thunder, and

perhaps an earthquake, which made the vast cavity for the sea, as well as threw up the hills and mountains, and made the valleys; (see ~~<1880>~~ Job 38:10 ~~<1946>~~ Psalm 104:6-8),

and let the dry land appear: clear of the waters, dried by the expanded air, hardened by the fiery light, and as yet without any herb or tree upon it:

and it was so; immediately done, the waters were drained off the earth, directed to their proper channels, and caused to run as by line to their appointed place; and the solid parts of the earth became dry, and appeared in sight.

Ver. 10. *And God called the dry land earth*, etc.] The whole chaos, that was a turbid fluid, a mixture of earth and water, a rude unformed mass of matter, was called earth before; but now that part of the terraqueous globe, which was separated from the waters, and they from it, is called “earth”: which has its name in the Arabic language from its being low and depressed; the lighter parts having been elevated, and moved upwards, and formed the atmosphere; the grosser parts subsiding and falling downwards, made the earth, which is low with respect to the firmament, which has its name in the same language from its height ^{f60}, as before observed.

And the gathering together of the waters called he seas; for though there was but one place into which they were collected, and which is the main ocean, with which all other waters have a communication, and so are one; yet there are divers seas, as the Red sea, the Mediterranean, Caspian, Baltic, etc. or which are denominated from the shores they wash, as the German, British, etc. and even lakes and pools of water are called seas, as the sea of Galilee and Tiberias, which was no other than the lake of Gennesaret.

And God saw [that it was] good; that these two should be separate, that the waters should be in one place, and the dry land appear, and both have the names he gave them: and this is here mentioned, because now the affair of the waters, the division and separation of them, were brought to an end, and to perfection: but because this phrase is here used, and not at the mention of the second day, hence Picherellus, and some others, have thought, that this work is to be ascribed to the second day, and not to the third, and render the beginning of the ninth verse, and “God had said”, or “after God had said, let the waters under the heaven”, etc. (~~<1000>~~ Genesis 1:9)

Ver. 11. *And God said, let the earth bring forth grass*, etc.] Which had been impregnated by the Spirit of God that moved upon it when a fluid; and though now become dry land, it retained sufficient moisture in it, and was juicy and fit to produce vegetables; and especially as it had the advantage of the expanded air about it, and the warmth of the primordial light or fire; though all this would have been insufficient to produce plants and trees at full growth, with their seed in them, and fruit on them, without the interposition of almighty power: this seems to intend the germination or budding out of the tender grass, and the numerous spires of it which cover the earth, and by their verdure and greenness give it a delightful aspect, as well as afford food for the creatures:

the herb yielding seed; this is distinct from the former; that denotes herbage in general, which grows up of itself without being sown or manured, and is the food of beasts; this in particular, herbs and plants for the use of man, which yield a seed which either falling from it sows itself again, or is taken from it and sown on purpose to reproduce it, being useful or delightful:

[and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind; as apples, pears, plums, apricots, nectars, peaches, oranges, lemons, etc.

whose seed is in itself upon the earth; each of which produce a seed according to the nature of them, which being sown produce the like, and so there is a continuance of them upon the earth:

and it was so; as God commanded it should, as appears from the following verse.

Ver. 12. *And the earth brought forth grass*, etc.] In great abundance at once; the hills and vales were clothed with it, and so a rich provision was made the beasts and cattle of the earth two or three days before they were created:

[and] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself after his kind: wholesome and healthful herbs and plants, and delicious fruit to be meat and food for man, ready prepared for him when created; (see ^{<00023>}Genesis 1:29-30) on this day, though after related, were made the garden of Eden, and all the trees in it, pleasant for sight, and good for food; and particularly the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil;

and God saw that it [was] good; which he had now caused to spring forth, grass, herbs, and fruit trees, which were good for men and beast, and this he foresaw would be so; (see Gill on “~~Genesis~~ Genesis 1:4”).

Ver. 13. *And the evening and the morning were the third day.*] The space of twenty four hours ran out, and were measured, either by the rotation of the body of light and heat around the earth, or of the earth upon its axis: and this was according to Capellus the twentieth day of April, and, according to Bishop Usher, the twenty fifth of October; though those who suppose the world was created in autumn make the first day to be the first of September, and so this must be the third of that month; the Jews are divided about the season of the creation; some say Nisan or March, others Tisri or September^{f61}

Ver. 14. *And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven,* etc.] In the upper part of it, commonly called the starry heaven: some writers, both Jewish and Christian, and even modern astronomers, understand this only of the appearance of them, and not of the formation of them; they suppose they were made on the first day, but did not appear or shine out so clearly and visibly as now on the fourth day: but it seems rather, that the body of fire and light produced on the first day was now distributed and formed into several luminous bodies of sun, moon, and stars, for these were *tram*, “from light”; lights produced from that light, or made out of it; or were instruments of communicating and letting down that light upon the earth^{f62}, which was collected and put together in them, especially in the sun: and the uses of them were

to divide the day from the night; which is the peculiar use of the sun, which by its appearance and continuance makes the day, and by withdrawing itself, or not appearing for a certain time, makes the night; as the light by its circular motion did for the first three days, or the diurnal motion of the earth on its axis, then and now:

and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years; for “signs” of good and bad weather; for the times of ploughing, sowing, reaping, etc. and for the “seasons” of summer and winter, spring and autumn; for “days” by a circular motion for the space of twenty four hours; and for “years” by annual motion for the space of three hundred sixty five days and odd hours. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“and let them be for signs and the times of the feasts, and to reckon with them the number of days, and, sanctify the beginnings of the months, and the beginnings of the years, and the intercalations of months and years, the revolutions of the sun, and the new moons, and cycles.”

And so Jarchi interprets “seasons” of the solemn festivals, that would hereafter be commanded the children of Israel; but those uses were not for a certain people, and for a certain time, but for all mankind, as long as the world should stand.

Ver. 15. *And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven*, etc.] To continue there as luminous bodies; as enlighteners, as the word signifies, causing light, or as being the instruments of conveying it, particularly to the earth, as follows:

to give light upon the earth; and the inhabitants of it, when formed:

and it was so: these lights were formed and placed in the firmament of the heaven for such uses, and served such purposes as God willed and ordered they should.

Ver. 16. *And God made two great lights*, etc.] This was his own work which he himself did, and not by another; and may be particularly observed to express the folly of idolaters in worshipping these luminaries which were the creations of God, and were placed by him in the heaven to serve some purposes on earth beneficial to men, but not to be worshipped. These two “great lights” are the sun and the moon; and they may well be called great, especially the former, for the diameter of the sun is reckoned to be about eight hundred thousand miles. According to Mr. Derham^{f63} its apparent diameter is computed at 822,145 English miles, its ambit at 2,582,873 miles, and its solid contents at 290,971,000,000,000,000: the lowest account makes the sun a hundred thousand times bigger than the earth; and according to Sir Isaac Newton it is 900,000 bigger. The moon’s diameter is to that of the earth is about twenty seven per cent, or 2175 miles, its surface contains fourteen hundred thousand square miles^{f64}: it is called great, not on account of its corporeal quantity, for it is the least of all the planets excepting Mercury, but because of its quality, as a light, it reflecting more light upon the earth than any besides the sun.

The greater light to rule the day: not to rule men, though the heathens have worshipped it under the names of Molech and Baal, which signify

king and lord, as if it was their lord and king to whom they were to pay homage; but to rule the day, to preside over it, to make it, give light in it, and continue it to its proper length; and in which it rules alone, the moon, nor any of the other planets then appearing: this is called the “greater” light, in comparison of the moon, not only with respect to its body or substance, but on account of its light, which is far greater and stronger than that of the moon; and which indeed receives its light from it, the moon being, as is generally said, an opaque body:

and the lesser light to rule the night; to give light then, though in a fainter, dimmer way, by reflecting it from the sun; and it rules alone, the sun being absent from the earth, and is of great use to travellers and sailors; it is called the lesser light, in comparison of the sun. Astronomers are of opinion, as Calmet^{f65} observes, that it is about fifty two times smaller than the earth, and four thousand one hundred and fifty times smaller than the sun; but these proportions are otherwise determined by the generality of modern astronomers: however, they all agree that the moon is abundantly less than the sun; and that it is as a light, we all know.

[He made] the stars also; to rule by night, (~~<100>~~ Psalm 136:9) not only the planets, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Venus, but the vast numbers of stars with which the heavens are bespangled, and which reflect some degree of light upon the earth; with the several constellations, some of which the Scriptures speak of, as Arcturus, Orion, Pleiades, and the chambers of the south, (~~<800>~~ Job 9:9) (~~<888>~~ Job 38:31-32 ~~<1008>~~ Amos 5:8) though some restrain this to the five planets only.

Ed. Contrast the foolishness of modern cosmology with the writings of the early church father, Theophilus when he states^{f66}:

“On the fourth day the luminaries came into existence. Since God has foreknowledge, he understood the nonsense of the foolish philosophers who were going to say that the things produced on earth came from the stars, so that they might set God aside. In order therefore that the truth might be demonstrated, plants and seeds came into existence before stars. For what comes into existence later cannot cause what is prior to it.”

Ver. 17. *And God set them in the firmament of the heaven*, etc.] He not only ordered that there they should be, and made them that there they might be, but he placed them there with his own hands; and they are

placed, particularly the sun, at such a particular distance as to be beneficial and not hurtful: had it been set nearer to the earth, its heat would have been intolerable; and had it been further off it would have been of no use; in the one case we should have been scorched with its heat, and in the other been frozen up for the want of it. The various expressions used seem to be designed on purpose to guard against and expose the vanity of the worship of the sun and moon; which being visible, and of such great influence and usefulness to the earth, were the first the Heathens paid adoration to, and was as early as the times of Job, (^{<18125>}Job 31:26-28) and yet these were but creatures made by God, his servants and agents under him, and therefore to worship them was to serve the creature besides the Creator.

To give light upon the earth; this is repeated from (^{<0015>}Genesis 1:15) to show the end for which they were made, and set up, and the use they were to be of to the earth; being hung up like so many lamps or chandeliers, to contain and send forth light unto the earth, to the inhabitants of it, that they may see to walk and work by, and do all the business of life, as well as be warmed and comforted thereby, and the earth made fertile to bring forth its precious fruits for the use of creatures in it: and it is marvellous that such light should be emitted from the sun, when it is at such a vast distance from the earth, and should reach it in so short a space. A modern astronomer^{f67} observes, that a bullet discharged from a cannon would be near twenty five years, before it could finish its journey from the sun to the earth: and yet the rays of light reach the earth in seven minutes and a half, and are said to pass ten millions of miles in a minute.

Ver. 18. *And to rule over the day, and over the night*, etc.] The one, namely the sun, or greater light, to rule over the day, and the moon and stars, the lesser lights, to rule over the night: this is repeated from (^{<0016>}Genesis 1:16) to show the certainty of it, and that the proper uses of these lights might be observed, and that a just value might be put upon them, but not carried beyond due bounds:

and to divide the light from the darkness; as the day from the night, which is done by the sun, (^{<0014>}Genesis 1:14) and to dissipate and scatter the darkness of the night, and give some degree of light, though in a more feeble manner, which is done by the moon and stars:

and God saw that [it was] good; or foresaw it would be, that there should be such lights in the heaven, which would be exceeding beneficial to the

inhabitants of the earth, as they find by good experience it is, and therefore have great reason to be thankful, and to adore the wisdom and goodness of God; (see ^{<9060>}Psalm 136:1,7-9 ^{<2110>}Ecclesiastes 11:7). (See Gill on ^{<0104>}Genesis 1:4”).

Ver. 19. *And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.*] Made by the rotation of the earth on its own axis, in the space of twenty four hours: this according to Capellus was the twenty first of April, and according to Bishop Usher the twenty sixth of October; or, as others, the fourth of September: and thus, as on the fourth day of the creation the sun was made, or appeared, so in the fourth millennium the sun of righteousness arose on our earth.

Ver. 20. *And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly,* etc.] The waters gathered together in one place, the waters of the ocean, and those in rivers, pools and lakes, and which, before their collection into those places, had been sat on, moved, and impregnated by the Spirit of God; so that they could, as they did, by the divine order accompanied with his power, bring forth abundance of creatures, next mentioned:

the moving creature that hath life: an animal life, of which sort of creatures as yet there had been none made; vegetables, or such as have a vegetative life, were made on the third day; but those that have a sensitive and animal life not till this day, the fifth; and the less perfect, or lower sort of these, were first produced, even such as move or “creep”^{f68}, as the word used signifies; which is applied to fishes as well as creeping things, because in swimming their bellies touch the water, and are close to it, as reptiles on the earth: and of these creeping things in the seas there are innumerable, as the Psalmist says, (^{<0425>}Psalm 104:25). Pliny^{f69} reckons up an hundred and seventy six kinds of fishes, which he puts in an alphabetical order:

and fowl [that] may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven; which according to our version were to be produced out of the waters also; not out of mere water, but out of earth and water mixed together, or out of the earth or clay^{f70} that lay at the bottom of the waters: and it may be observed of some fowls, that they live on the waters, and others partly on land and partly on water; and as the elements of fowl and fish, the air and water, bear a resemblance to each other, so do these creatures, some fowls both fly and swim; and what wings are to the one, fins are to the other; and both steer their course by their tails, and are both oviparous: though it should seem, according to (^{<0019>}Genesis 2:19), that the fowls were produced

from the earth, and the words may be rendered here, “let the fowl fly above the earth”, etc. as they are in the Samaritan and Syriac versions, and in others ^{f71}.

Ver. 21. *And God created great whales*, etc.] Which the Targums of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret of the Leviathan and its mate, concerning which the Jews have many fabulous things: large fishes are undoubtedly meant, and the whale being of the largest sort, the word is so rendered. Aelianus, from various writers, relates many things of the extraordinary size of whales; of one in the Indian sea five times bigger than the largest elephant, one of its ribs being twenty cubits ^{f72}; from Theocles, of one that was larger than a galley with three oars ^{f73}; and from Onesicritus and Orthagoras, of one that was half a furlong in length ^{f74}; and Pliny ^{f75} speaks of one sort called the “balaena”, and of one of them in the Indian sea, that took up four acres of land, and so Solinus ^{f76}; and from Juba, he relates there were whales that were six hundred feet in length, and three hundred sixty in breadth ^{f77} but whales in common are but about fifty, seventy, eighty, or at most one hundred feet. Some interpret these of crocodiles, (see ^{<239B>}Ezekiel 29:3) some of which are twenty, some thirty, and some have been said to be an hundred feet long ^{f78} The word is sometimes used of dragons, and, if it has this sense here, must be meant of dragons in the sea, or sea serpents, leviathan the piercing serpent, and leviathan the crooked serpent, (^{<2370B>}Isaiah 27:1) so the Jews ^{f79}; and such as the bishop of Bergen ^{f80} speaks of as in the northern seas of a hundred fathom long, or six hundred English feet; and who also gives an account of a sea monster of an enormous and incredible size, that sometimes appears like an island at a great distance, called “Kraken” ^{f81}; now because creatures of such a prodigious size were formed out of the waters, which seemed so very unfit to produce them; therefore the same word is here made use of, as is in the creation of the heaven and the earth out of nothing, (^{<000B>}Genesis 1:1) because this production, though not out of nothing, yet was an extraordinary instance of almighty power.

And every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind; that is, every living creature that swims in the waters of the great sea, or in rivers, whose kinds are many, and their numbers not to be reckoned; (see Gill on “^{<000B>}Genesis 1:20”)

and every winged fowl after his kind; every fowl, and the various sorts of them that fly in the air; these were all created by God, or produced out of the water and out of the earth by his wonderful power:

and God saw [that it was] good; or foresaw that those creatures he made in the waters and in the air would serve to display the glory of his perfections, and be very useful and beneficial to man, he designed to create.

(Some of the creatures described by the ancients must refer to animals that are now extinct. Some of these may have been very large dinosaurs. Ed.)

Ver. 22. *And God blessed them*, etc.] With a power to procreate their kind, and continue their species, as it is interpreted in the next clause;

saying, be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas: and these creatures do multiply exceedingly, and vast quantities there are of them in the mighty waters, though the consumption of some sorts of them is very great. Our English word “fish” is derived from the Hebrew word פִּשׁ, “fush”, which signifies to multiply and increase:

and let fowl multiply in the earth; as they did, and continue to do to this day.

Ver. 23. *And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.*] The sun now in the firmament, where it was fixed the day before, having gone round the earth, or the earth about that, in the space of twenty four hours; and according to Capellus this was the twenty second of April; or, as others, the fifth of September; and according to Bishop Usher the twenty seventh of October.

Ver. 24. *And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind*, etc.] All sorts of living creatures that live and move upon the earth; not that the earth was endued with a power to produce these creatures of itself, without the interposition of God: for though it might be impregnated with a quickening virtue by the Spirit of God, which moved on it whilst a fluid, and had been prepared and disposed for such a production by the heat of the body of light created on the first day, and of the sun on the fourth; yet no doubt it was by the power of God accompanying his word, that these creatures were produced of the earth, and formed into their several shapes. The Heathens had some traditionary notion of this affair: according to the Egyptians, whose sentiments

Diodorus Siculus^{f82} seems to give us, the process was thus carried on; the earth being stiffened by the rays of the sun, and the moist matter being made fruitful by the genial heat, at night received nourishment by the mist which fell from the ambient air; and in the day was consolidated by the heat of the sun, till at length the enclosed foetus having arrived to a perfect increase, and the membranes burnt and burst, creatures of all kinds appeared; of whom those that had got a greater degree of heat went upwards, and became flying fowl; those that were endued with an earthly concretion were reckoned in the class or order of reptiles, and other terrestrial animals; and those that chiefly partook of a moist or watery nature, ran to the place of a like kind, and were called swimmers or fish. This is the account they give; and somewhat like is that which Archelaus, the master of Socrates, delivers as his notion, that animals were produced out of slime, through the heat of the earth liquefying the slime like milk for food^{f83}; and Zeno the Stoic says^{f84}, the grosser part of the watery matter of the world made the earth, the thinner part the air, and that still more subtilized, the fire; and then out of the mixture of these proceeded plants and animals, and all the other kinds; but all this they seem to suppose to be done by the mere efforts of nature; whereas Moses here most truly ascribes their production to the all powerful Word of God:

cattle, [and] creeping things, and beast of the earth after his kind; the living creatures produced out of the earth are distinguished into three sorts; “cattle”, which seem to design tame cattle, and such as are for the use of man, either for carriage, food, or clothing, as horses, asses, camels, oxen, sheep, etc. and “creeping” things, which are different from the creeping things in the sea before mentioned, are such as either have no feet, and go upon their bellies, or are very short, and seem to do so, whether greater or lesser, as serpents, worms, ants, etc.

and the beast of the earth seems to design wild beasts, such as lions, bears, wolves, etc.

and it was so; such creatures were immediately produced.

Ver. 25. *And God made the beast of the earth after his kind*, etc.] The wild beasts, and the several sorts of them; beginning the account with the last mentioned, as is frequent in the Hebrew language, and so he made all the rest:

and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; tame creatures, and all the reptiles of the earth: this most clearly shows and proves that the above creatures were not produced by the mere force of nature, or the powers the earth were possessed of, however the matter of it might be disposed and prepared, but by the omnipotent hand of God:

and God saw [that it] was good; that every creature he had made would some way or other be for his glory, and for the benefit of man. Picherellus thinks that all this belongs to the work of the fifth day, not the sixth; because as the vegetables, herbs, and trees were produced on the same day, the third day; so animals, whether in the waters, air, or earth, were made on one and the same day; and that it was proper a separate day should be allotted for the formation of rational creatures, Adam and Eve, and that it might appear that the same blessing was not conferred on brutes as on reasonable beings; and therefore the words with which (^{<00024>}Genesis 1:24) begins should be rendered, “but after God had said, let the earth”, etc. that is, after God had ordered this, and it was done, then “the evening and the morning were the fifth day”; which is what rhetoricians call an “hysteron proteron”.

Ver. 26. *And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness*, etc.] These words are directed not to the earth, out of which man was made, as consulting with it, and to be assisting in the formation of man, as Moses Gerundensis, and other Jewish writers ^{f85}, which is wretchedly stupid; nor to the angels, as the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and others, who are not of God’s privy council, nor were concerned in any part of the creation, and much less in the more noble part of it: nor are the words spoken after the manner of kings, as Saadiah, using the plural number as expressive of honour and majesty; since such a way of speaking did not obtain very early, not even till the close of the Old Testament: but they are spoken by God the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost, who were each of them concerned in the creation of all things, and particularly of man: hence we read of divine Creators and Makers in the plural number, (^{<00010>}Job 35:10) (^{<00010>}Psalm 149:2 ^{<00010>}Ecclesiastes 12:1) and Philo the Jew acknowledges that these words declare a plurality, and are expressive of others, being co-workers with God in creation ^{f86}: and man being the principal part of the creation, and for the sake of whom the world, and all things in it were made, and which being finished, he is introduced into it as into an house ready prepared and furnished for him; a consultation is held

among the divine Persons about the formation of him; not because of any difficulty attending it, but as expressive of his honour and dignity; it being proposed he should be made not in the likeness of any of the creatures already made, but as near as could be in the likeness and image of God. The Jews sometimes say, that Adam and Eve were created in the likeness of the holy blessed God, and his Shechinah^{f87}; and they also speak^{f88} of Adam Kadmon the ancient Adam, as the cause of causes, of whom it is said, “I was as one brought up with him (or an artificer with him), (⁻⁰¹⁸⁴Proverbs 8:30) and to this ancient Adam he said, “let us make man in our image, after our likeness”: and again, “let us make man”; to whom did he say this? the cause of causes said to “‘jod’, he, ‘vau’, he”; that is, to Jehovah, which is in the midst of the ten numerations. What are the ten numerations? “‘aleph’, he, ‘jod’, he”, that is, **hyha**, “I am that I am, (⁻⁰¹⁸⁴Exodus 3:14) and he that says let us make, is Jehovah; I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God: and three jods **yyy** testify concerning him, that there is none above him, nor any below him, but he is in the middle:

and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air; that is, to catch them, and eat them; though in the after grant of food to man, no mention as yet is made of any other meat than the herbs and fruits of the earth; yet what can this dominion over fish and fowl signify, unless it be a power to feed upon them? It may be observed, that the plural number is used, “let them”, which shows that the name “man” is general in the preceding clause, and includes male and female, as we find by the following verse man was created:

and over the cattle, and over all the earth; over the tame creatures, either for food, or clothing, or carriage, or for all of them, some of them for one thing, and some for another; and over all the wild beasts of the earth, which seem to be meant by the phrase, “over all the earth”; that is, over all the beasts of the earth, as appears by comparing it with (⁻⁰⁰²⁴Genesis 1:24) so as to keep them in awe, and keep them off from doing them any damage:

and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; to make use of it as should seem convenient for them.

Ver. 27. *So God created man in his own image*, etc.] Which consisted both in the form of his body, and the erect stature of it, different from all other creatures; in agreement with the idea of that body, prepared in

covenant for the Son of God, and which it was therein agreed he should assume in the fulness of time; and in the immortality of his soul, and in his intellectual powers, and in that purity, holiness, and righteousness in which he was created; as well as in his dominion, power, and authority over the creatures, in which he was as God's viceregent, and resembled him. The Jerusalem Targum is,

“the Word of the Lord created man in his likeness;”

even that Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, and in time became incarnate, by whom all things were made, (~~<600>~~John 1:1-3,14)

in the image of God created he him; which is repeated for the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of, as showing man's superior glory and dignity to the rest of the creatures, (~~<610>~~1 Corinthians 11:7)

male and female created he them; not that man was created an hermaphrodite, or with two bodies, back to back united together, and afterwards cleaved asunder, as the Jews fabulously say; but first God made man, or the male, out of the dust of the earth, and infused a rational soul into him; and then out of one of his ribs made a female, or woman, who was presented to him as his wife, that so their species might be propagated; and only one male and one female were created, to show that hereafter a man was to have at a time no more wives than one; (see ~~<625>~~Malachi 2:15 ~~<630>~~Matthew 19:4) for all that is said in the following chapter, concerning the formation of man out of the dust of the earth, and the making of woman out of his rib, and presenting her to him, and his taking her to be his wife, were all done on this sixth day, and at this time. It is a tradition among the Heathens, that man was made last of all the creatures; so says Plato^{f89}; and this notion the Chinese also have^{f90}. The Jews give these reasons why man was made on the evening of the sabbath, to show that he did not assist in the work of creation; and that if he was elated in his mind, it might be told him that a fly was created before him, and that he might immediately enter on the command, i.e. of the sabbath^{f91}.

Ver. 28. *And God blessed them*, etc.] The man and the woman he had made, with all the blessings of nature and Providence; with all the good things of life; with his presence, and with communion with himself in a natural way, through the creatures; and particularly with a power of procreating their species, as follows;

and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth: if this is not an express command, as the Jews understand it, for marriage and procreation of children, it seems to be more than a bare permission; at least it is a direction and an advice to what was proper and convenient for the increase of mankind, and for the filling of the earth with inhabitants, which was the end of its being made, (^{<24518>}Isaiah 45:18). This shows that marriage is an ordinance of God, instituted in paradise, and is honourable; and that procreation is a natural action, and might have been, and may be performed without sin,

and subdue it; the earth; not that it was in the hands of others, who had no right to it, and to be conquered and taken out of their hands; but is to be understood of their taking possession, and making use of it; of their tilling the land, and making it subservient to their use:

and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the face of the earth; which was giving them an universal and unlimited dominion over all the creatures; of which see an enumeration in (^{<19816>}Psalm 8:6-8).

Ver. 29. *And God said,* etc.] That is, to Adam and Eve, whom he had made in his image and likeness, and to whom he had given the dominion of the earth and sea, and all things in them:

behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth; every herb or plant which had a seed in it, by which it sowed itself again; or being taken off, might be sown by man, even everyone that was wholesome, healthful, and nourishing, without any exception; whatever grew in any part of the earth, be it where it would:

and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; all but the tree of knowledge, of good and evil, afterwards excepted; and both these take in all kind of vegetables, all herbs, plants, roots, even corn, wheat, barley, pease, beans, etc. and the various fruits of all sorts of trees, but that before mentioned:

to you it shall be for meat: which is generally thought to be the food of the antediluvians^{f92}, it not being proper, at least very soon, to kill any of the animals, until they were multiplied and increased, lest their species should be destroyed; though here is no prohibition of eating flesh; nor is it said that this only should be for meat, which is before mentioned; and by the early employment of some in keeping sheep, and by the sacrifice of

creatures immediately after the fall, part of which used to be eaten by the offerers; and by the distinction of clean and unclean creatures before the flood, it looks probable that flesh might be eaten: and Bochart^{f93} refers this clause to what goes before in the preceding verse, as well as to what is in this, and takes the sense to be, that the fishes of the sea, and fowls of the air, and every living creature man had dominion over, as well as herbs and fruits, were given him for his food: but the Jews^{f94} are of opinion, that the first man might not eat flesh, but it was granted to the sons of Noah.

Ver. 30. *And to every beast of the earth*, etc.] Wild or tame, the cattle on a thousand hills; God took care and provided for these, being all his creatures, and designed to answer some end or other by their creation:

and to every fowl of the air; that flies in it;

and to every creeping thing upon the earth; even the meanest and lowest insect:

wherein there is life; or “a living soul”; that has an animal life, which is to be supported by food:

[I have given] every green herb for meat; the leaves for some, and seed for others; and here is no mention made of flesh; and perhaps those creatures which are now carnivorous were not so at their first creation:

and it was so; every creature, both man and beast, had food suitable to their nature and appetite, and a sufficiency of it.

Ver. 31. *And God saw everything that he had made*, etc.] Either all that he had made on the several six days of the creation, he took a survey of them, looked over them again, as workmen do when they have finished their work, to see if anything is amiss or wanting; not that anything of this nature can be supposed in the works of God, but such a survey is attributed to him after the manner of men, to show the completeness of his works, and the excellency of them. Picherellus^{f95} limits this to what had been done on this day, with respect to man, who alone, as he thinks, was the subject of this day’s work; and so it respects the creation of man after the image and likeness of God; the forming of the woman out of his rib, and so providing a suitable helper for him; giving them dominion over all the creatures, and suitable food for the support of the animal life; and God reflected on this, and foresaw it would be good in the issue, as it was in itself.

And behold, [it was] very good; it had been said of everything else, at the close of each day's work, excepting the second, that it was good; but here the expression is stronger upon the creation of man, the chief and principal work of God, that it was "very good"; he being made upright and holy, bearing the image of his Creator upon him, and in such circumstances as to be happy and comfortable himself, and to glorify God: the phrase may be expressive not only of the goodness of everything God had made, as it was in itself, and in its use; but of his complacency, and delight therein, every thing being made for himself and for, his pleasure, (⁴⁰⁴¹⁵Revelation 4:11)

and the evening and the morning were the sixth day; by that time all these works on this day were finished; the sun had gone round the earth, or the earth about that, for the space of twenty four hours, which completed the sixth day, within which term of time God had determined to finish all his works, as he did. This day, according to Capellus, was the twenty third of April, and, according, to Archbishop Usher, the twenty eighth of October, or, as others, the sixth of September. Mr. Whiston, as has been before observed, is of opinion, that the six days of the creation were equal to six years: and the Persians have a tradition, which they pretend to have received from Zoroastres, that God created the world, not in six natural days, but in six times or spaces of different length, called in their tongue "Ghahan barha". The first of these spaces, in which the heavens were created, was a space of forty five days; the second, in which the waters were created, sixty days; the third, in which the earth was created, seventy five days; the fourth, in which grass and trees were created, thirty days; the fifth, in which all creatures were made, eighty days; the sixth, in which man was created, seventy five days; in all three hundred sixty five days, or a full year^{f96}. The first of the six principal good works they are taught to do is to observe the times of the creation^{f97}. And the ancient Tuscans or Etrurians allot six thousand years to the creation; the order of which, with them, is much the same with the Mosaic account, only making a day a thousand years: in the first thousand, they say, God made the heaven and the earth; in the next, the firmament, which appears to us, calling it heaven; in the third, the sea, and all the waters that are in the earth; in the fourth, the great lights, the sun and moon, and also the stars; in the fifth, every volatile, reptile, and four footed animal, in the air, earth and water, (which agrees with Picherellus); (see Gill on "⁴⁰⁰²⁵Genesis 1:25") and in the sixth, man; and whereas they say God employed twelve thousand years in all his creation, and the first six being passed at the creation of man, it seems,

according to them, that mankind are to continue for the other six thousand years^{f98}. And it is a notion that obtains among the Jews, that, answerable to the six days of creation, the world will continue six thousand years. It is a tradition of Elias^{f99}, an ancient Jewish doctor, that

“the world shall stand six thousand years, two thousand void, two thousand under the law, and two thousand, the days of the Messiah.”

And Baal Hatturim^{f100} observes, there are six “alephs” in the first verse of this chapter, answerable to the six thousand years the world is to continue: and R. Gedaliah says^{f101}, at the end of the sixth millennium the world shall return without form and void, (to its former condition, “tohu” and “bohu”,) and the whole shall be a sabbath: and very particular is another writer^{f102} of theirs concerning these six days of the creation, who having spoken of the day of judgment, the resurrection of the dead, and the world to come, observes, that the six days’ work is an intimation and sign of these things: on the sixth day man was created, and the work was perfected on the seventh; so the kings of the nations shall be in the world five thousand years, answerable to the five days in which the fowls, and creeping things of the waters, and the rest, were created; and the holding of their kingdoms will be a little within the sixth millennium, answerable to the creation of cattle and beasts, who were now created on the beginning of it, the “sixth day”; and the kingdom of the house of David will be in the sixth millennium, answerable to the creation of man, who knew his Creator, and ruled over them all; and at the end of that millennium will be the day of judgment, answerable to man’s being judged at the end of it, “the sixth day; and the seventh millennium will be the sabbath”. And a like notion obtains among the Persian Magi; it is said that Zerdusht, or Zoroastres, was born in the middle age of the world, so it was told him from the age of Keiomaras (the first man) unto thy age are 3000 years, and from this thy age unto the resurrection are 3000 years^{f103}.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 2

In this chapter are contained a summary of the works of creation on the six days, and God's resting from his works on the seventh day, and the sanctification of that, (^{<0001>}Genesis 2:1-4) and an account of various things relating to several parts of the creation enlarged on and explained, and of various circumstances omitted in the preceding chapter, which could not so well be taken notice of there; as of a mist arising out of the earth, which watered the herbs and plants before there was any rain to fall upon them, or a man to cultivate them, (^{<0005>}Genesis 2:5,6) and of the matter and manner of man's formation, (^{<0007>}Genesis 2:7) and of the planting of the garden of Eden, and the trees that were in it, and the rivers that watered it, and sprung from it, and the course they steered, the countries they washed, and what those countries abounded with, (^{<0008>}Genesis 2:8-14) of man's being put into it to dress it, and keep it, and of the grant he had to eat of the fruit of any of the trees in it, excepting one, which was forbidden under a penalty of death, (^{<0015>}Genesis 2:15-17) and of all the creatures, beasts and fowls, being brought to him, to give them names, (^{<0018>}Genesis 2:18-20) and of God's providing an help meet for him, and forming Eve out of one of his ribs, and of their marriage together, and the institution of marriage, (^{<0021>}Genesis 2:21-24) and the chapter is concluded with observing the present state and circumstances of our first parents before they fell, (^{<0025>}Genesis 2:25).

Ver. 1. *Thus the heavens and the earth were finished*, etc.] Perfected and completed in the space of six days, gradually, successively, in the manner before related; by the word and power of God they were on the first day created out of nothing, but they were not perfected, beautified, and adorned, and filled, until all the creatures in the were made:

and all the host them, of the heavens and the earth; the host of heavens are the sun, moon, and stars, often so called in Scripture, and also the angels; (see ^{<0013>}Luke 2:13) wherefore this may be considered as a proof of their creation within the above space of time, probably on the first day, though the Jews commonly say on the second; for if all the host of heaven were

made at this time, and angels are at least a part of that host, then they must be then made, or otherwise all the host of heaven were not then and there made, as here affirmed: and the host of the earth, or terraqueous globe, are the plants, herbs, and trees, the fowls, fishes, animals, and man; and these are like hosts or armies, very numerous, and at the command of God, and are marshalled and kept in order by him; even some of the smallest of creatures are his army, which are at his beck, and he can make use of to the annoyance of others, as particularly the locusts are called, (^{<2411>} Joel 2:11,20).

Ver. 2. *And on the seventh day God ended his work, which he had made,* etc.] Not that God wrought anything on the seventh day, or finished any part of his work on that day, because he could not then be said to rest from all his work, as he is afterwards twice said to do; and because of this seeming difficulty the Septuagint, Samaritan, and Syriac versions, read, “on the sixth day”. The two latter versions following the former, which so translated for the sake of Ptolemy king of Egypt, as the Jews say ^{f104}, that he might not object that God did any work on the sabbath day: and Josephus ^{f105} observes, that, Moses says the world, and all things in it, were made in those six days, as undoubtedly they were; and were all finished on the sixth day, as appears from the last verse of the preceding chapter; and yet there is no occasion to alter the text, or suppose a various reading. Some, as Aben Ezra observes, take the sense of the word to be, “before the seventh day God ended his work”, as they think **b** may be rendered, and as it is by Noldius ^{f106}: or the words may be translated, “in the seventh day, when God had ended”, or “finished his work” ^{f107}, which he had done on the sixth day, then

he rested on the seventh day from all his works which he had made: not as though weary of working, for the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, nor is weary, (^{<2418>} Isaiah 40:28) but as having done all his work, and brought it to such perfection, that he had no more to do; not that he ceased from making individuals, as the souls of men, and even all creatures that are brought into the world by generation, may be said to be made by him, but from making any new species of creatures; and much less did he cease from supporting and maintaining the creatures he had made in their beings, and providing everything agreeable for them, and governing them, and overruling all things in the world for ends of his own glory; in this sense he “worketh hitherto”, as Christ says, (^{<4517>} John 5:17).

Ver. 3. *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it*, etc.] A day in which he took delight and pleasure, having finished all his works, and resting from them, and looking over them as very good; and so he pronounced this day a good and happy day, and “sanctified” or appointed it in his mind to be a day separated from others, for holy service and worship; as it was with the Jews when they became a body of people, both civil and ecclesiastical: or this is all said by way of prolepsis or anticipation, as many things in this chapter are, many names of countries and rivers, by which being called in the times of Moses, are here given them, though they were not called by them so early, nor till many ages after: and according to Jarchi this passage respects future time, when God “blessed” this day with the manna, which descended on all the days of the week, an omer for a man, and on the sixth day double food; and he “sanctified” it with the manna which did not descend at all on that day: besides, these words may be read in a parenthesis, as containing an account of a fact that was done, not at the beginning of the world, and on the first seventh day of it; but of what had been done in the times of Moses, who wrote this, after the giving of the law of the sabbath; and this being given through his hands to the people of Israel, he takes this opportunity here to insert it, and very pertinently, seeing the reason why God then, in the times of Moses, blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it, was, because he had rested on that day from all his works, (^{<2011>}Exodus 20:11) and the same reason is given here, taken plainly out of that law which he had delivered to them:

because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made; which shows, that this refers not to the same time when God blessed and hallowed the seventh day, which was done in the times of Moses, but to what had been long before, and was then given as a reason enforcing it; for it is not here said, as in the preceding verse, “he rested”, but “had rested”, even from the foundation of the world, when his works were finished, as in (^{<3018>}Hebrews 4:3) even what “he created to make”^{f108}, as the words may be here rendered; which he created out of nothing, as he did the first matter, in order to make all things out of it, and put them in that order, and bring them to that perfection he did.

Ver. 4. *These [are] the generations of the heavens and the earth, when they were created*, etc.] That is, the above account, delivered in the preceding chapter, is a history of the production of the heavens and earth, and of all things in them; the creation of them being a kind of generation,

and the day of their creation a sort of birthday; (see ~~Q100~~ Genesis 5:1 ~~Q100~~ Matthew 1:1)

in the day that the Lord God made the earth, and the heavens; meaning not any particular day, not the first day, in which the heavens and the earth were created; but referring to the whole time of the six days, in which everything in them, and relating to them, were made. Here another name is added to God, his name “Jehovah”, expressive of his being and perfections, particularly his eternity and immutability, being the everlasting and unchangeable “I am”, which is, and was, and is to come: this name, according to the Jews, is not to be pronounced, and therefore they put the points of “Adonai”, directing it so to be read; and these two names, “Jehovah Elohim”, or “Adonai” and “Elohim”, with them make the full and perfect name of God, and which they observe is here very pertinently given him, upon the perfection and completion of his works.

Ver. 5. *And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth*, etc.] That is, God made it, even he who made the heavens and the earth; for these words depend upon the preceding, and are in close connection with them; signifying that the plants of the field, which were made out of the earth on the third day, were made before any were planted in it, or any seed was sown therein from whence they could proceed, and therefore must be the immediate production of divine power:

and every herb of the field before it grew: those at once sprung up in perfection out of the earth, before there were any that budded forth, and grew up by degrees to perfection, as herbs do now:

for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth: so that the production of plants and herbs in their first formation could not be owing to that; since on the third day, when they were made, there was no sun to exhale and draw up the waters into the clouds, in order to be let down again in showers of rain:

and there [was] not a man to till the ground; who was not created till the sixth day, and therefore could have no concern in the cultivation of the earth, and of the plants and herbs in it; but these were the produce of almighty power, without the use of any means: some Jewish writers ^{f110}, by the plant and herb of the field, mystically understand the first and second Messiah, for they sometimes feign two; (see ~~Q100~~ Isaiah 4:2 ~~Q100~~ Ezekiel 34:29)

Ver. 6. *But there went up a mist from the earth*, etc.] After the waters had been drained off from it, and it was warmed by the body of light and heat created on the first day, which caused a vapour, which went up as a mist, and descended:

and watered the whole face of the ground; or earth, and so supplied the place of rain, until that was given: though rather the words may be rendered disjunctively, “or there went up”^{f111}; that is, before a mist went up, when as yet there was none; not so much as a mist to water the earth, and plants and herbs were made to grow; and so Saadiah reads them negatively, “nor did a mist go up”; there were no vapours exhaled to form clouds, and produce rain, and yet the whole earth on the third day was covered with plants and herbs; and this is approved of by Kimchi and Ben Melech.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground*, etc.] Not of dry dust, but, as Josephus^{f112} says, of red earth macerated, or mixed with water; the like notion Hesiod^{f113} has; or out of clay, as in (~~33:6~~ Job 33:6) hence a word is made use of, translated “formed”, which is used of the potter that forms his clay into what shape he pleases: the original matter of which man was made was clay; hence the clay of Prometheus^{f114} with the Heathens; and God is the Potter that formed him, and gave him the shape he has, (see ~~26:8~~ Isaiah 64:8), there are two “jods”, it is observed, in the word, which is not usual; respecting, as Jarchi thinks, the formation of man for this world, and for the resurrection of the dead; but rather the two fold formation of body and soul, the one is expressed here, and the other in the following clause: and this, as it shows the mighty power of God in producing such a creature out of the dust of the earth, so it serves to humble the pride of man, when he considers he is of the earth, earthy, dust, and ashes, is dust, and to dust he must return.

And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; which in that way entered into his body, and quickened it, which before was a lifeless lump of clay, though beautifully shapen: it is in the plural number, the “breath of lives”^{f115}, including the vegetative, sensitive, and rational life of man. And this was produced not with his body, as the souls of brutes were, and was produced by the breath of God, as theirs were not; nor theirs out of the earth, as his body was: and these two different productions show the different nature of the soul and body of man, the one is material and mortal, the other immaterial and immortal:

and man became a living soul; or a living man, not only capable of performing the functions of the animal life, of eating, drinking, walking, etc. but of thinking, reasoning, and discoursing as a rational creature.

Ver. 8. *And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden*, etc.] Or “had planted”^{f116}, for this was not now done after the formation of man, but before; and so the word translated “eastward” may be rendered, as it is by some, “before”^{f117}: for the plain meaning is, that God had planted a garden before he made man, even on the third day, when all herbs, and plants, and trees were produced out of the earth. The whole world was as a garden, in comparison of what it is now since the fall: what then must this spot of ground, this garden be, which was separated and distinguished from the rest, and the more immediate plantation of God, and therefore is called the garden of the Lord, (^{<0130>}Genesis 13:10 ^{<0303>}Ezekiel 28:13) and which Plato^{f118} calls *διος κηπος*, “Jove’s garden?” This garden was planted in the country of Eden, so called very probably from its being a very pleasant and delightful country; and though it is not certain, and cannot be said exactly where it was, yet it seems to be a part of Mesopotamia, since it is more than once mentioned with Haran, which was in that country, (^{<1202>}2 Kings 19:12 ^{<0370>}Isaiah 37:12 ^{<0373>}Ezekiel 27:23) and since it was by the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, when they were become one stream, which ran through this country, and parted again at this garden; and the country there, as Herodotus^{f119} says, is the most fruitful he ever saw; and it seems to be much better to place it here than in Armenia, where the fountain of these rivers is said to be: so Tournefort^{f120} thinks it lay in the country, or plain of the three churches (or Ejmiadzit), in Armenia, about twenty French leagues distant from the heads of Euphrates and Araxes, and near as many from the Phasis, a country exceeding pleasant and fruitful. A very learned man^r is of opinion, that the garden of Eden was in the land of Judea to the east, by the lake of Gennesaret or Tiberias, and the lake of Asphaltites, called the Dead sea, and takes in, in its compass, the famous valley, or the great plain, and the plains of Jericho, and great part of Galilee, and all that tract which Jordan flows by, from Gennesaret to the country of Sodom; and he takes the river Jordan to be *ʿd[ray*, “the river of Eden”, from whence it has its name of Jordan; and Gennesaret he interprets as if it was *ṛṣ ʿg*, “Gansar”, the garden of the prince, that is, of Adam, the prince of all mankind. He argues from the situation of the place, and the pleasantness and fruitfulness of it, the balsam of Jericho, and other odoriferous plants that grew there, and what are called the apples of paradise: and it must be

owned, that this country abounded with gardens and orchards: it is mentioned in the Jewish Misnah, where the commentators^{f121} say, it was a country in the land of Israel, in which were many gardens and orchards, that produced excellent fruit; and the fruits of Gennesaret are spoken of in the Talmud^{f122} as exceeding sweet: and with this agrees the account Josephus^{f123} gives of it, that it is

“wonderful in nature and goodness, and through its fertility refuses no plant; everything is set here; the temper of the air suits with different things; here grow nuts, and more winter fruit; and there palms, which are nourished with heat, and near them figs and olives, which require a softer air--not only it produces apples of different sorts, beyond belief, but long preserves them; and indeed the most excellent of fruit; grapes and figs it furnishes with for ten months, without intermission, and other fruit throughout the whole year, growing old, with them.”

And it may be further observed, that it is asked by the Jewish Rabbins, why it is called Genesar? and the answer is, because **pyrsyng**, “the gardens of princes”; these are the kings who have gardens in the midst of it: another reason is given, because it belonged to Naphtali, a portion in the midst of it, as it is said, and of “Naphtali a thousand princes”, (~~1323b~~ 1 Chronicles 12:34).^{f124} And it is worthy of remark, that Strabo calls Jericho, which was within this tract, “the paradise of balsam”^{f125}; and there, and hereabout, as Diodorus Siculus^{f126}, and Justin^{f127} relate, grew this aromatic plant, and nowhere else; it was not to be found in any other part of the world. And it appears from Scripture, that if the plain of Jordan was not the garden of Eden, it is said to be, “as the garden of the Lord”, (~~0130~~ Genesis 13:10) and if the “caph” or “as” is not a note of similitude, but of reality, as it sometimes is, it proves it to be the very place; and the above learned writer takes it to be not comparative, but illative, as giving a reason why it was so well watered, because it was the garden of the Lord: and the Jews have some notion of this, for they say, if that the garden of Eden is in the land of Israel, Bethshean is the door of it, or entrance into it; the gloss gives this reason, because the fruits were sweeter than any other^{f128}; and this was near, at the entrance of the great plain before mentioned; and before which was this place, as Josephus says^{f129}: and if the garden of Eden was in those parts, it may be observed, that where the first Adam first dwelt, and where he sinned and fell, Christ the second Adam frequently was; here he conversed much, taught his doctrines, wrought his miracles; and even here

he appeared after his resurrection from the dead. But the opinions of men about this place are very many, and there is scarce any country in the whole world but one or another has placed the garden of Eden in it; nay, some have assigned a place for it out of the earth, in the eighth sphere. Such a garden undoubtedly there was somewhere, and it is said to be placed “eastward”, either in the eastern part of the country of Eden, (see ^{<00416>}Genesis 4:16) or to the east of the desert where Moses was when he wrote; or to the east of Judea, as Mesopotamia was: and if this garden was in Judea, the place assigned for it by the above learned person, it was in the eastern part of that country; (see ^{<00219>}Numbers 32:19). This garden was an emblem either of the church of Christ on earth, which is a garden enclosed, surrounded with divine power, and distinguished with divine grace; a small spot in comparison of the world; is of Jehovah’s planting, and is his property; and is an Eden to his people, where they enjoy much spiritual pleasure and delight: or however of the place and state of the happiness of the saints in the other world, often called a paradise in allusion to this, (^{<02348>}Luke 23:43 ^{<07244>}2 Corinthians 12:4 ^{<00117>}Revelation 2:7) and which is of God’s planting, and therefore called the paradise of God, and is an Eden, where are pleasures for evermore: and this seems to be what the Jews mean when they say ^{f130}, that the garden of Eden, or paradise, was created before the world was; which is no other than what Christ says of it in other words, (^{<02534>}Matthew 25:34)

and there he put the man whom he had formed; not as soon as he had planted the garden, but as soon as he had made man; and from hence it is generally concluded, that man was made without the garden, and brought from the place where he was formed, and put into it; and which some say was near Damascus: but be it where it will, it is most probable that it was not far from the garden; though there seems no necessity for supposing him to be made out of it; for the putting him into it may signify the appointing and ordering him to be there, and fixing and settling him in it, for the ends and uses mentioned, (see ^{<00215>}Genesis 2:15 3:23).

Ver. 9. *And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food*, etc.] That is, out of the ground of the garden of Eden; and this was done on the third day, when the whole earth brought forth grass, herbs, and trees: but a peculiar spot of ground was fixed on for man, and stocked with trees of all sorts for his use, not only to bear fruit, which would be suitable and agreeable food for him, but others also, which would yield him delight to look at; such as the tall

cedars for their loftiness, spreading branches and green leaves, with many others; so that not only there were trees to gratify the senses of tasting and smelling, but that of sight; and such a sightly goodly tree to look at was the tree of knowledge, (~~GEN~~ Genesis 3:6). These trees may be an emblem of the saints, the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, and made to grow by him through the influence of his Spirit and grace; and whom he plants in his gardens, the churches, and transplants into the heavenly paradise, and are often compared to palm trees, cedars, olive trees, pomegranates, etc.

the tree of life also in the midst of the garden; set there as in the most excellent place, where it might be most conspicuous, and to be come at; for before Adam sinned, as there was no prohibition of his eating of it, so there was no obstruction to it; and as he had a grant to eat of it, with the other trees, it was designed for his use, to support and maintain his natural life, which would have been continued, had he persisted in his obedience and state of innocence, and very probably by means of this chiefly: hence the son of Sirach calls it the tree of immortality,

“The knowledge of the commandments of the Lord is the doctrine of life: and they that do things that please him shall receive the fruit of the tree of immortality.” (Sirach 19:19)

and it might be also a sign, token, and symbol to him of his dependence on God; that he received his life from him; and that this was preserved by his blessing and providence, and not by his own power and skill; and that this would be continued, provided he transgressed not the divine law: and it seems to have a further respect, even to eternal life; by Christ; for though it might not be a symbol of that life to Adam in his state of innocence, yet it became so after his fall: hence Christ is sometimes signified by the tree of life, (~~PROV~~ Proverbs 3:18 ~~REV~~ Revelation 2:7) who is not only the author of natural and spiritual life, but the giver of eternal life; the promise of it is in him, and the blessing itself; he has made way for it by his obedience, sufferings, and death, and is the way unto it; it is in his gift, and he bestows it on all his people, and it will lie greatly in the enjoyment of him. The situation of this tree in the midst of the garden well agrees with him who is in the midst of his church and people, (~~REV~~ Revelation 1:13 2:7) stands open, is in sight, and is accessible to them all now, who may come to him, and partake of the fruits and blessings of his grace, which are many,

constant, and durable, (~~¶21D~~ Revelation 22:2) and who will be seen and enjoyed by all, to all eternity:

and the tree of knowledge of good and evil; so called, either with respect to God, who by it tried man, when he had made him, whether he would be good or evil; but this he foreknew: rather therefore with respect to man, not that the eating the fruit of it could really give him such knowledge, nor did he need it; for by the law of nature inscribed on his heart, he knew the difference between good and evil, and that what God commanded was good, and what he forbid was evil: but either it had its name from the virtue Satan ascribed to it, (~~¶20B~~ Genesis 3:5) or from the sad event following on man's eating the fruit of it, whereby he became experimentally sensible of the difference between good and evil, between obedience and disobedience to the will of God; he found by sad experience what good he had lost, or might have enjoyed, and what evil he had brought on himself and his posterity, he might have avoided. What this tree was is not certain; there are various conjectures about it, and nothing else can be come at concerning it. Some take it to be the fig tree, as Jarchi, and some in Aben Ezra on (~~¶20B~~ Genesis 3:6) because fig leaves were at hand, and immediately made use of on eating the fruit of it; some the vine, and particularly the black grape, as in the book of Zohar^{f131}; others, as Baal Hatturim on (~~¶20B~~ Genesis 1:29) the pome citron, or citron apple tree^{f132}; others, the common apple, as the author of the old Nizzechon^{f133}, and which is the vulgar notion; evil and an apple being called by the same Latin word "malum": in the Talmud^{f134}, some say it was the vine, some the fig tree, and others wheat^{f135}: the Mahometans say it was a tree, called by the Africans by the name of Musa^{f136}.

Ver. 10. *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden*, etc.] Before man was created, as Aben Ezra observes, this river went out of Eden and watered it on every side; but what river is here meant, is hard to say. It is more generally thought to be the river Euphrates, when that and the Tigris met, and became one stream or river, and as such entered and passed through Eden; and as it was parted into four rivers afterwards, in two of which they retained their names: the learned Reland^{f137} thinks, this river is now lost; but the learned writer before referred to thinks, as has been observed, that it is the river Jordan; *see note on* "~~¶20B~~ *Genesis 2:8*" and which, as Pliny^{f138} says, was a very pleasant river:

and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads; after it had passed through Eden, and the garden in it, watering it, it divided into four parts or heads of water, or four chief principal rivers, hereafter mentioned; and which circumstance the above writer thinks makes it the more probable to be the river Jordan, which and with the four rivers are spoken of together by the son of Sirach, in the Apocrypha:

“25 He filleth all things with his wisdom, as Phison and as Tigris in the time of the new fruits. 26 He maketh the understanding to abound like Euphrates, and as Jordan in the time of the harvest. 27 He maketh the doctrine of knowledge appear as the light, and as Geon in the time of vintage.” (Sirach 24)

of which in the following verses. This river may be an emblem of the everlasting love of God, that pure river of water of life, which springs from the throne of God, and of the Lamb, from divine sovereignty, and not from the faith, love, and obedience of man; that river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and which water the garden, the church, revive its plants, and make it fruitful and delightful; the four heads or branches of which are eternal election of God, particular redemption by Christ, regeneration and sanctification by the Spirit, and eternal life and happiness, as the free gift of God through Christ; (see ~~<390>~~ Psalm 46:4 ~~<620>~~ Revelation 22:1).

Ver. 11. *The name of the first is Pison*, etc.] Not the river Nile in Egypt, as Jarchi, who thinks it is derived from “Pashah”, which signifies to increase, expand, and diffuse, as that does at certain times, and spreads itself over the land of Egypt, or from “Pishten”, linen, which grows there, (~~<2800>~~ Isaiah 19:9) nor the river Ganges in India, as Josephus^{f139}, and others; for the country where it is afterwards said to run agrees with neither Egypt nor India: rather it seems to be the same river, which is the Phasis of Pliny^{f140}, and Strabo^{f141}, and the Phycus of Xenophon^{f142}, and the Hyphasis of Philostorgius^{f143}, a river in Armenia, and about Colchis; and which is sometimes called Pasitigris, being a branch of that river, and mixed with, or arising from channels, drawn from Tigris, Euphrates, and other waters^{f144}

that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; this country had its name from Havilah, one of the sons of Cush, (~~<000>~~ Genesis 10:7) who very probably seated himself near his brother Seba, from whom came the Sabeans, who inhabited one part of Arabia; and Havilah, it is plain, was before Egypt, in the way to Assyria, and bordered

upon the Ishmaelites, who inhabited Arabia Deserta, (^{<02516>}Genesis 25:16-18 ^{<01517>}1 Samuel 15:7). So that it seems to be a country in Arabia, near unto, or a part of Cush or Arabia Cusea, and near to Seba or Arabia Felix: and so Strabo, among the nations of the Arabians, and along with the Nabatheans, places the Chaulotaeans ^{f145}, who seem to be no other than the posterity of Havilah: according to the learned Reland ^{f146}, it is the same with Colchis, a part of Scythia, and Phasis is well known to be a river of Colchis; and which runs into Pontus, as appears from Pliny ^{f147} and includes Scythia, as Justin ^{f148} says; and then it must have its name from Havilah, the son of Joktan, (^{<01129>}Genesis 10:29) and in either of these countries there was gold, and an abundance of it, and of the best, as follows:

Ver. 12. *And the gold of that land is good*, etc.] Arabia was famous for gold: Diodorus Siculus ^{f149} speaks of gold in Arabia, called “apyrus”, which is not melted by fire out of small filings, as other; but as soon as dug is said to be pure gold, and that in the size of chestnuts, and of such a flaming colour, that the most precious stones are set in it by artificers for ornament: and in Colchis and Scythia, as Strabo ^{f150} relates, there are rivers which produce gold; and from whence came the fable of the golden fleece, the Argonauts went to Colchis for:

there is the bdellium, and the onyx stone; the first of these is either an aromatic gum; the tree, according to Pliny ^{f151}, is black, and is of the size of an olive tree, has the leaf of an oak, and its fruit is like capers; it is found in Arabia, India, Media, and Babylon; but the best, according to him, is in Bactriana, and, next to that, the bdellium of Arabia: or else it is a precious stone, and which the Jewish writers ^{f152} commonly take to be crystal; and, according to Solinus ^{f153}, the best crystal is in Scythia. Bochart ^{f154} would have it that the pearl is meant, because of its whiteness and roundness, for which the manna is compared to it, (^{<01107>}Numbers 11:7) and the rather because of the pearl fishery at Catipha, taking Havilah to be that part of Arabia which lies upon the Persian gulf. The latter, the onyx, is a precious stone, which has its name from its being of the colour of a man’s nail; and, according to Pliny ^{f155}, the onyx marble is found in the mountains of Arabia, and the ancients thought it was nowhere else; and he speaks elsewhere of the Arabian onyx precious stone, and of the sardonyx, as in the same country ^{f156}; and some think that is here meant; though the word is sometimes by the Septuagint rendered the emerald; and the best of these, according to Solinus ^{f157} and Pliny ^{f158}, were in Scythia.

Ver. 13. *And the name of the second river [is] Gihon*, etc.] There was one of this name in the land of Israel, which, or a branch of it, flowed near Jerusalem, (^{<1003>}1 Kings 1:33 ^{<4820>}2 Chronicles 32:30) this Aben Ezra suggests is here meant, and which favours the notion of the above learned man, that the garden of Eden was in the land of Israel. Josephus^{f159} takes it to be the river Nile, as do many others; it seems to have been a branch of the river Euphrates or Tigris, on the eastern side, as Phison was on the west; and so Aben Ezra says it came from the south east. The learned Reland^{f160} will have it to be the river Araxes: it has its name, according to Jarchi, from the force it goes with, and the noise it makes. And it seems to have its name from **j** **wg**, which signifies to come forth with great force, as this river is said to do, when it pours itself into the Baltic sea.

The same [is] it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia; either Ethiopia above Egypt; and this favours the notion of those who take Gihon to be the Nile: for Pausanias^{f161} says, that it was commonly reported that the Nile was Euphrates, which disappearing in a marsh, rose up above Ethiopia, and became the Nile, and so washed that country, and is thought to agree very well with the Mosaic account: or else that Cush or Ethiopia, which bordered on Midian, and was a part of Arabia, and may be called Arabia Chusea, often meant by Cush in Scripture. Reland^{f162} thinks the country of the Cossaeans or Cussaeans, a people bordering on Media, the country of Kuhestan, a province of Persia, is intended.

Ver. 14. *The name of the third river is Hiddekel*, etc.] A river which ran by Shushan in Persia, and retained its name in the times of Daniel, (^{<2700>}Daniel 10:4) where it is called the great river; and it seems it bears the same name now among the Persians; at least it did an hundred and fifty years ago, when Rauwolff^{f163} travelled in those parts. The Targum of Jonathan here calls it Diglath, the same with the Diglito of Pliny^{f164}; and according to him it is called Tigris, from its swiftness, either from the tiger, a swift creature, or from **arg**, “to dart”, in the Chaldee language; and so Curtius^{f165} says, that in the Persian language they call a dart “tigris”: and with this agrees the word “Hiddekel”, which in the Hebrew language signifies sharp and swift, as a polished arrow is; and Jarchi says it is so called, because its waters are sharp and swift: though this is contradicted by some modern travellers^{f166} who say it is a slower stream than the Euphrates, and is not only very crooked, and full of meanders, but also choked up with islands, and great banks of stone:

that is [it] which goeth towards the east of Assyria: a country which had its name from Ashur, a son of Shem, (^{<0101>}Genesis 10:11,22) it became a famous kingdom and monarchy, Nineveh was the metropolis of it, which was built on the river Tigris or Hiddekel; and, as before observed, it ran by Shushan in Persia; and so, as Diodorus Siculus ^{f167} says, it passed through Media into Mesopotamia; and which very well agrees with its being, according to Moses, one of the rivers of Eden. Twelve miles up this river, from Mosul, near which Nineveh once stood, lies an island, called the island of Eden, in the heart of the Tigris, about ten English miles in circuit, and is said to be undoubtedly a part of paradise ^{f168}:

and the fourth river [is] Euphrates: or “Phrat”, as in the Hebrew tongue. Reland ^{f169} seems rightly to judge, that the syllable “eu”, prefixed to it, is the Persian “au” or “cu”, which in that language signifies “water”; so that “Euphrates” is no other than “the water of Phrat”, so called from the fruitfulness of it; for its waters, as Jarchi says, fructify, increase, and fatten the earth; and who rightly observes that these names, and so those of other rivers, and of the countries here mentioned, are named by a prolepsis or anticipation, these being the names they bore when Moses wrote; unless it may be thought to be the Hebrew *awh*, “Hu, the, that Phrat”; and which the Greeks have made an “eu” of.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden,* etc.] This is observed before in (^{<0108>}Genesis 2:8) and is here repeated to introduce what follows; and is to be understood not of a corporeal assumption, by a divine power lifting him up from the place where he was, and carrying him into another; rather of a manuduction, or taking him by the hand and leading him thither; so Onkelos renders it, he “led” him, that is, he ordered and directed him thither: hence Jarchi paraphrases it, he took him with good words, and persuaded him to go thither: the place from whence he is supposed by some to be taken was near Damascus, where he is by them said to be created; or the place where the temple was afterwards built, as say the Jewish writers: the Targum of Jonathan is,

“the Lord God took the man from the mount of Service, the place in which he was created, and caused him to dwell in the garden of Eden.”

And elsewhere ^{f170} it is said,

“the holy blessed God loved the first Adam with an exceeding great love, for he created him out of a pure and holy place; and from what place did he take him? from the place of the house of the sanctuary, and brought him into his palace, as it is said, (~~Q125~~Genesis 2:15) “and the Lord God took”, etc.”

though no more perhaps is intended by this expression, than that God spoke to him or impressed it on his mind, and inclined him to go, or stay there:

to dress it, and to keep it; so that it seems man was not to live an idle life, in a state of innocence; but this could not be attended with toil and labour, with fatigue and trouble, with sorrow and sweat, as after his fall; but was rather for his recreation and pleasure; though what by nature was left to be improved by art, and what there was for Adam to do, is not easy to say: at present there needed no ploughing, nor sowing, nor planting, nor watering, since God had made every tree pleasant to the sight, good for food, to grow out of it; and a river ran through it to water it: hence in a Jewish tract ^{f171}, before referred to, it is said, that his work in the garden was nothing else but to study in the words of the law, and to keep or observe the way of the tree of life: and to this agree the Targums of Jonathan and of Jerusalem,

“and he placed him in the garden of Eden, to serve in the law, and keep the commands of it.”

And in another tract ^{f172} it is said,

“God brought Adam the law, (~~R327~~Job 28:27) and “he put him in the garden of Eden”; that is, the garden of the law, “to dress it”, to do the affirmative precepts of the law, “and to keep it”, the negative precepts:”

though Aben Ezra interprets this service of watering the garden, and keeping wild beasts from entering into it. And indeed the word may be rendered to “till”, as well as to dress, as it is in (~~Q123~~Genesis 3:23) and by Ainsworth here; so Milton ^{f173} expresses it; and some have thought Adam was to have planted and sowed, had he continued in the garden.

Ver. 16. *And the Lord God commanded the man*, etc.] Over whom he had power and authority; and he had a right to command him what he pleased, being his Creator, benefactor, and preserver; and this is to be understood

not of man only, but of the woman also, whose creation, though related afterwards, yet was before this grant to eat of all the trees of the garden but one, and the prohibition of the fruit of that; for that she was in being, and present at this time, seems manifest from (~~GEN~~Genesis 3:2,3)

saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: a very generous, large, and liberal allowance this: or “in eating thou mayest eat”^{f174}; which was giving full power, and leaving them without any doubt and uncertainty about their food; which they might freely take, and freely eat of, wherever they found it, or were inclined to, even of any, and every tree in the garden, excepting one, next forbidden.

Ver. 17. *But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil,* etc.] Of the name of this tree, and the reasons of it, (see Gill on “~~GEN~~Genesis 2:9”)

thou shalt not eat of it; not that this tree had any efficacy in it to increase knowledge, and improve in science and understanding, as Satan suggested God knew; and therefore forbid the eating of it out of envy to man, which the divine Being is capable of; or that there was anything hurtful in it to the bodies of men, if they had eaten of it; or that it was unlawful and evil of itself, if it had not been expressly prohibited: but it was, previous to this injunction, a quite indifferent thing whether man ate of it or not; and therefore was pitched upon as a trial of man’s obedience to God, under whose government he was, and whom it was fit he should obey in all things; and since he had a grant of all the trees of the garden but this, it was the greater aggravation of his offence that he should not abstain from it:

for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; or “in dying, die”^{f175}; which denotes the certainty of it, as our version expresses it; and may have regard to more deaths than one; not only a corporeal one, which in some sense immediately took place, man became at once a mortal creature, who otherwise continuing in a state of innocence, and by eating of the tree of life, he was allowed to do, would have lived an immortal life; of the eating of which tree, by sinning he was debarred, his natural life not now to be continued long, at least not for ever; he was immediately arraigned, tried, and condemned to death, was found guilty of it, and became obnoxious to it, and death at once began to work in him; sin sowed the seeds of it in his body, and a train of miseries, afflictions, and diseases, began to appear, which at length issued in death. Moreover, a spiritual or moral death immediately ensued; he lost his original righteousness, in which he was created; the image of God in him was deformed; the powers

and faculties of his soul were corrupted, and he became dead in sins and trespasses; the consequence of which, had it not been for the interposition of a surety and Saviour, who engaged to make satisfaction to law and justice, must have been eternal death, or an everlasting separation from God, to him and all his posterity; for the wages of sin is death, even death eternal, (^{f173}Romans 6:23). So the Jews ^{f176} interpret this of death, both in this world and in the world to come.

Ver. 18. *And the Lord God said,* etc.] Not at the same time he gave the above direction and instruction to man, how to behave according to his will, but before that, even at the time of the formation of Adam and which he said either to him, or with himself: it was a purpose or determination in his own mind, and may be rendered, as it is by many, he “had said” ^{f177}, on the sixth day, on which man was created,

[it is] not good that man should be alone; not pleasant and comfortable to himself, nor agreeable to his nature, being a social creature; nor useful to his species, not being able to propagate it; nor so much for the glory of his Creator:

I will made him an help meet for him; one to help him in all the affairs of life, not only for the propagation of his species, but to provide things useful and comfortable for him; to dress his food, and take care of the affairs of the family; one “like himself” ^{f178}, in nature, temper, and disposition, in form and shape; or one “as before him” ^{f179}, that would be pleasing to his sight, and with whom he might delightfully converse, and be in all respects agreeable to him, and entirely answerable to his case and circumstances, his wants and wishes.

Ver. 19. *And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air,* etc.] Or “had formed them” ^{f180} on the fifth and sixth days; and these were formed two and two, male and female, in order to continue their species; whereas man was made single, and had no companion of the same nature with him: and while in these circumstances, God

brought them unto Adam; or “to the man” ^{f181}; either by the ministry of angels, or by a kind of instinct or impulse, which brought them to him of their own accord, as to the lord and proprietor of them, who, as soon as he was made, had the dominion of all the creatures given him; just as the creatures at the flood went in unto Noah in the ark; and as then, so now, all

creatures, fowl and cattle, came, all but the fishes of the sea: and this was done

to see what he would call them; what names he would give to them; which as it was a trial of the wisdom of man, so a token of his dominion over the creatures, it being an instance of great knowledge of them to give them apt and suitable names, so as to distinguish one from another, and point at something in them that was natural to them, and made them different from each other; for this does not suppose any want of knowledge in God, as if he did this to know what man would do, he knew what names man would give them before he did; but that it might appear he had made one superior to them all in wisdom and power, and for his pleasure, use, and service; and therefore brings them to him, to put them into his hands, and give him authority over them; and being his own, to call them by what names he pleased:

and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof; it was always afterwards called by it, by him and his posterity, until the confusion of languages, and then every nation called them as they thought proper, everyone in their own language: and as there is a good deal of reason to believe, that the Hebrew language was the first and original language; or however that eastern language, of which the Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic, are so many dialects; it was this that he spoke, and in it gave names to the creatures suitable to their nature, or agreeable to some property or other observed in them: and Bochart^{f182} has given us many instances of creatures in the Hebrew tongue, whose names answer to some character or another in them: some think this was done by inspiration; and Plato says, that it seemed to him that that nature was superior to human, that gave names to things; and that this was not the work of vain and foolish man, but the first names were appointed by the gods^{f183}; and so Cicero^{f184} asks, who was the first, which with Pythagoras was the highest wisdom, who imposed names on all things?

Ver. 20. *And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field*, etc.] As they came before him, and passed by him, paying as it were their homage to him, their lord and owner:

but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him; and perhaps this might be one reason of their being brought unto him, that he might become sensible that there was none among all the creatures of his nature, and that was fit to be a companion of his; and to him must this be referred, and not

to God; not as if God looked out an help meet for him among the creatures, and could find none; but, as Aben Ezra observes, man could not find one for himself; and this made it the more grateful and acceptable to him, when God had formed the woman of him, and presented her before him.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept*, etc.] This was not a common and natural sleep that Adam fell into, occasioned by any weariness of the animal spirits, in viewing the creatures as they passed by him, and in examining them, and giving them suitable and proper names; but it was supernatural, and from the Lord, his power and providence, who caused it to fall upon him: it was not a drowsiness, nor a slumber, but a sound sleep: his senses were so locked up by it, that he perceived not anything that was done to him; and it seems to have been on purpose, that he might feel no pain, while the operation was made upon him, as well as that it might appear that he had no hand in the formation of the woman; and that he might be the more surprised at the sight of her, just awaking out of sleep, to see so lovely an object, so much like himself, and made out of himself, and in so short a time as while he was taking a comfortable nap:

and he took one of his ribs; with the flesh along with it: men have commonly, as anatomists^{f185} observe, twelve ribs on a side; it seems by this, that Adam had thirteen. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“and he took one of his ribs; that is, the thirteenth rib of his right side:”

but our English poet^{f186} takes it to be one of the left side, and also a supernumerary one^{f187}. God made an opening in him, and took it out, without putting him to any pain, and without any sensation of it: in what manner this was done we need not inquire; the power of God was sufficient to perform it; Adam was asleep when it was done, and saw it not, and the manner of the operation is not declared:

and closed up the flesh instead thereof: so that there was no opening left, nor any wound made, or a scar appeared, or any loss sustained, but what was made up by an increase of flesh, or by closing up the flesh; and that being hardened like another rib, and so answered the same purpose.

Ver. 22. *And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he woman*, etc.] It is commonly observed, and pertinently enough, that the

woman was not made from the superior part of man, that she might not be thought to be above him, and have power over him; nor from any inferior part, as being below him, and to be trampled on by him; but out of his side, and from one of his ribs, that she might appear to be equal to him; and from a part near his heart, and under his arms, to show that she should be affectionately loved by him, and be always under his care and protection: and she was not “created” as things were, out of nothing, nor “formed” as Adam was, out of the dust of the earth, being in the same form as man; but “made” out of refined and quickened dust, or the flesh and bones of man, and so in her make and constitution fine and lovely; or “built”^{f188}, as the word signifies, which is used, because she is the foundation of the house or family, and the means of building it up: or rather to denote the singular care and art used, and fit proportion observed in the make of her:

and brought her unto the man: from the place where the rib had been carried, and she was made of it; or he brought her, as the parent of her, at whose dispose she was, and presented her to Adam as his spouse, to be taken into a conjugal relation with him, and to be loved and cherished by him; which, as it affords a rule and example to be followed by parents and children, the one to dispose of their children in marriage, and the other to have the consent of their parents in it; as well as it is a recommendation of marriage, as agreeable to the divine will, and to be esteemed honourable, being of God: so it was a type of the marriage of Christ, the second Adam, between him and his church, which sprung from him, from his side; and is of the same nature with him, and was presented by his divine Father to him, who gave her to him; and he received her to himself as his spouse and bride; (see ~~415~~ Ephesians 5:29-32).

Ver. 23. *And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*, etc.] Of “his bones”, because made out of a pair of his ribs, as some think, one on each side, and therefore expressed in the plural number, “and of his flesh”, a part of which was taken with the rib; this Adam knew, either being awake while she was made, though asleep when the rib was taken out; or by divine revelation, by an impress of it on his mind; or it might have been declared to him in a dream, while asleep, when, being in an ecstasy or trance, this whole affair was represented unto him: and this was “now” done, just done, and would be done no more in like manner; “this time”^{f189}, this once, as many render it; so it was, but hereafter the woman was to be produced in the way of generation, as man:

she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man: her name was “Ishah”, because taken from “Ish”, as “vira” in Latin from “vir”, and “woman” in our language from “man”.

Ver. 24. *Therefore shall a man leave his father, and his mother*, etc.]

These are thought by some to be the words of Moses, inferring from the above fact, what ought to be among men; and by others, the words of Adam under divine inspiration, as the father of mankind instructing his sons what to do, and foretelling what would be done in all succeeding ages: though they rather seem to be the words of God himself, by whom marriage was now instituted; and who here gives direction about it, and declares the case and circumstance of man upon it, and how he would and should behave: and thus our Lord Jesus Christ, quoting these words, makes them to be the words of him that made man, male and female, and supplies and prefaces them thus, and said, “for this cause”, etc.

(^{<4095}Matthew 19:5) so Jarchi paraphrases them,

“the Holy Ghost said so:”

not that a man upon his marriage is to drop his affections to his parents, or be remiss in his obedience to them, honour of them, and esteem for them, or to neglect the care of them, if they stand in need of his assistance; but that he should depart from his father’s house, and no more dwell with him, or bed and board in his house; but having taken a wife to himself, should provide an habitation for him and her to dwell together: so all the three Targums interpret it, of quitting “the house of his father, and his mother’s bed”,

and shall cleave unto his wife; with a cordial affection, taking care of her, nourishing and cherishing her, providing all things comfortable for her, continuing to live with her, and not depart from her as long as they live: the phrase is expressive of the near union by marriage between man and wife; they are, as it were, glued together, and make but one; which is more fully and strongly expressed in the next clause:

and they shall be one flesh; that is, “they two”, the man and his wife, as it is supplied and interpreted by Christ, (^{<4095}Matthew 19:5) and so here in the Targum of Jonathan, and in the Septuagint and Samaritan versions: the union between them is so close, as if they were but one person, one soul, one body; and which is to be observed against polygamy, unlawful divorces, and all uncleanness, fornication, and adultery: only one man and

one woman, being joined in lawful wedlock, have a right of copulation with each other, in order to produce a legitimate offspring, partaking of the same one flesh, as children do of their parents, without being able to distinguish the flesh of the one from the other, they partake of: and from hence it appears to be a fabulous notion, that Cecrops, the first king of Athens, was the first institutor of matrimony and joiner of one man to one woman; whence he was said to be “biformis”^{f190}, and was called *διφνης*; unless, as some^{f191} have thought, that he and Moses were one and the same who delivered out the first institution of marriage, which is this.

Ver. 25. *And they were both naked, the man and his wife*, etc.] Were as they were created, having no clothes on them, and standing in need of none, to shelter them from the heat or cold, being in a temperate climate; or to conceal any parts of their bodies from the sight of others, there being none of the creatures to guard against on that account:

and were not ashamed; having nothing in them, or on them, or about them, that caused shame; nothing sinful, defective, scandalous or blameworthy; no sin in their nature, no guilt on their consciences, or wickedness in their hands or actions; and particularly they were not ashamed of their being naked, no more than children are to see each other naked, or we are to behold them: besides, they were not only alone, and none to behold them; but their being naked was no disgrace to them, but was agreeably to their nature; and they were not sensible that there was any necessity or occasion to cover themselves, nor would they have had any, had they continued in their innocent state: moreover, there was not the least reason to be ashamed to appear in such a manner, since they were but one flesh. The Jerusalem Targum is,

“they knew not what shame was,”

not being conscious of any sin, which sooner or later produces shame. Thus Plato^{f192} describes the first men, who, he says, were produced out of the earth; and for whom the fertile ground and trees brought forth fruit of all kind in abundance of themselves, without any agriculture; that these were *γυμνοὶ καὶ ἀρρωτοὶ*, “naked and without any covering”; and so Diodorus Siculus^{f193} says, the first of men were naked and without clothing. The word here used sometimes signifies wise and cunning; it is rendered “subtle” first verse of the next chapter: and here the Targum of Jonathan is,

“they were both wise, Adam and his wife, but they continued not in their glory;”

the next thing we hear of is their fall.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 3

In this chapter an account is given of the temptation of our first parents, of the instrument of it, and of their fall into it, and of the effect of it, (~~OCB1~~Genesis 3:1-7) their summons upon it to appear before God, against whom they had sinned, (~~OCB3~~Genesis 3:8-10) their examination by him, and the excuses they made, (~~OCB1~~Genesis 3:11-13) the various sentences passed of the serpent, the woman, and the man, (~~OCB4~~Genesis 3:14-19) some incidental things recorded, expressive of faith and hope in man, and of favour to him, (~~OCB~~Genesis 3:20,21) and his expulsion from the garden of Eden, (~~OCB2~~Genesis 3:22-24).

Ver. 1. *Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made*, etc.] Many instances are given of the subtlety of serpents, in hiding their heads when struck at, rolling themselves up, stopping their ear at the voice of the charmer, putting off their skin, lying in sand of the same colour with them, and biting the feet of horses, and other things of the like kind; but by these it does not appear to be now more subtle than any other creature, whatever it might be at its first creation; particularly the fox greatly exceeds it: the words therefore may be rendered, “that serpent”; that particular serpent, of which so much is spoken of afterwards; “or the serpent was become” ^{f194}, or “made more subtle”, that is, not naturally, but through Satan being in it, and using it in a very subtle manner, to answer his purposes, and gain his point: for though a real serpent, and not the mere form or appearance of one, is here meant, as is clear from this account, and the curse afterwards pronounced on it; yet not that only, but as possessed and used by Satan as an instrument of his to accomplish his designs, as is evident from its having the faculty of speech, and the use of reason, employed in a very artful and sophistic manner: nor is it rational to suppose that human nature, in the height of its glory and excellency, should be outwitted and seduced by a creature so inferior to it; besides, the Scriptures always ascribe the seduction of man to the devil; who, because he acted his deceitful part in and by the serpent, is called the serpent, and the old serpent, and the devil and Satan, (~~OCB~~2

Corinthians 11:3 ^{f195} Revelation 12:9). The Targum of Jonathan restrains this subtlety to wickedness, paraphrasing the words

“but the serpent was wise to evil.”

Some Jewish writers ^{f195} interpret the passage of the nakedness of the serpent, taking the word in the sense it is used in (^{f196}Genesis 2:25) and render it, “more naked than any beast of the field”, the rest having a clothing, as hair, etc. but this none; and so might be more agreeable to Eve, being in this respect like herself; but it is generally interpreted of subtlety. The serpent early became the object of religions worship. Taautus, or the Egyptian Thoth, was the first that attributed deity to the nature of the dragon, and of serpents; and after him the Egyptians and Phoenicians: the Egyptian god Cneph was a serpent with an hawk’s head; and a serpent with the Phoenicians was a good demon: what led them to have such veneration for this animal, were its plenty of spirits, its fiery nature, its swiftness, its various forms it throws itself into, and its long life ^{f196}; and so Pherecydes ^{f197} speaks of a deity of the Phoenicians called Ophioneus; and who also affirms ^{f198}, that this was the prince of demons cast down from heaven by Jupiter; and Herodotus ^{f199} makes mention of sacred serpents about Thebes; and Aelianus ^{f200} of sacred dragons; and Justin Martyr says ^{f201}, the serpent with the Heathens was a symbol of all that were reckoned gods by them, and they were painted as such; and wherever serpents were painted, according to Persius ^{f202}, it was a plain indication that it was a sacred place. Serpents were sacred to many of the Heathen deities, and who were worshipped either in the form of one, or in a real one ^{f203}; all which seem to take their rise from the use the devil made of the serpent in seducing our first parents.

And he said to the woman; being alone, which he took the advantage of; not the serpent, but Satan in it; just as the angel spoke in Balaam’s ass; for we are not to imagine with Philo, Josephus, Aben Ezra, and others, that beasts in their original state had the faculty of speech, and whose language Eve understood: it is very probable that good angels appeared in paradise to our first parents, in one form or another, and conversed with them; it may be in an human form, and it may be in the form of a beautiful flying serpent, which looked very bright and shining, and that sort called Seraph, (^{f204}Numbers 21:6) hence angels may bear the name of Seraphim, as some have thought; so that it might not be at all surprising to Eve to hear the serpent speak, it being what she might have been used to hear, and might

take this to be a good angel in such a shape, that was come to bring a message to her from God, and to converse with her for her good, and who thus accosted her:

yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? or “of any tree” ^{f204}; so ambiguously does he speak, in order to reproach the divine goodness, and draw into a disbelief of it. The speech is abrupt; and, as Kimchi observes ^{f205}, supposes some discourse, as to this purpose; surely God hates you, for though you are greater than the rest of the creatures, he has not provided any superior excellency for you, and especially since he has said, “ye shall not eat”, etc. Or as others, taking occasion from their being naked, (^{<00025>}Genesis 2:25) he observes, that that was unbecoming them, of which they might be ashamed; yea, also, that it was unjust to forbid them to eat of the tree of good and evil: he might, it is suggested, first endeavour to persuade the woman, that it was indecent for her, and her husband, to be naked; which they not being convinced of, he insinuated that this was owing to a defect of knowledge, and that there was a tree in the garden, which if they ate of, would give them that knowledge, and therefore God had forbid it, to keep them in ignorance: but he seems to put this question, to cause them to doubt of it, whether there was such a prohibition or not, and as amazing that it should be, and as not believing it to be true; it being, as he would have it, contrary to the perfections of God, to his goodness and liberality, and to his profession of a peculiar respect to man: wherefore the Targum of Onkelos renders it, “of a truth”, and that of Jonathan, “is it true?” surely it cannot be true, that a God of such goodness could ever deny you such a benefit, or restrain you from such happiness; he can never be your friend that can lay such an injunction on you.

Ver. 2. *And the woman said unto the serpent*, etc.] Or to him that spoke in the serpent, which she might take to be a messenger from heaven, a holy angel: had she known who it was, she might be chargeable with imprudence in giving an answer, and carrying on a conversation with him; and yet even supposing this, she might have a good design in her answer; partly to set the matter in a true light, and assert what was truth; and partly to set forth the goodness and liberality of God, in the large provision he had made, and the generous grant he had given them: from this discourse of Eve and the serpent, no doubt Plato ^{f206} had his notion of the first men discoursing with beasts:

we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; of all and every one of them, which is to be understood, excepting the one after mentioned; so far are we from being debarred from eating of any, which the speech of the Serpent might imply, that they were allowed to eat of what they pleased, but one.

Ver. 3. *But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden,* etc.] This tree stood near the tree of life, as is highly probable, since that is described in the same situation, (~~Gen~~ Genesis 2:9) she does not give it any name, which perhaps was not as yet given it; or she was not acquainted with it, its name in the preceding chapter being given by anticipation; and most likely it is, it had its name from the event, and as yet was without one:

God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die: here the woman is charged by some both with adding to, and taking from the law of God; and if so, must have sinned very heinously before she eat of the fruit; but neither of them are sufficiently proved; not the former by her saying, “neither shall ye touch it”, which though not expressed in the prohibition, is implied, namely, such a touching the fruit as to pluck it off the tree, take it in the hand, and put it to the mouth, in order to eat it: nor the latter by these words, “lest ye die”, or “lest perhaps ye die” ^{f207}; as if it was a matter of doubt, when it was most strongly assured; for the word used is not always to be understood of doubting, but of the event of a thing; (see ~~Ps~~ Psalm 2:12) and may be rendered, “that ye die not” ^{f208}; which would certainly be the case, should they pluck the fruit and eat of it.

Ver. 4. *And the serpent said unto the woman,* etc.] In reply to her answer:

ye shall not surely die; in direct contradiction to the divine threatening, and which he would insinuate was a mere threatening, and which God never intended to put in execution; so that they had nothing to fear from that, God would never be so rigid and severe, and beat so hard upon them as to put them to death for such an offence, if it was one; he only gave out the menace to frighten them, and deter from it: however, at most it was not a certain thing they should die, and they might safely conclude they would not.

Ver. 5. *For God doth know,* etc.] Or “but” ^{f209} God doth know”, who knows all things, and has foreknowledge of all future events; he foreknows what will be the consequence of this event, eating the fruit of this tree, that it would be so far from issuing in death, which he has threatened, that the

effect of it would be a clearer understanding, and a greater degree of knowledge of things, which he is unwilling should be enjoyed, and therefore has endeavoured to prevent it by this prohibition; suggesting hereby, even in God, hatred of the creatures he had made, and unwilling they should be as happy as they might:

that in the day ye eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened; not the eyes of their bodies, as if they were now blind, but the eyes of their understanding; meaning, that their knowledge should be enlarged, and they should see things more clearly than they now did, and judge of them in a better manner; yea, even together with the light of their mind, the sight of their bodily eyes would receive some advantage; and particularly, that though they saw the nakedness of their bodies, yet it was as if they saw it not, and were unconcerned about it, and heedless of it; did not see it as unseemly and indecent, and so were not ashamed; but now they should see it as it was, and be filled with shame and confusion:

and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil: as “Elohim”, which word is sometimes used of civil magistrates, sometimes of angels, and sometimes of God himself, and of the divine Persons in the Godhead: the Targum of Onkelos seems to respect the former, rendering it “as great personages”, princes, judges, civil magistrates, who ought to know the difference between good and evil, or otherwise would be unfit for their office; but this cannot be the sense here, since there were no such persons in being, to whom the reference could be made; nor could it convey any proper idea to the mind of Eve, unless by them are meant principalities and powers, or “the mighty angels”, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the word; and so it intimates, that upon eating this fruit they should be as wise and as knowing as those intelligent creatures: though perhaps Satan might mean, such angels as himself and his were, and that they should by sad experience know the difference between good and evil, as they did: but rather it is to be understood of that Elohim that made the heavens and the earth, for as yet the word had never been used, but of the true God, and of the divine Persons in the Trinity: and this agrees with what is ironically said, (^{<0082>}Genesis 3:22) “behold the man is become as one of us”, as the devil told him he should, and as he believed he would: this was the bait laid for than, suited to his intellectual mind, and to the ambitious desires of it, not being content with finite knowledge, but aiming at omniscience, or something like it: now the temptation began to take place and operate.

Ver. 6. *And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food*, etc.]

She being near the tree, and perhaps just at it when the serpent first attacked her; wherefore looking more wishfully at it, she could discern nothing in the fruit of the tree which showed it to be bad, and unfit to be eaten, or why it should be forbidden for food; but, on the contrary, had a most promising aspect to be very delicious, nourishing and salutary, as any other fruit in the garden:

and that it was pleasant to the eyes; of a beautiful colour, and very inviting to the taste:

and a tree to be desired to make one wise; which above all was the most engaging, and was the most prevailing motive to influence her to eat of it, an eager desire of more wisdom and knowledge; though there was nothing she could see in the tree, and the fruit of it, which promised this; only she perceived in her mind, by the discourse she had with the serpent, and by what he had told her, and she believed, that this would be the consequence of eating this fruit, which was very desirable, and she concluded within herself that so it would be:

she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; she took it off of the tree, and not only tasted of it, but ate of it; what quantity cannot be said, enough to break the divine law, and to incur the divine displeasure: so Sanchoniatho says ^{f210}, that Aeon (the same with Eve) found the way of taking food from trees:

and gave also to her husband with her; that he might eat as well as she, and partake of the same benefits and advantages she hoped to reap from hence; for no doubt it was of good will, and not ill will, that she gave it to him; and when she offered it to him, it is highly probable she made use of arguments with him, and pressed him hard to it, telling him what delicious food it was, as well as how useful it would be to him and her. The Jews infer from hence, that Adam was with her all the while, and heard the discourse between the serpent and her, yet did not interpose nor dissuade his wife from eating the fruit, and being prevailed upon by the arguments used; or however through a strong affection for his wife, that she might not die alone, he did as she had done:

and he did eat; on which an emphasis may be observed, for it was upon his eating the fate of his posterity depended; for not the woman but the man was the federal head, and he sinning, all his posterity sinned in him, and

died in him; through this offence judgment came upon all to condemnation; all became sinners, and obnoxious to death, (~~Rom~~ Romans 5:12-19). If Eve only had eaten of the forbidden fruit, it could only have personally affected herself, and she only would have died; and had this been the case, God would have formed another woman for Adam, for the propagation of mankind, had he stood; though since he fell as well as she, it is needless to inquire, and may seem too bold to say what otherwise would have been the case.

Ver. 7. *And the eyes of them both were opened*, etc.] Not of their bodies, but of their minds; not so as to have an advanced knowledge of things pleasant, profitable, and useful, as was promised and expected, but of things very disagreeable and distressing. Their eyes were opened to see that they had been deceived by the serpent, that they had broke the commandment of God, and incurred the displeasure of their Creator and kind benefactor, and had brought ruin and destruction upon themselves; they saw what blessings and privileges they had lost, communion with God, the dominion of the creatures, the purity and holiness of their nature, and what miseries they had involved themselves and their posterity in; how exposed they were to the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and to eternal death:

and they knew that they were naked; they must know before that they were naked in their bodies, but they did not perceive that their nakedness was at all uncomely, or any disadvantage to them; but now they were sensible of both, that whereas they could look upon it before, and not blush or feel any sinful emotions in them, now they could not behold it without shame, and without finding evil concupiscence arising in them; and it being now the cool of the day, and their spirits also seized with fear of the divine displeasure, they might feel a shivering all over them, and wanted something to cover them: but more especially this may respect the nakedness of their souls they were now conscious of, being stripped of that honour and glory, privileges and power, they were vested with; and having lost the image of God that was upon them, and that robe of purity, innocence, and righteousness, the rectitude of their nature, with which they were arrayed, and finding themselves naked and defenceless, and unable to screen themselves from the curses of a righteous law, and the fury of vindictive justice:

and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons; not to cover their whole bodies, but only those parts which, ever since, mankind have been ashamed to expose to public view, and which they studiously conceal from sight: the reason of which perhaps is, because by those members the original corruption of human nature has been from the beginning, and still is propagated from parents to children. The leaves of the fig tree were pitched upon because of the largeness of them; the leaves of the common fig tree are very large, as everyone knows; and perhaps those in the eastern countries, and especially in paradise, were much larger than ours. Pliny^{f211} says of the fig tree, that its leaf is the largest, and the most shady. Some think the Indian fig tree is meant; so John Temporarius, as Drusius relates; and so our Milton^{f212}; and according to Pliny^{f213}, the breadth of the leaves of this tree has the shape of an Amazonian shield. And when they are said to sew these together, it is not to be supposed that they sewed them as tailors sew their garments together, since they cannot be thought to be furnished with proper instruments, or that they tacked them together with some sort of thorns, or made use of them instead of needles; but they took the tender branches of the fig tree with leaves on them, as the word signifies, (see ~~14815~~ Nehemiah 8:15) and twisted them round their waists; which served for “girdles”, as some render the word^{f214}, and the broad leaves hanging down served for aprons; but these, whatever covering they may be thought to have been to their bodies, which yet seem to be but a slender one, they could be none to their souls, or be of any service to hide their sin and shame from the all seeing eye of God; and of as little use are the poor and mean services of men, or their best works of righteousness, to shelter them from the wrath of God, and the vengeance of divine justice.

Ver. 8. *And they heard the voice of the Lord God*, etc.] Which they had heard before, and knew, though perhaps now in another tone, and very terrible, which before was mild and gentle, pleasant and delightful: some by it understand a clap of thunder, sometimes called the voice of the Lord, (~~14218~~ Psalm 29:3-9) and the rather because mention is made afterwards of a wind; but rather the voice of the Son of God, the eternal Word, is here meant, who appeared in an human form, as a pledge of his future incarnation, and that not only as a Judge, to arraign, examine, and condemn the parties concerned in this act of disobedience to God, but as a Saviour of men, to whom, as such, he made himself known, as the event shows, and therefore they had no reason to entertain such terrible

apprehensions of him, as to flee from him; and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, “the voice of the Word of the Lord God”, the essential Word of God then with him, and since made flesh, and dwelt among men as the Saviour of them; and to him agrees what follows:

walking in the garden in the cool of the day; or “at the wind of the day”^{f215}; of “that day” in which man was created and fell, as some conclude from hence; in the evening, at sun setting; for very often when the sun sets a wind rises, at least a gentle breeze; and this might bring the sound of the voice, and of the steps of this glorious Person, the sooner to the ears of Adam and his wife, which gave them notice of his near approach, and caused them to hasten their flight: some render it emphatically, “at the wind of that day”^{f216}; as if it was a violent wind which arose at that time, as a sign and testimony of the indignation of God, as the sound of a violent wind was a testimony of the coming of the Spirit of God, (~~4th~~ Acts 2:2)

and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden; conscious of their guilt, and vainly imagining they could flee from his presence, which is everywhere, and hide themselves from his sight, before whom every creature is manifest, be it where it will; and very foolishly fancying, that the thick trees and bushes in the garden would be a screen and shelter for them: and sad shifts do wretched mortals make to secure themselves from the wrath of God, who are ignorant of the justifying righteousness and atoning sacrifice of the Son of God: it is in the singular number in the original text, “in the midst of the tree of the garden”^{f217}; which some understand of the fig tree, whose leaves they covered themselves with, and under the shade of which they hid themselves; and particularly of the Indian fig tree, which is so large, that it is said that fifty horsemen may shade themselves at noon day under it; nay, some say four hundred^{f218}; but tree may be put for trees, the singular for the plural.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord God called unto Adam*, etc.] The Jerusalem Targum is, the Word of the Lord God, the second Person in the Trinity; and this is the voice he is said to have heard before:

and said unto him, where [art] thou? which is said, not as ignorant of the place where he was, nor of what he had done, nor of the circumstances he was in, or of the answers he would make; but rather it shows all the reverse, that he knew where he was, what he had done, and in what condition he was, and therefore it was in vain to seek to hide himself: or as

pitied his case, saying, “alas for thee”^{f219}, as some render the words, into what a miserable plight hast thou brought thyself, by listening to the tempter, and disobeying thy God! thou that wast the favourite of heaven, the chief of the creatures, the inhabitant of Eden, possessed of all desirable bliss and happiness, but now in the most wretched and forlorn condition imaginable; or as upbraiding him with his sin and folly; that he who had been so highly favoured by him, as to be made after his image and likeness, to have all creatures at his command, and the most delightful spot in all the globe to dwell in, and a grant to eat of what fruit he would, save one, and who was indulged with intercourse with his God, and with the holy angels, should act such an ungrateful part as to rebel against him, break his laws, and trample upon his legislative authority, and bid, as it were, defiance to him: or else as the Saviour, looking up his straying sheep, and lost creature, man: or rather as a summons to appear before him, the Judge of all, and answer for his conduct; it was in vain for him to secrete himself, he must and should appear; the force of which words he felt, and therefore was obliged to surrender himself, as appears from what follows.

Ver. 10. *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden*, etc.] The voice of thy Word, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan: this was not the true cause of his hiding himself; he had heard his voice in the garden before, when it did not strike him with terror, but gave him pleasure;

and I was afraid, because I was naked. This also was not the true reason; he was naked from his creation as to his body, and it caused no shame in him, nor any dread to appear before God; he conceals the true cause, which was sin, that made the nakedness of his body shameful, and had stripped his soul of its native clothing, purity and holiness; and therefore it was, he could not appear before a pure and holy Being:

and I hid myself; among the trees of the garden, and his wife also; or therefore^{f220} “hid myself”; through fear of God, his wrath and displeasure, which he had justly incurred by his disobedience, and because of his sin which had made his soul naked, though he was not as yet ingenuous enough to confess it.

Ver. 11. *And he said*, etc.] The Lord God, or the Word of the Lord;

who told thee that thou [wast] naked? or showed it to thee; by what means hast thou got knowledge of it? what hast thou done that thou perceivest it, so as to cause shame and fear? man was made naked, and so he continued,

and he must be sensible of it, but it gave him no uneasiness, because he was without shame on account of it; so that it was as if it was not, and he was regardless of it, as if he was not naked; but now, having sinned, he could not look upon his nakedness without blushing, and sin being what had produced this sensation, he was afraid to appear before God, against whom he had sinned; though he did not choose to acknowledge it, only alleges his outward nakedness, without confessing the inward nakedness of his soul, and being humbled for that as he ought to have been; and in order to bring him to this, is this question and the following put unto him;

hast thou eaten of the tree, wherever I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? The Lord knew he had; but he puts this question to bring him to a confession of it, as well as to aggravate his crime; that it was a violation of a precept of his, who had been so kind and bountiful to him, who had crowned him with glory and honour, and set him over the works of his hands, and had put all creatures under his feet, and had allowed him to eat of every tree in the garden but one; there was but one tree restrained from him, but one command he gave him, and this he broke; sin is a transgression of the law, (~~GEN~~ 1 John 3:4). And in this light it is here put to bring Adam under a conviction, and to a confession of it; though he made it in a very lame manner, having covered it as long as he could; being found he excuses it, as loath to bear the blame and scandal of it. (see ~~GEN~~ Job 31:33).

Ver. 12. *And the man said,* etc.] Not being able any longer to conceal the truth, though he shifts off the blame as much as possible from himself:

the woman whom thou gavest to be with me: to be his wife and his companion, to be an help meet unto him, and share with him in the blessings of paradise, to assist in civil and domestic affairs, and join with him in acts of religion and devotion:

she gave me of the tree, and I did eat; she first ate of it herself, through the solicitations of the serpent, and then she persuaded me to eat of it; and accordingly I did, I own it. By this answer Adam endeavours to cast the blame partly upon his wife, and partly upon God; though in what he said he told the truth, and what was matter of fact, yet it carries this innuendo, that if it had not been for his wife he had never ate of it, which was a foolish excuse; for he, being her head and husband, should have taught her better, and been more careful to have prevented her eating of this fruit, and should have dissuaded her from it, and have reproved her for it, instead of

following her example, and taking it from her hands: and more than this he tacitly reflects upon God, that he had given him a woman, who, instead of being an help meet to him, had helped to ruin him; and that if he had not given him this woman, he had never done what he had: but at this rate a man may find fault with God for the greatest blessings and mercies of life bestowed on him, which are abused by him, and so aggravate his condemnation.

Ver. 13. *And the Lord God said unto the woman*, etc.] Who was first in the transgression, and drew her husband into it, and upon whom he seemingly casts the blame of his eating the forbidden fruit:

what is this that thou hast done? dost thou know how great an offence thou hast committed in breaking a command of mine, and how aggravated it is when thou hadst leave to eat of every other tree? what could move thee to do this? by what means hast thou been brought into it, and not only hast done it thyself, but drawn thine husband into it, to the ruin of you both, and of all your posterity? so heinous is the sin thou hast been guilty of:

and the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat; that is, a spirit in the serpent, which she took for a good one, but proved a bad one, with lying words and deceitful language imposed upon her, told her that the fruit forbidden was very good food, and very useful to improve knowledge; even to such a degree as to make men like God; and this God knew, and therefore out of envy and ill will to them forbid the eating of it; nor need they fear his menaces, for they might depend upon it they should never die; and thus he caused her to err from the truth, and to believe a lie; and by giving heed to the seducing spirit she was prevailed upon to eat of the fruit of the tree, which was forbidden, and which she owns; and it is an ingenuous confession that she makes as to the matter of fact; but yet, like her husband, and as learning it from him, she endeavours to shift off the blame from herself, and lay it on the serpent.

Ver. 14. *And the Lord God said unto the serpent*, etc.] And to the devil in it; for what follows may be applied to both; literally to the serpent, and mystically to Satan; both are punished, and that very justly, the serpent in being the instrument Satan made use of, and is cursed for his sake, as the earth for man's; and the punishing the instrument as well as the principal, the more discovers God's detestation of the act for which they are punished, as appears in other instances, (^{<1278>}Exodus 21:28 ^{<1275>}Leviticus

20:15). Nor could it have been agreeable to the justice of God, to punish the instrument and let the principal go free; and therefore the following sentence must be considered as respecting them both: and it must be observed, that no pains is taken to convince Satan of his sin, or any time spent in reasoning and debating with him about it, he being an hardened apostate spirit, and doomed to everlasting destruction, and without any hope of mercy and forgiveness; but to show the divine resentment of his crime, the following things are said:

because thou hast done this; beguiled the woman, and drawn her in to eat of the forbidden fruit,

[thou art] cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; the serpent is the most hateful of all creatures, and especially the most detestable to men, and Satan is accursed of God, banished from the divine presence, is laid up in chains of darkness, and reserved for the judgment of the great day, and consigned to everlasting wrath and ruin, signified by everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels;

upon thy belly shalt thou go, or “breast”, as Aben Ezra, and others; Jarchi thinks it had feet before, but were cut off on this account, and so became a reptile, as some serpents now have feet like geese, as Pliny^{f221} relates; or it might go in a more erect posture on its hinder feet, as the basilisk, which is one kind of serpent, now does; and if it was a flying one, bright and shining in the air, now it should lose all its glory, and grovel in the dust, and with pain, or at least with difficulty, creep along on its breast and belly; and this, as it respects the punishment of the devil, may signify, that he being cast down from the realms of bliss and glory, shall never be able to rise more, and regain his former place and dignity:

And dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life; meaning not that particular serpent, and as long as that should live, but all of the same kind, as long as there were any in the world, even to the end of it: it is probable, that when the serpent moved in a more erect posture, it lived on herbs and plants as other creatures; but when it was obliged to go upon its belly or breast, it licked up the dust of the earth, and which it could not well avoid in eating whatsoever food it did; and some serpents are said to live upon it. This is applicable to Satan, designs the mean and abject condition in which he is, and the sordid food he lives upon; no more on angels’ food and joys of heaven, but on the base, mean, earthly, and impure lusts of men; and this will be his case, condition, and circumstances, for ever.

Ver. 15. *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman*, etc.] Between whom there had been so much familiarity, not only while they had the preceding discourse together, but before; for it is conjectured by some ^{f222}, that she took a particular liking to that creature, and was delighted with it, and laid it perhaps in her bosom, adorned her neck with its windings, or made it a bracelet for her arms; and being a peculiar favourite, the devil made choice of it as his instrument to deceive her; but now being beguiled hereby, she conceived an antipathy against it, and which is become natural between the serpent and man; man abhors the sight of a serpent, and the serpent the sight of man; and the spittle of a man and the gall of a serpent are poison to each other; and this antipathy is observed to be stronger in the female sex: and this was not only true of the particular serpent that deceived Eve, and of the particular woman, Eve, deceived by him, but of every serpent and of every woman in successive ages; and is also true of Satan and the church of God in all ages, between whom there is an implacable and an irreconcilable hatred, and a perpetual war:

and between thy seed and her seed; the posterity of Eve, mankind, and the production of serpents, between whom the antipathy still continues, and mystically the evil angels and also wicked men called serpents; and a generation of vipers on the one hand, and the people of God on the other, the seed of the church; the latter of which are hated and persecuted by the former, and so it has been ever since this affair happened: and especially by the seed of the woman may be meant the Messiah; the word “seed” sometimes signifying a single person, (^{<01025>}Genesis 4:25 15:3 21:13) and particularly Christ, (^{<01816>}Galatians 3:16) and he may with great propriety be so called, because he was made of a woman and not begotten by man; and who assumed not an human person, but an human nature, which is called the “holy thing”, and the “seed of Abraham”, as here the “seed of the woman”, as well as it expresses the truth of his incarnation and the reality of his being man; and who as he has been implacably hated by Satan and his angels, and by wicked men, so he has opposed himself to all them that hate and persecute his people:

it shall bruise thy head; the head of a serpent creeping on the ground is easily crushed and bruised, of which it is sensible, and therefore it is careful to hide and cover it. In the mystical sense, “it”, or “he, Hu”, which is one of the names of God, (^{<01927>}Psalms 102:27) (^{<023812>}Isaiah 48:12) and here of the Messiah, the eminent seed of the woman, should bruise the head of the old serpent the devil, that is, destroy him and all his principalities and powers,

break and confound all his schemes, and ruin all his works, crush his whole empire, strip him of his authority and sovereignty, and particularly of his power over death, and his tyranny over the bodies and souls of men; all which was done by Christ, when he became incarnate and suffered and died, (^{<8124>}Hebrews 2:14,15 ^{<5125>}Colossians 2:15 ^{<6128>}1 John 3:8)

And thou shall bruise his heel; the heel of a man being what the serpent can most easily come at, as at the heels of horses which it bites, (^{<0497>}Genesis 49:17) and which agrees with that insidious creature, as Aristotle ^{f223} describes it: this, as it refers to the devil, may relate to the persecutions of the members of Christ on earth, instigated by Satan, or to some slight trouble he should receive from him in the days of his flesh, by his temptations in the wilderness, and agony with him in the garden; or rather by the heel of Christ is meant his human nature, which is his inferior and lowest nature, and who was in it frequently exposed to the insults, temptations, and persecutions of Satan, and was at last brought to a painful and accursed death; though by dying he got an entire victory over him and all his enemies, and obtained salvation for his people. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase this passage of the days of the Messiah, and of health and salvation in them: what is here delivered out in a way of threatening to the serpent the devil, carries in it a kind intimation of grace and good will to fallen man, and laid a foundation for hope of salvation and happiness: reference seems to be had to this passage in (^{<3410>}Psalm 40:7) “in the volume”, in the first roll, *εν κεφαλιδι*, as in the Greek version, at the head, in the beginning “of the book, it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God.”

Ver. 16. *Unto the woman he said*, etc.] The woman receives her sentence next to the serpent, and before the man, because she was first and more deeply in the transgression, and was the means of drawing her husband into it.

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, or “thy sorrow of thy conception” ^{f224}, or rather “of thy pregnancy” ^{f225}; since not pain but pleasure is perceived in conception, and besides is a blessing; but this takes in all griefs and sorrows, disorders and pains, from the time of conception or pregnancy, unto the birth; such as a nausea, a loathing of food, dizziness, pains in the head and teeth, faintings and swoonings, danger of miscarriage, and many distresses in such a case; besides the trouble of bearing such a burden, especially when it grows heavy: and when it is said,

“I will greatly multiply”, or “multiplying I will multiply”^{f226}, it not only denotes the certainty of it, but the many and great sorrows endured, and the frequent repetitions of them, by often conceiving, bearing, and bringing forth:

in sorrow shall thou bring forth children, sons and daughters, with many severe pangs and sharp pains, which are so very acute, that great tribulations and afflictions are often in Scripture set forth by them: and it is remarked by naturalists^{f227}, that women bring forth their young with more pain than any other creature:

and thy desire [shall be] to thy husband, which some understand of her desire to the use of the marriage bed, as Jarchi, and even notwithstanding her sorrows and pains in child bearing; but rather this is to be understood of her being solely at the will and pleasure of her husband; that whatever she desired should be referred to him, whether she should have her desire or not, or the thing she desired; it should be liable to be controlled by his will, which must determine it, and to which she must be subject, as follows;

and he shall rule over thee, with less kindness and gentleness, with more rigour and strictness: it looks as if before the transgression there was a greater equality between the man and the woman, or man did not exercise the authority over the woman he afterwards did, or the subjection of her to him was more pleasant and agreeable than now it would be; and this was her chastisement, because she did not ask advice of her husband about eating the fruit, but did it of herself, without his will and consent, and tempted him to do the same.

Ver. 17. *And unto Adam he said*, etc.] Last of all, being the last that sinned, but not to be excused:

because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife; which was not only mean but sinful, since it was opposite to the voice of God, which he ought to have hearkened to God is to be hearkened to and obeyed rather than man, and much rather than a woman; to regard the persuasion of a woman, and neglect the command of God, is a great aggravation of such neglect; (see ^{<4019>}Acts 4:19,29)

and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee; saying, thou shall not eat of it; that is, had eat of the fruit of the tree which God had plainly pointed unto him, and concerning which he had given a clear and an express command not to eat of it; and had delivered it to him in the

strongest manner, and had most peremptorily and strictly enjoined it, adding the threatening of death unto it; so that he could by no means plead ignorance in himself, or any obscurity in the law, or pretend he did not understand the sense of the legislator. The righteous sentence therefore follows,

cursed is the ground for thy sake; the whole earth, which was made for man, and all things in it, of which he had the possession and dominion, and might have enjoyed the use of everything in it, with comfort and pleasure; that which was man's greatest earthly blessing is now turned into a curse by sin, which is a proof of the exceeding sinfulness of it, and its just demerit: so in later instances, a "fruitful land" is turned "into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein", (^{<19A734>}Psalm 107:34) hence, whenever there is sterility in a country, a want of provisions, a famine, it should always be imputed to sin; and this should put us in mind of the sin of the first man, and the consequence of that:

in sorrow shall thou eat of it all the days of thy life, meaning that with much toil and trouble, in manuring and cultivating the earth, he should get his living out of the produce of it, though with great difficulty; and this would be his case as long as he was in it.

Ver. 18. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee*, etc.] Not for his advantage, but to give him more trouble, and cause him more fatigue and sorrow to root them up: these include all sorts of noxious herbs and plants, and troublesome weeds, which added to man's labour to pluck up, that those more useful might grow and flourish: and Rabbi Eliezer^{f228} was of opinion, that if there had not been a new blessing upon the earth, it would have brought forth nothing else, as that which is rejected and nigh unto cursing does, (^{<50108>}Hebrews 6:8) and this curse continued, at least it was not wholly removed, until the times of Noah, (^{<100821>}Genesis 8:21) which made it hard and difficult to the antediluvian patriarchs to get their bread.

And thou shall eat the herb of the field; not the fruits of the garden of Eden, but only the common herbs of the field, such as even the beasts of the earth fed upon: to such a low condition was man, the lord of the whole earth, reduced unto by sin; and this was according to the law of retaliation, that man, who could not be content with all the fruits of Eden, save one, by eating the forbidden fruit should be deprived of them all.

Ver. 19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread*, etc.] Or “of thy nose” ^{f229}, sweat appearing first and chiefly on the forehead, from whence it trickles down by the nose in persons employed in hard labour; and here it takes in all the labour used in cultivating the earth for the production of herbs, and particularly of corn, of which bread is made; with respect to which there are various operations in which men sweat, such as ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, grinding, sifting, kneading, and baking; and it may have regard to all methods and means by which men get their bread, and not without sweat; and even such exercises as depend upon the brain are not excused from such an expense: so that every man, let him be in what station of life he will, is not exempt, more or less, from this sentence, and so continues till he dies, as is next expressed:

till thou return unto the ground, his original, out of which he was made; that is, until he dies, and is interred in the earth, from whence he sprung; signifying that the life of man would be a life of toil and labour to the very end of it: and nothing else can man expect in it:

for dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return; his body was composed of the dust, was of the earth, earthly, and should be reduced to that again by death, which is not an annihilation of man, but a bringing him back to his original; which shows what a frail creature man is, what little reason he has to be proud of himself, when he reflects from whence he came and whither he must go; (see ²¹¹⁷Ecclesiastes 12:7).

Ver. 20. *And Adam called his wife's name Eve*, etc.] Whom he had before named “Ishah”, a woman, because taken from him the man, (¹⁰¹²³Genesis 2:23) and now gives her a new name upon this scene of things, which had taken place; which is derived not from “Chavah”, to “show forth”, to “declare”; as if she was called so, because of her discourse with the serpent, being loquacious and talkative, and telling everything she knew, according to some Jewish writers ^{f230}; but from “Chayah, to live”, as the reason given in the text shows. She is called Aeon (“Aevum”) by Philo Byblius, the interpreter of Sanchoniatho ^{f231}. The word “Eve” is retained in many Heathen writers, and used to be frequently repeated in the Bacchanalian rites, when the idolaters appeared with serpents platted on their heads ^{f232}; which plainly refers to the affair between the serpent and Eve; hence Bacchus is sometimes called Evius ^{f233}: the reason of Adam’s giving her this name follows,

because she was the mother of all living; which reason is either given by Moses, when from her had sprung a numerous offspring, and would be continued to the end of the world; or if given by Adam was prophetic of what she would be; and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “because she would be the mother of all living”; and the ground of this faith and persuasion of his, that he and his wife should not die immediately for the offence they had committed, but should live and propagate their species, as well as be partakers of spiritual and eternal life, was the hint that had been just given, that there would be a seed spring from them; not only a numerous offspring, but a particular eminent person that should be the ruin of the devil and his kingdom, and the Saviour of them; and so Eve would be not, only the mother of all men living in succeeding generations, but particularly, or however one descending from her, would be the mother of him that should bring life and immortality to light, or be the author of all life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and who is called ζῶν, “the life”, which is the same word by which the Greek version renders Eve in the preceding clause. It was with pleasure, no doubt, that Adam gave her this name; and it appears that this affair of her being seduced by the serpent, and of drawing him into the transgression, did not alienate his affection from her; and the rather he must needs cleave unto her, and not forsake her, since her seed was to break the serpent’s head, and procure life and salvation for them; and by means of her there would be a race of living men produced, which would propagate his species to the end of time: for all living can only respect them, and not other animals, though in some sense they may be included, as our English poet^{f234} hints.

Ver. 21. *Unto Adam also, and to his wife*, etc.] Besides the kind intimation of grace and favour to them, another token of God’s good will towards them was shown, in that whereas they were naked and ashamed,

did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them; not that before this they were only bone and flesh, and now God brought a skin over them, and covered them with it, or ordered a beast, which was very like a man, to have its skin stripped off, and put on him, as some in Aben Ezra foolishly imagined; but these were made of the skins of beasts, not of the skin of the serpent, as the Targum of Jonathan; but of creatures slain, not merely for this purpose, nor for food, but for sacrifice, as a type of the woman’s seed, whose heel was to be bruised, or who was to suffer death for the sins of men; and therefore to keep up and direct the faith of our first parents to the slain Lamb of God from the foundation of the world, and of all believers in

all ages, until the Messiah should come and die, and become a sacrifice for sin, the sacrifices of slain beasts were appointed: and of the skins of these the Lord God, either by his almighty power, made coats for the man and his wife, or by the ministry of angels; or he instructed and directed them to make them, which was an instance of goodness to them; not only to provide food for them as before, but also raiment; and which though not rich, fine, and soft, yet was substantial, and sufficient to protect them from all inclemencies of the weather; and they might serve as to put them in mind of their fall, so of their mortality by it, and of the condition sin had brought them into; being in themselves, and according to their deserts, like the beasts that perish: as also they were emblems of the robe of Christ's righteousness, and the garments of his salvation, to be wrought out by his obedience, sufferings, and death; with which being arrayed, they should not be found naked, nor be condemned, but be secured from wrath to come. The Heathens had a notion, that the first men made themselves coats of the skins of beasts: the Grecians ascribe this to Pelasgus, whom they suppose to be the first man ^{¶235} among them, and Sanchoniatho ^{¶236} to Usous, who lived in the fifth generation.

Ver. 22. *And the Lord God said,* etc.] The Word of the Lord God, as the Jerusalem Targum; not to the ministering angels, as the Targum of Jonathan but within himself, or to the other two divine Persons:

behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; which is generally understood as an irony or sarcasm at man's deception by Satan, who promised man, and he expected to be as gods, knowing good and evil; behold the man, see how much like a god he looks, with his coat of skin upon his back, filled with shame and confusion for his folly, and dejected under a sense of what he had lost, and in a view of what he was sentenced to; yet must be understood not as rejoicing in man's misery, and insulting over him in it, but in order the more to convince him of his folly, and the more to humble him, and bring him to a more open repentance for affecting what he did, and giving credit to the devil in it: though I rather think they are seriously spoken, since this was after man was brought to a sense of the evil he committed, and to repentance for it, and had had the promised seed revealed to him as a Saviour, and, as an emblem of justification and salvation by him, was clothed with garments provided by God himself: wherefore the words are to be considered either as a declaration of his present state and condition, in and by Christ, by whose righteousness he was made righteous, even as he is righteous, though he had lost his own; to

whose image he was conformed, now bearing the image of the heavenly One, though he was deprived of that in which he was created, having sinned, and come short of the glory of God; and was now restored to friendship and amity with God, favoured with his gracious presence, and having faith and hope of being with him for evermore; the eyes of his understanding were enlightened by the Spirit and grace of God, to know the good things which God had provided for him in Christ, and in the covenant of grace, a better covenant than that under which he was made, and which he had broke; and to know the evil nature of sin, its just demerit, and the atonement of it, by the death and sacrifice of the promised seed: or else the words are a declaration of man's past state and condition, and may be rendered, "behold, the man was as one of us"^{f237}; as one of the Persons in the Deity, as the Son of God, after whose image, and in whose likeness, he was made; both as to his body, that being formed according to the idea of the body of Christ in the divine mind, and which was not begotten, but made out of the virgin earth; and as to his soul, which was created in righteousness and holiness, in wisdom and knowledge, and was like him in the government he had over all the creatures: and besides, he was in many things a type of Christ, a figure of him that was to come; especially in his being a federal head to his posterity, and in his offices of prophet, priest, and King; and being created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him, and having the law of God inscribed on his heart, he knew what was good and to be done, and what was evil and to be avoided: but now he was in a different condition, in other circumstances, had lost the image of God, and friendship with him, and his government over the creatures; and had ruined himself, and all his posterity, and was become unholy and unwise; for being tempted by Satan to eat of the forbidden fruit, under an expectation of increasing his knowledge, lost in a great measure what he had:

and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life; as well as of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; which some take to be a continued sarcasm; and others, that it was in pity to him, that he might not live a long life of sorrow; and others, as a punishment, that having sinned he was justly deprived of the sacrament and symbol of life; or else to prevent a fresh sin; or rather to show that there could be no life without satisfaction for the sin committed, and this in no other way than by Christ, the antitype of the tree of life:

and eat, and live for ever; not that it was possible, by eating of the fruit of the tree of life, his natural life could be continued for ever, contrary to the sentence of death pronounced upon him; or so as to elude that sentence, and by it eternal life be procured and obtained; but he was hindered from eating of it, lest he should flatter himself, that by so doing he should live for ever, notwithstanding he was doomed to die; and very probably the devil had suggested this to him, that should he be threatened with death, which he made a question of, yet by eating of the tree of life, which stood just by the other, he might save himself from dying: wherefore to prevent him, and to cut off all hopes of securing life to himself in this way, it is suggested that something must be done, which may be supplied from the following verse, let us send him out of the garden.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden*, etc.] Gave him orders to depart immediately; sent or put him away as a man does his wife, when he divorces her; or as a prince banishes a rebellious subject: for how long Adam was in the garden (see Gill on “~~Psalm~~ Psalm 49:12”), however, he did not send him to hell at once, as he did the apostate angels, but

to till the ground, from whence he was taken: either the earth in general, out of which he was made, and to which he must return, and in the mean while must labour hard, in digging and ploughing, in planting and sowing, that so he might get a livelihood; or that particular spot out of which he was formed, which is supposed from hence to have been without the garden of Eden, though very probably near unto it: some say it was a field near Damascus; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“he went and dwelt in Mount Moriah, to till the ground out of which he was created;”

and so other Jewish writers say ^{f238}, the gate of paradise was near Mount Moriah, and there Adam dwelt after he was cast out.

Ver. 24. *So he drove out the man*, etc.] Being unwilling to go out upon the orders given, some degree of force was used, or power exerted, in some way or other, to oblige him to depart; the word it is expressed by is used of divorces: there was a conjugal relation between God and man, the covenant between them had the nature of a matrimonial contract; which covenant man broke, though he was an husband to him, by committing idolatry, that is, spiritual adultery, not giving credit to him, but believing

the devil before him; wherefore he wrote him a bill of divorce, and sent him away; drove him from his presence and communion with him, from his house and habitation, from his seat of pleasure, and garden of delight, and from all the comfortable enjoyments of life; an emblem of that separation and distance which sin makes between God and his creature, and of that loss which is sustained thereby:

and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubims; the Septuagint version is,

“and he placed him, or caused him (Adam) to dwell over against the paradise of pleasure, and he ordered the cherubim”

But the words are not to be understood either of placing man, or placing the cherubim, but of Jehovah’s placing himself, or taking up his habitation and residence before the garden of Eden, or at the east of it: while man abode in a state of innocence, the place of the divine Presence, or where God more gloriously manifested himself to him, was in the garden; but now he having sinned, and being driven out of it, he fixes his abode in a very awful manner at the entrance of the garden, to keep man out of it; for so the words may be rendered, “and he inhabited the cherubim, or dwelt over, or between the cherubim, before or at the east of the garden of Eden” ^{f239}; so the Jerusalem Targum,

“and he made the glory of his Shechinah, or glorious Majesty, to dwell of old at the east of the garden of Eden, over or above the two cherubim;”

or between them, as the Targum of Jonathan; and very frequently is Jehovah described as sitting and dwelling between the cherubim, (^{<1004>}1 Samuel 4:4 ^{<1012>}2 Samuel 6:2 ^{<12915>}2 Kings 19:15 ^{<16801>}Psalms 80:1 99:1 ^{<23716>}Isaiah 37:16) by which are meant not flying animals or fowls, whose form no man ever saw, as Josephus ^{f240}; nor angels, which is the more generally received opinion; for these were not real living creatures of any sort, but forms and representations, such as were made afterwards in the tabernacle of Moses, and temple of Solomon; and which Ezekiel and John saw in a visionary way, and from whom we learn what figures they were: and these were hieroglyphics, not of a trinity of persons, as some of late have stupidly imagined; for these were the seat of the divine Majesty, and between which he dwelt: and besides, as these had four faces, they would rather represent a quaternity than a trinity, and would give a similitude of

the divine Being, which cannot be done, and be contrary to the second command; to which may be added, that the word is sometimes singular as well as plural: but these were hieroglyphics of the ministers of the word, whose understanding, humility, and tenderness, are signified by the face of a man; their strength, courage, and boldness, by that of a lion; their labour and diligence by that of an ox; and their quick sight and penetration into divine things by that of an eagle, which are the forms and figures of the cherubim; (see Gill on “~~2010~~ Ezekiel 1:10”). Among these Jehovah is; with these he grants his presence, and by them signifies his mind and will to men; and these he makes use of to show them the vanity of all self-confidence, and to beat them off of seeking for life and righteousness by their own works, and to direct them alone to Christ, and point him out as the alone way of salvation; and of this use the hieroglyphic might be to fallen Adam, now driven out of Eden:

and a flaming sword, which turned every way; a drawn sword, brandished, and which being very quick in its motion, as it was turned to and fro, glittered and looked like a flame of fire: this is not to be understood as by itself, and as of itself, turning about every way without a hand to move it, nor as with the cherubim, or as in the hands of angels, as in (~~1216~~ 1 Chronicles 21:16) or as being they themselves, which are made as flames of fire; but as in the hand of the Lord God, that dwelt between the cherubim; for so it may be rendered, “he inhabited the cherubim and that with a flaming sword”, ^{f241}; that is, with one in his hand, an emblem of the fiery law of God now broken, and of the fire of divine wrath on the account of that, and of the flaming justice of God, which required satisfaction; and this turning on all sides,

to keep the way of the tree of life; showing, that life and salvation were not to be had, unless the law and justice of God were satisfied; and that they were not to be expected on the foot of men’s works, but only through Christ, the way, the truth, and the life; that no happiness was to be looked for from the covenant of works, now broke, nothing but wrath and vengeance; and that there must be another way opened, or there could be no enjoyment of the heavenly paradise.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 4

In this chapter an account is given of the two eldest children of Adam and Eve, their names and calling, (~~ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲃ~~Genesis 4:1,2) and of their different offerings to the Lord, and the different respect had unto them by him, which in Cain issued in wrath and envy, which appeared in his countenance, and were taken notice of by the Lord, and about which he reasoned with him, (~~ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲃ~~Genesis 4:3-7) but it had no effect upon him, he murdered his brother, upon which he was examined about him, but denied he knew anything of him where he was, (~~ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲃ~~Genesis 4:8,9) he is arraigned, convicted and condemned, sentence passed upon him, and that executed, which he complains of, and is mitigated, or however a protection is granted him, and a mark set on him for his security, (~~ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲃ~~Genesis 4:10-15) after which we have an account of his posterity for several generations, their names, and the business of some of them, (~~ⲓⲟⲩⲁⲃ~~Genesis 4:16-24) and the chapter is closed with the birth of another son, and of a grandson to Adam and Eve, in whose days was the beginning of social religion.

Ver. 1. *And Adam knew Eve his wife*, etc.] An euphemism, or modest expression of the act of coition. Jarchi interprets it, “had known”, even before he sinned, and was drove out of the garden; and so other Jewish writers, who think he otherwise would not have observed the command, “be fruitful and multiply”: but if Adam had begotten children in a state of innocence, they would have been free from sin, and not tainted with the corruption of nature after contracted; but others more probably think it was some considerable time after; according to Mer Thudiusi, or Theodosius ^{f242}, it was thirty years after he was driven out of paradise:

and she conceived and bare Cain; in the ordinary way and manner, as women ever since have usually done, going the same time with her burden. Whether this name was given to her first born by her, or by her husband, or both, is not said: it seems to have been given by her, from the reason of it after assigned. His name, in Philo Byblius ^{f243}, is Genos, which no doubt was Cain, in Sanchoniatho, whom he translated; and his wife, or the twin

born with him, is said to be Genea, that is, **hnyq**, “Cainah”: the Arabs call her Climiah ^{f244} and the Jewish writers Kalmenah ^{f245}; who are generally of opinion, that with Cain and Abel were born twin sisters, which became their wives.

And said, that is, Eve said upon the birth of her firstborn,

I have gotten a man from the Lord; as a gift and blessing from him, as children are; or by him, by his favour and good will; and through his blessing upon her, causing her to conceive and bear and bring forth a son: some render it, “I have gotten a man, the Lord” ^{f246}; that promised seed that should break the serpents head; by which it would appear, that she took that seed to be a divine person, the true God, even Jehovah, that should become man; though she must have been ignorant of the mystery of his incarnation, or of his taking flesh of a virgin, since she conceived and bare Cain through her husband’s knowledge of her: however, having imbibed this notion, it is no wonder she should call him Cain, a possession or inheritance; since had this been the case, she had got a goodly one indeed: but in this she was sadly mistaken, he proved not only to be a mere man, but to be a very bad man: the Targum of Jonathan favours this sense, rendering the words,

“I have gotten a man, the angel of the Lord.”

Ver. 2. *And she again bare his brother Abel*, etc.] Or “added to bare” ^{f247}, not directly or immediately, but perhaps the following year; though some have thought, because no mention is made of her conceiving again, that she brought forth Abel at the same time she did Cain, or that the birth of the one immediately followed upon that of the other: and it is the common opinion of the Jews ^{f248} that with Abel, as with Cain, was born a twin sister, whom the Arabic writers ^{f249} call Lebuda: the name of Abel, or rather Hebel, signifies not “mourning”, as Josephus ^{f250} observes, but “vanity”, Eve not making that account of him as she did of Cain; or perhaps because by this time she became sensible of her mistake in him, or had met with something which convinced her that all earthly enjoyments were vanity; or by a spirit of prophecy foresaw what would befall this her second son, that he should be very early deprived of his life in a violent manner:

and Abel was a keeper of sheep: a calling which he either chose himself, or his father put him to, and gave him; for though he and his brother were born to a large estate, being the heirs of Adam, the lord of the whole earth,

yet they were not brought up in idleness, but in useful and laborious employments:

but Cain was a tiller of the ground: of the same occupation his father was, and he being the first born, was brought up in the same business, and might be a reason why he was put into it.

Ver. 3. *And in process of time it came to pass,* etc.] Or “at the end of days”^{f251}; which some understand of the end of seven days, at the end of the week, or on the seventh day, which they suppose to be the sabbath day, these sons of Adam brought their offerings to the Lord: but this proceeds upon an hypothesis not sufficiently established, that the seventh day sabbath was now appointed to be observed in a religious way; rather, according to Aben Ezra, it was at the end of the year; So “after days” in (~~07104~~ Judges 11:4 *marg) is meant after a year; and which we there render, as here, “in process of time”. This might be after harvest, after the fruits of the earth were gathered in, and so a proper season to bring an offering to the Lord, in gratitude for the plenty of good things they had been favoured with; as in later times, with the Israelites, there was a feast for the ingathering of the fruits of the earth, (~~02316~~ Exodus 23:16). The Targum of Jonathan fixes this time to the fourteenth of Nisan, as if it was the time of the passover, a feast instituted two thousand years after this time, or thereabout; and very stupidly one of the Jewish writers^{f252} observes, that

“the night of the feast of the passover came, and Adam said to his sons, on this night the Israelites will bring the offerings of the passovers, offer ye also before your Creator.”

That Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord; corn, herbs, seeds, etc. the Targum of Jonathan says it was flax seed; so Jarchi makes mention of an “agadah” or exposition, which gives the same sense; and another of their writers^{f253} observes, that Cain brought what was left of his food, or light and trifling things, flax or hemp seed. This he brought either to his father, as some think, being priest in his family; or rather he brought and offered it himself at the place appointed for religious worship, and for sacrifices; so Aben Ezra, he brought it to the place fixed for his oratory. It is highly probable it was at the east of the entrance of the garden of Eden, where the Shechinah, or the divine Majesty, was, and appeared in some remarkable manner.

Ver. 4. *And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock*, etc.] As he was a shepherd, his flock consisted of sheep; and of the firstlings of these, the lambs that were first brought forth, he presented as an offering to the Lord; and which were afterwards frequently used in sacrifice, and were a proper type of Christ, Jehovah's firstborn, the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world, a Lamb without spot and blemish; fitly signified by one for his innocence, harmlessness, and meekness:

and of the fat thereof; which is to be understood either of the fat properly, which in later time was claimed by the Lord as his own, (~~RB6~~ Leviticus 3:16) or of the fattest of his flock, the best lambs he had; the fattest and plumpest, and which were most free from defects and blemishes; not the torn, nor lame, nor sick, but that which was perfect and without spot; for God is to be served with the best we have. Josephus ^{f254} says it was milk, and the firstlings of his flock; and a word of the same letters, differently pointed, signifies milk; and some learned men, as Grotius and others, have given into this sense, observing it to be a custom with the Egyptians to sacrifice milk to their gods: but the word, as here pointed, is never used for milk; nor were such sacrifices ever used by the people of God; and Abel's sacrifice is called by the apostle ψυσικ, a "slain" sacrifice, as Heidegger ^{f255} observes:

and the Lord had respect to Abel, and to his offering; as being what he had designed and appointed to be used for sacrifice in future time, and as being a suitable type and emblem of the Messiah, and his sacrifice; and especially as being offered up by faith, in a view to the sacrifice of Christ, which is of a sweet smelling savour to God, and by which sin only is atoned and satisfied for, (see ~~RB4~~ Hebrews 11:4). God looked at his sacrifice with a smiling countenance, took, and expressed delight, well pleasedness, and satisfaction in it; and he first accepted of his person, as considered in Christ his well beloved Son, and then his offering in virtue of his sacrifice: and this respect and acceptance might be signified by some visible sign or token, and particularly by the descent of fire from heaven upon it, as was the token of acceptance in later times, (~~RB24~~ Leviticus 9:24) and Theodotion here renders it, he "fired" it, or "set" it on "fire"; and Jarchi paraphrases it,

"fire descended and licked up his offering;"

and Aben Ezra,

"and fire descended and reduced the offering of Abel to ashes;"

so Abraham Seba^{f256} .

Ver. 5. *But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect*, etc.] Not because of the matter of it, as some have thought; but because it was not offered in faith and sincerity, but in a formal and hypocritical manner, without any regard to the Messiah and his sacrifice, and without any view to the glory of God: no notice was taken, no approbation was given of it by the above token, or any other; so that it was manifest to Cain himself, that God did not approve of it, or was well pleased with it, as with his brother's:

and Cain was very wroth; with God, to whom he offered it, because he did not accept of it, and with his brother, because he and his sacrifice were preferred to him and his:

and his countenance fell; the briskness and cheerfulness of his countenance went off, and he looked dejected; and instead of lifting up his face towards heaven; he looked with a down look to the earth; he looked churlish, morose, and sullen, ill natured, full of malice and revenge, and as if he was studying which way to vent it; he knit his brows and gnashed his teeth, put on a surly countenance; and there might be seen in his face all the signs, not only of grief and disappointment, but of rage and fury; though^{f257} some interpret it of shame and confusion.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said unto Cain, why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?* etc.] Which was said not as being ignorant of his wrath and resentment, but to bring him to a conviction of his sin or sins, which were the cause of God's rejecting his sacrifice, and to repentance and amendment; and to show him that he had no cause to be displeased, either with him or his brother, for the different treatment of him and his offering; since the fault lay in himself, and he had none to blame but his own conduct, which for the future he should take care to regulate according to the divine will, and things would take a different turn.

Ver. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?* etc.] That is, either if thou doest thy works well in general, doest good works in a right way and manner, according to life will of God, and directed to his glory, from right principles, and with right views: so all the Targums,

“if thou doest thy works well;”

for it is not merely doing a good work, but doing the good work well, which is acceptable to God; hence that saying,

“that not nouns but adverbs make good works:”

or particularly it may respect sacrifice; if thou doest thine offering well, or rightly offereth, as the Septuagint; or offers not only what is materially good and proper to be offered, but in a right way, in obedience to the divine will, from love to God, and with true devotion to him, in the faith of the promised seed, and with a view to his sacrifice for atonement and acceptance; then thine offering would be well pleasing and acceptable. Some render the latter part of the clause, which is but one word in the original text, “there will be a lifting up” ^{f258}; either of the countenance of the offerer, and so, if Cain had done well, his countenance would not have fallen, but have been lifted up, and cheerful as before; or of sin, which is the pardon of it, and is often expressed by taking and lifting it up, and bearing it away, and so of easing a man of it as of a burden; and in this sense all the Targums take it; which paraphrase it,

“it or thy sin shall be forgiven thee:”

and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door; if thou dost not do good works, nor offer an offering as it should be offered, sin lies at the door of conscience; and as soon as that is awakened and opened, it will enter in and make sad work there, as it afterwards did, (^{<Q10413>}Genesis 4:13) or it is open and manifest, and will be taken cognizance of, and punishment be inflicted for it; or else the punishment of sin itself is meant, which lies at the door, is at hand, and will soon be executed; and so all the Targums paraphrase it.

“thy sin is reserved to the day of judgment,”

or lies at the door of the grave, reserved to that day, as Jarchi. Some render the word a sin offering, as it sometimes signifies; and then the sense is, that though he had sinned, and had done amiss in the offering he had offered, nevertheless there was a propitiatory sacrifice for sin provided, which was at hand, and would soon be offered; so that he had no need to be dejected, or his countenance to fall; for if he looked to that sacrifice by faith, he would find pardon and acceptance; but the former sense is best:

and unto thee shall be his desire; or “its desire”, as some understand it of sin lying at the door, whose desire was to get in and entice and persuade

him to that which was evil, and prevail and rule over him. The Targum of Jonathan, and that of Jerusalem, paraphrase it of sin, but to another sense,

“sin shall lie at the door of thine heart, but into thine hand I have delivered the power of the evil concupiscence; and to thee shall be its desire, and thou shalt rule over it, whether to be righteous, or to sin:”

but rather it refers to Abel; and the meaning is, that notwithstanding his offering was accepted of God, and not his brother Cain's, this would not alienate his affections from him, nor cause him to refuse subjection to him; but he should still love him as his brother, and be subject to him as his elder brother, and not seek to get from him the birthright, or think that that belonged to him, being forfeited by his brother's sin; and therefore Cain had no reason to be angry with his brother, or envious at him, since this would make no manner of alteration in their civil affairs:

and thou shalt rule over him, as thou hast done, being the firstborn.

Ver. 8. *And Cain talked with Abel*, etc.] Or “said”, or “spoke unto” him ^{f259}; either what the Lord God said to him in the foregoing verses, as Aben Ezra; or he spoke to him in a kind and friendly manner, and thereby got him to take a walk in the field with him. The Vulgate Latin version adds, “let us go abroad”; and the Septuagint and Samaritan versions, “let us go into the field”; not to fight a duel, which Abel doubtless would have declined, had that been declared, but to have some friendly conversation; and there being a large pause here in the Hebrew text, the Jerusalem Targum gives us an account of what passed between them when in the field;

“Cain said to Abel his brother, there is no judgment, nor Judge, nor will a good reward be given to the righteous; nor will vengeance be taken of the wicked; neither is the world created in mercy nor governed in mercy; otherwise, why is thine offering received with good will, and mine not?”

Abel answered and said to Cain,

“there is a judgment,” etc.

and so goes on to assert everything Cain denied, and to give a reason why the offering of the one was accepted, and the other rejected: and to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan:

and it came to pass, when they were in the field; alone and at a distance from their parents, or from any town or city, if any were now built, as some think there were, and out of the sight of any person that might come and interpose and rescue: about a mile from Damascus, in a valley, yet on the side of a hill, are now shown the place, or the house on it, where Cain slew Abel ^{f260}; and so Mr. Maundrel ^{f261} speaks of a high hill near Damascus, reported to be the same they offered their sacrifice on, and Cain slew his brother, and also of another hill at some distance from Damascus, and an ancient structure on it, supposed to be the tomb of Abel:

that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him; in a furious manner assaulted him, without any just provocation, and took away his life, by some instrument or other, perhaps that was used in husbandry, which might be in the field where they were. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“he fixed a stone in his forehead, and slew him;”

and so the Jews say ^{f262} elsewhere: our poet ^{f263} says, he smote him in the breast with a stone, into the midriff or diaphragm: it must be by some means or other, by which his blood was shed; but it is not material to inquire what the instrument was, as Aben Ezra observes; since though there might be swords, yet there were stones and clubs enough, as he takes notice; and there must be even instruments for agriculture, one of which might be taken up, as being at hand, with which the execution might be made. The Jewish writers ^{f264} say Abel was an hundred years old when he was slain; and some of them ^{f265} make Abel to be the first aggressor: they say, that Abel rose up against him, and threw him to the ground, and afterwards Cain rose up and slew him; however this was not likely the case.

Ver. 9. *And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel thy brother?* etc.]

Perhaps this was said to him the next time he came to offer, he not being with him: this question is put, not as being ignorant where he was, but in order to bring Cain to a conviction and confession of his sin, to touch his conscience with it, and fill it with remorse for it; and, for the aggravation of it, observes the relation of Abel to him, his brother:

and he said, I know not; which was a downright lie; for he must know where he had left him or laid him: this shows him to be under the influence of Satan, who was a liar, and the father of lies, as well as a murderer from the beginning; and that he was so blinded by him, as to forget whom he was speaking to; that he was the omniscient God, and knew the wickedness he had done, and the falsehood he now delivered, and was capable of confronting him with both, and of inflicting just punishment on him.

[Am] I my brother's keeper? which was very saucily and impudently spoken: it is not only put by way of interrogation, but of admiration, as Jarchi observes, as wondering at it, that God should put such a question to him, since he knew he had not the charge of his brother, and his brother was at age to take care of himself; and if not, it rather belonged to God and his providence to take care of him, and not to him: so hardened was he in his iniquity, he had stretched out his hand against his brother, and now he stretched it out against God, and ran upon him, even on the thick bosses of his buckler.

Ver. 10. *And he said*, etc.] Not Cain, the last speaker, but the Lord God,

what hast thou done? what an heinous crime hast thou committed! how aggravated is it! I know what thou hast done; thou hast slain thy brother, thine own, thine only brother, a holy, righteous, and good man, who never gave thee any offence, or any just occasion of shedding his innocent blood: this he said as knowing what he had done, and to impress his mind with a sense of the evil, and to bring him to a confession of it, before the sentence was passed, that it might appear to all to be just, and of which there was full proof and evidence, as follows:

the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground; where it was split, and in which it was covered and hid, and where perhaps Cain had buried his body, that it might not be seen, and the murder not discovered; but God saw what was done, and the voice of innocent blood came into his ears, and cried for vengeance at his hands: it is in the original, “the voice of thy brother’s bloods”^{f266}, in the plural; which the Jews generally understood of the posterity that would have descended from Abel, had he not been murdered: the Targum of Onkelos is,

“the voice of the blood of the seeds or generations that should come from thy brother;”

(see ^{<1995>}2 Kings 9:26) or it may respect the blood of the seed of the woman, of all the righteous ones that should be slain in like manner. The Jerusalem Targum is,

“the voice of the bloods of the multitude of the righteous that shall spring from Abel thy brother,”

or succeed him; (see ^{<1235>}Matthew 23:35). Jarchi thinks it has reference to the many wounds which Cain gave him, from whence blood sprung; and every wound and every drop of blood, as it were, cried for vengeance on the murderer.

Ver. 11. *And now [art] thou cursed from the earth*, etc.] From receiving benefit by it, and enjoying the fruits of it as before, and from having a settled dwelling in it, as is afterwards explained:

which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; the blood of his brother, which was shed by his own hand, was received and sucked into the earth, where it was spilt, through the pores of it, and drank up and covered, so as not to be seen; in which it was as it were more humane to Abel, and as it were more ashamed of the crime, and shuddered more, and expressed more horror at it, than Cain.

Ver. 12. *When thou tillest the ground*, etc.] Which was the business he was brought up in and followed, (^{<1002>}Genesis 4:2)

it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; the earth had been cursed for Adam's sin, and was not so fruitful as in its original state; and now it was cursed again for Cain's sin; not the whole earth, but that part which belonged to Cain, and was cultivated by him; and so it must be supposed to be cursed, not only in the spot where he had been settled, but in every other place where he should come and occupy, and which through this additional curse became so barren that it did not yield such good fruits, and such an increase of it as before; it lost its native and vital juice, by which seed cast into it became not so fruitful, and did not increase; but instead of this, though much pains were taken to manure it, and much was sown, yet it brought forth little, at least but little to Cain, whatever it did to others; and therefore it is said, “shall not yield unto thee”; it would not turn much to his account, or yield much profit and increase to him, or bring forth much fruit; (see ^{<8938>}Job 31:38)

a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth; being obliged to quit his former habitation, and remove to a place at some distance from the house of his father Adam, which was near the garden of Eden, as Aben Ezra observes; and to wander about from place to place, having no quiet settlement in anyone place: the Septuagint render it “groaning and trembling”; the guilt of his sin lay heavy on his conscience, and filled him with such horror and terror that he was continually sighing and groaning, and was seized with such a tremor that he shook in all his limbs; so the Arabic writers ^{f267} say, that he was trembling and quivering, and had a shaking in his head all the days of his life; and Aben Ezra observes, that there are some that say that the first of these words signifies to moan and lament; but it may be, it was not so much his sin, at least the evil of it, that he lamented, as the mischief that came by it, or the calamities and misfortunes it brought upon him.

Ver. 13. *And Cain said unto the Lord*, etc.] In the anguish of his spirit and the distress of his mind:

my punishment is greater than I can bear; thus complaining of the mercy of God, as if he acted a cruel part, inflicting on him more than he could endure; and arraigning his justice, as if it was more than he deserved, or ought in equity to be laid on him; whereas it was abundantly less than the demerit of his sin, for his punishment was but a temporal one; for, excepting the horrors and terrors of his guilty conscience, it was no other than a heavier curse on the land he tilled, and banishment from his native place, and being a fugitive and wanderer in other countries; and if such a punishment is intolerable, what must the torments of hell be? the worm that never dies? the fire that is never quenched? and the wrath of God, which is a consuming fire, and burns to the lowest hell? some render the words, “my sin is greater than can be forgiven” ^{f268}; as despairing of the mercy of God, having no faith in the promised seed, and in the pardon of sin through his atonement, blood, and sacrifice; or, “is my sin greater than can be forgiven” ^{f269}? is there no forgiveness of it? is it the unpardonable sin? but Cain seems not to be so much concerned about sin, and the pardon of it, as about his temporal punishment for it; wherefore the first sense seems best, and best agrees with what follows.

Ver. 14. *Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth*, etc.] Not from being upon the earth, or had chased him out of the world as a wicked man is at death, but from a quiet settlement in it, and

from society and converse with the inhabitants of it; and especially he was driven from that part of it, where he was born and brought up, and which he had been employed in manuring; where his parents dwelt, and other relations, friends, and acquaintance: and to be banished into a strange country, uninhabited, and at a distance from those he had familiarly lived with, was a sore punishment of him:

and from, thy face shall I be hid; not from his omniscience and omnipresence, for there is no such thing as being hid from the all seeing eye of God, or flying from his presence, which is everywhere; but from his favour and good will, and the outward tokens of it, as well as from the place where his Shechinah or divine Majesty was; and which was the place of public worship, and where good men met and worshipped God, and offered sacrifice to him: and from the place of divine worship and the ordinances of it, and the church of God and communion with it, an hypocrite does not choose to be debarred:

and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; as was threatened him, (see Gill on “^{<0042>}Genesis 4:12”):

and it shall come to pass, that everyone that findeth me shall slay me; that is, some one, the first that should meet him, for he could be slain but by one; so odious he knew he should be to everyone, being under such marks of the divine displeasure, that his life would be in danger by whomsoever he should be found: and this being near an hundred and thirty years after the creation of man, (see ^{<0025>}Genesis 4:25) (^{<00B3>}Genesis 5:3) there might in this time be a large number of men on earth; Adam and Eve procreating children immediately after the fall, and very probably many more besides Cain and Abel, and those very fruitful, bringing many at a birth and often, and few or none dying, the increase must be very great; and we read quickly after this of a city being built, (Gen 4:17). Cain seems to be more afraid of a corporeal death than to have any concern about his soul, and the eternal welfare of it, or to be in dread and fear of an eternal death, or wrath to come; though some think the words should be rendered in a prayer^{t270}, “let it be that anyone that findeth me may kill me”; being weary of life under the horrors of a guilty conscience.

Ver. 15. *And the Lord said unto him*, etc.] In order to satisfy him, and make him easy in this respect, that: he need not fear an immediate or bodily death, which was showing him great clemency and lenity; or in answer to his begging for death, “therefore”, or as some render the word, taking them

for two, “not so” ^{f271}; it shall not be that whoever finds thee shall slay thee, thou needest not be afraid of that; nor shall thy request be granted, that thou mightest be slain by the first man that meets thee: it was the will of God, that though Cain deserved to die, yet that he should not die immediately, but live a long miserable life, that it might be a terror to others not to commit the like crime; though rather the particle should be rendered “verily, surely, of a truth” ^{f272}; so it will certainly be, it may be depended on:

whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold; seven times more than on Cain; that is, he shall be exceedingly punished; vengeance shall be taken on him in a very visible manner, to a very great degree; the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are “unto or through seven generations;”

the meaning of which is, that the slayer of Cain should not only be punished in his own person, but in his posterity, even unto seven generations; and not as Jarchi and Aben Ezra interpret it, that God deferred his vengeance on Cain unto seven generations, and at the end of them took vengeance on him by Lamech, one of his own posterity, by whom he is supposed by that Jewish writer to be slain:

and the Lord set a mark upon Cain; about which there is a variety of sentiments ^{f273}: some say it was a horn in his forehead: others, a leprosy in his face; others, a wild ghastly look; others, a shaking and trembling in all his limbs; and others, that there was an earthquake wherever he stepped: and others will have it, that the dog which guarded Abel’s flock was given him to accompany him in his travels, by which sign it might be known that he was not to be attacked, or to direct him from taking any dangerous road: some say it was a letter imprinted on his forehead, either taken out of the great and glorious name of God, as the Targum of Jonathan, or out of his own name, as Jarchi; others the mark or sign of the covenant of circumcision ^{f274}: but as the word is often used for a sign or miracle, perhaps the better rendering and sense of the words may be, “and the Lord put”, or “gave a sign” ^{f275}; that is, he wrought a miracle before him to assure him, that “whoever found him should not kill him”: so that this was not a mark or sign to others, to direct or point out to them that they should not kill him, or to deter them from it; but was a sign or miracle confirming him in this, that no one should kill him; agreeably to which is the note of Aben Ezra,

“it is right in my eyes that God made a sign (or wrought a miracle) for him, until he believed;”

by which he was assured that his life would be secure, go where he would; even that no one should “strike”^{f276} him, as the word is, much less kill him.

Ver. 16. *And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord*, etc.] Either from the place where the Lord was talking with him; or from the place where his glorious Majesty usually resided, where was some visible token of his presence, some stream of light and glory which showed him to be there, and which was at the east of the garden of Eden; from whence Cain was obliged to go, not being suffered to appear any more before God, or among his worshippers: there was a place near Tripoli in Syria, near where Mount Lebanon ends, called *προσωπον του ψευ*, “the face of God”, made mention of by Polybius^{f277}, and Strabo^{f278}: and was near those parts where some place the garden of Eden; and it is possible might have its name from some tradition that this was the place where the face of God was seen, or his presence enjoyed by our first parents after their ejection from Eden, and from whence Cain went forth:

and dwelt in the land of Nod; so called, not before he went there, but from his wandering up and down in it; continuing in no one place in it, as well as his mind was restless and uneasy; Jarchi mentions another reason of its name, that in every place where he went the earth shook under him, and men said, Depart from him, this is he that slew his brother:

on the east of Eden; further east from the place where his father Adam and his other children dwelt; not being allowed to continue any longer with them, or converse with them, after he had been guilty of so horrid a crime.

Ver. 17. *And Cain knew his wife*, etc.] Who this woman was is not certain, nor whether it was his first wife or not; whether his sister, or one that descended from Adam by another of his sons, since this was about the one hundred and thirtieth year of the creation. At first indeed Cain could marry no other than his sister; but whether he married Abel’s twin sister, or his own twin sister, is disputed; the Jews say^{f279}, that Cain’s twin sister was not a beautiful woman, and therefore he said, I will kill my brother and take his wife: on the other hand, the Arabic writers say^{f280}, that Adam would have had Cain married Abel’s twin sister, whom they call Awin; and Abel have married Cain’s twin sister, whom they call Azron; but Cain would

not, because his own sister was the handsomest; and this they take to be the occasion of the quarrel, which issued in the murder of Abel.

And she conceived and bare Enoch; which signifies “trained up”, not in the true religion, and in the ways of God and godliness, as one of this name descending from Seth was, who is said to walk with God; but in the practices of his father Cain, and in a wicked course of life:

and he builded a city: for a settlement on earth, thinking of nothing but this world, and the things of it; or to secure himself from being slain by men; or it may be for his amusement, to divert his thoughts from the melancholy scene always presented to his mind, by being thus employed; and his posterity growing numerous, he took this method to keep them together, and that they might be able to defend themselves from the assaults of others. Some render the words, “he was building a city”^{f281}; as if he did not live to finish it; but it looks as if it was finished by him, by what follows:

and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch: not after his own name, which was odious and infamous, but after his son’s name, to show his affection to him, and that his name might be continued in ages to come; (see ^{<991>}Psalm 49:11). This was the first city that was built, that we read of. Sir Walter Raleigh conjectures^{f282} that the Henochii or Heniochi of Pliny, Ptolemy, and other writers, took their name from this city of Enoch, or from the country where it stood, when it was repeopled after the flood, since these people were due east from the garden of Eden.

(For Cain to marry his sister or any other close relation was not harmful as it is today. There would be few if any genetic disorders at this time.

However, as time passed, the human race accumulated more and more genetic defects, so by the time of Moses, the laws against incest, as given in (^{<888>}Leviticus 18:1-20:27), were necessary. These laws helped prevent deformed children. Ed.)

Ver. 18. *And unto Enoch was born Irad*, etc.] But of neither of them is any other mention made, either in sacred or profane history; nor is it said how old Enoch was when Irad was born, nor how long he lived after; as is recorded of Adam, Seth, and their posterity:

[and] Irad begat Mehujael, [and] Mehujael begat Methusael; of whom also we have no other account;

[and] Methusael begat Lamech; and it seems for the sake of Lamech that the genealogy of Cain's posterity is described and carried down thus far, some things being to be taken notice of concerning him. The names of the immediate posterity of Genos or Cain, according to Sanchoniatho, and, as Philo Byblius ^{f283} has translated them, were light, fire, and flame; who found out fire by rubbing pieces of wood together, and taught the use of it, from whence they seem to have their names. These begat sons that exceeded others in bulk and height, whose names were given to the mountains they first possessed, and from them were called Cassius, Libanus, Antilibanus, and Brathy; and of them were begotten Memrumus and Hypsuranius, so called by their mothers, women, who, without shame, lay with everyone they could meet with; of these came Agreus and Halieus, the inventors of fishing and hunting; and these seem to answer to the generations from Cain to Lamech; and it is no wonder Moses should take no more notice of such a set of men; which, according to their own historian, deserved but little regard.

Ver. 19. *And Lamech took unto him two wives*, etc.] He was the first we read of that introduced polygamy, contrary to the first institution of marriage, whereby only one man and one woman were to be joined together, and become one flesh, (^{OLD24}Genesis 2:24). This evil practice, though it began in the race of wicked Cain, was in later ages followed by some among the people of God, which was connived at because of the hardness of their hearts; otherwise it was not so from the beginning. This was the first instance of it known; Jarchi says it was the way of the generation before the flood to have one wife for procreation of children, and the other for carnal pleasure; the latter drank a cup of sterility, that she might be barren, and was adorned as a bride, and lived deliciously; and the other was used roughly, and mourned like a widow; but by this instance it does not appear, for these both bore children to Lamech.

The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah; whose daughters they were cannot be said, no doubt of the race of Cain; the name of the one signifies an "ornament", or beauty, and might seem to answer to the account Jarchi gives of the wife for pleasure, if there were any foundation for it; and the other signifies a "shadow", being continually under the shadow of her husband.

Ver. 20. *And Adah bare Jabal*, etc.] According to Hillerus ^{f284}, this name, and Jubal and Tubal, after mentioned, all signify a river; why Lamech

should call all his sons by names signifying the same thing, is not easy to say.

He was the father of such as dwelt in tents, and [of such as have] cattle: not in a proper sense the father of them, though his posterity might succeed him in the same business; but he was the first author and inventor of tents or movable habitations, which could be carried from place to place, for the convenience of pasturage for cattle: he was not the first that had cattle in his possession, or that first fed and kept them, for Abel, the son of Adam, was a keeper of sheep; but he was the first that found out the use of tents, and the pitching of them to abide in at proper places, so long as the pasturage lasted, and then to remove elsewhere; as we find in later times the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did, and as the Scenitae and Nomades among the Arabs, and who retain the same method of keeping cattle to this day; and so the words may be rendered according to Bochart^{f285} and Noldius^{f286},

“he was the father of such that dwell in tents “with” cattle.”

Heidegger^{f287} thinks this Jabel to be the same with Pales, the god of shepherds^{f288}, to whom the Palilia were sacred with the Heathens; and that from Jabel may be formed “Bal”, leaving out the “jod”, as is sometimes done, and by adding the termination, it will be “Bales”, and by changing the letters of the same organ, “Pales”.

Ver. 21. *And his brother's name was Jubal*, etc.] This was another son of Lamech by Adah, and his name differs only in one letter from his brother's;

he was the father of all such that handle the harp and organ: he was the inventor of instrumental music, both of stringed instruments, such as were touched by the fingers, or struck with a quill, as the “harp”; and of wind instruments, such as were blown, as the “organ”, which seems not to be the same we call so, being a late invention; but however a pleasant instrument, as its name signifies. Jubal is thought by some to be the same with Apollo, to whom with the Greeks the invention of the harp is ascribed; and some have been of opinion, that the jubilee trumpet was so called from Jubal, (~~(Gen 10:1)~~ Leviticus 25:9). Sanchoniatho^{f289} makes Chrysor or Vulcan, the same with Tubalcain, the brother of Jubal, to exercise himself in eloquence, songs and divination, confounding or mistaking the employment of the two brothers. The Arabs have such a notion of the Cainites being the inventors of music, that they commonly call a singing girl “Cainah”^{f290}; and the

Arabic writers ^{f291} make Jubal to be the first inventor of music, and that the beasts and birds gathered together to hear him; the same that is said of Orpheus.

Ver. 22. *And Zillah, she also bare Tubalcain*, etc.] Thought by many to be the same with Vulcan, his name and business agreeing; for the names are near in sound, Tubalcain may easily pass into Vulcan; and who, with the Heathens, was the god of the smiths, and the maker of Jupiter's thunderbolts, as this was an artificer in iron and brass, as follows: his name is compounded of two words, the latter of which was no doubt put into his name in memory of Cain his great ancestor; the former Josephus ^{f292} reads Thobel, and says of him, that he exceeded all in strength, and had great skill in military affairs:

an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron; he taught men the way of melting metals, and of making armour and weapons of war, and other instruments, for various uses, out of them; and he seems to be the same with the Chrysor of Sanchoniatho; for he says ^{f293} of them (Agreus and Halieus) were begotten two brothers, the inventors of iron, and of working of it: one of these, called Chrysor, is said to be Hephaestus or Vulcan; and Chrysor, as Bochartus ^{f294} seems rightly to conjecture, is *rwaçrj*, "Choresh-Ur, a worker in fire"; that, by means of fire, melted metals, and cast them into different forms, and for different uses; and one of these words is used in the text of Tubalcain; and so, according to Diodorus Siculus ^{f295}, Vulcan signifies fire, and was not only the inventor of fire, but he says he was the inventor of all works in iron, brass, gold, and silver, and of all other things wrought by fire, and of all other uses of fire, both by artificers and all other men, and therefore he was called by all *πυρ*, "fire". Clemens of Alexandria ^{f296} ascribes the invention of brass and iron to the Idaeans or priests of Cybele in Cyprus; and so Sophocles in Strabo ^{f297}:

and the sister of Tubalcain was Naamah; whose name signifies "pleasant", fair and beautiful; and is thought by some to be the Venus of the Heathens; the Arabic writers ^{f298} say she was a most beautiful woman, and found out colours and painting; and by others Minerva; and Josephus ^{f299} says she excelled in the knowledge of divine things; and Minerva is by the Greeks called Nemanoum ^{f300}. The Jews say ^{f301} she was the wife of Noah; and some of them say ^{f302} she was the wife of one Shimron, and the mother of the evil spirit Asmodeus, mentioned in Tobit, and of whom other demons were begotten: the Targuru of Jonathan adds,

“she was the mistress of lamentation and songs;”

but our Bishop Cumberland ^{f303} conjectures, that she was the wife of Ham, was with him in the ark, and after the flood was the means of leading him into idolatry: what led him to this conjecture was, that he observed in Plutarch, that the wife of Cronus, the same with Ham, is by some called Nemaus, which brought Naamah to his mind. Josephus ^{f304} makes the number of children Lamech had by his two wives to be seventy seven.

Ver. 23. *And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, etc.]*

Confessing what he had done, or boasting what he would do should he be attacked; or in order to make his wives easy, who might fear from his fierceness and cruelty; and the murders he had committed, or on account of Abel’s murder, (^{<0045}Genesis 4:15) that either the judgments of God would fall upon him and them, or some man or other would dispatch him and his; wherefore calling them together, he thus bespeaks them,

hear my voice, ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech; this he said in an imperious manner to them, demanding their attention and regard, and as glorying in, instead of being ashamed of his polygamy, and in a blustering way, as neither fearing God nor man; or rather speaking comfortably to them, to remove their fears:

for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt; which, as some say, were his great-grandfather Cain, and his son Tubalcain: according to a tradition of the Jews ^{f305}, it was after this manner; Cain being old, and blind, and weary, sat in a thicket among the trees to rest himself; when Lamech, who was blind also, and led by Tubalcain hunting, who seeing Cain, and taking him for a wild beast, bid Lamech draw his bow, which he did, and killed him; but coming nearer, and finding it was Cain, was wroth and angry, and slew the young man: the Arabic writers ^{f306} tell the story with a little variation, and

“Lamech being in a wood with one of his sons, and hearing a noise in it, supposing it to be a wild beast, cast a stone, which fell upon Cain, and killed him ignorantly; and the lad that led him said, what hast thou done? thou hast killed Cain; at which being very sorrowful after the manner of penitents, he smote his hands together, and the lad standing before him, he struck his head with both his hands, and killed him unawares; and coming to his wives, Adah and Zillah, said to them, hear my word, he that slew Abel

shall be avenged sevenfold, but Lamech seventy times seven, who killed a man with a cast of a stone, and a young man by clapping of his hands.”

And our version, and others, imply, that he killed both a man, and a young man, or some one person or more, and that he was sorry for it, made confession of it; it was to the wounding and grief of his soul, which does not so well agree with one of the wicked race of Cain: wherefore the words may be rendered, “though I have slain a man”^{f307}, that is nothing to you, you are not accountable for it, nor have any thing to fear coming upon you by reason of that; it is to my own wounding, damage, and hurt, if to any, and not to you. Some versions render it, “I would slay a man”, etc.^{f308} any man, young or old, that should attack me; I fear no man: if any man wounds me, or offers to do me any hurt, I would slay him at once; I doubt not but I should be more than a match for him, be he who he will that shall set upon me, and kill him; though I might receive some slight wound, or some little hurt in the engagement, and therefore you need not be afraid of any man’s hurting me. The Arabic version reads interrogatively, “have I killed a man etc.?” and so some others^{f309}, I have not; with which agree the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan,

“I have not killed a man;”

for which he or his posterity should be punished, as they interpreted it; and therefore his wives had no need to fear any ill should befall him or them, or that the murder of Abel should be avenged on them, this being the seventh generation in which it was to be avenged, (^{<0045>}Genesis 4:15) wherefore it follows,

Ver. 24. *If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.*] Which if understood of him as confessing and lamenting his sin of murder, the sense is, if Cain was so severely punished for killing one man, of how much sorer punishment am I deserving, and shall have, who have killed two persons, and that after I had seen the punishment of Cain, and yet took no warning by it? or if he that killed Cain, who slew his brother, was to be avenged sevenfold, or to seven generations, then how much more, or longer, shall he be avenged, that shall slay me, who have slain none, or however not designedly; and therefore you may be easy and quiet, your fears, either from God or man, are groundless.

Ver. 25. *And Adam knew his wife again*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds, at the end of a hundred and thirty years after Abel was killed, (see ~~<ORR>~~Genesis 5:3) but, according to Bishop Usher, Seth was born the same year, which is most probable.

And she bare a son, and called his name Seth, that is, “put, placed, set”; not with any respect to Cain, who had no settled fixed abode, but wandered about; or to Seth as a foundation of the church and true religion, being a type of Christ the only foundation, though he may be considered in such a light; but the reason of his name follows:

for God, [said she], hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew; that is, another son in his room; and by calling him a “seed”, she may have respect unto the promised seed, whom she once thought Cain was, or however expected him in his line, as being the firstborn; but he proving a wicked man, and having slain his brother Abel, on whom her future hope was placed, has another son given her, and substituted in his room, in whom, and in whose family, the true religion would be preserved, and from whom the Messiah, the promised seed, would spring (see ~~<RRG>~~Galatians 3:16).

Ver. 26. *And to Seth, to him also there was born a son*, etc.] When he was an hundred and five years old, (~~<ORR>~~Genesis 5:6) and this is mentioned as a further proof and instance of God’s goodness to Adam’s family in this line, that there was a succession in it, where the true worship of God was kept, and from whence the Messiah was to arise, and as a pledge and confirmation of it:

and he called his name Enos; which is generally interpreted a weak, feeble, frail, mortal, miserable man; which Seth being sensible of, and observing the sorrows of human life, and especially an increase of them among good men through the growing corruptions of the age, gave this name to his son; though it may be observed, that the derivation of this name may be from the Arabic word ~~<Arabic>~~ “anas”^{f310}, to be sociable and familiar; man being a sociable creature, not only in civil but in religious things, and so a reason of the name may be taken from what follows;

then began men to call upon the name of the Lord; not but that Adam and Abel, and all good men, had called upon the name of the Lord, and prayed to him, or worshipped him before this time personally, and in their families; but now the families of good men being larger, and more numerous, they

joined together in social and public worship: or since it may be thought there were public assemblies for religious worship before this time, though it may be they had been neglected, and now were revived with more zeal and vigour; seeing the Cainites incorporating themselves, and joining families together, and building cities, and carrying on their civil and religious affairs among themselves, they also formed themselves into distinct bodies; and not only separated from them, but called themselves by a different name; for so the words may be rendered: “then began men to call themselves”, or “to be called by the name of the Lord”^{f311}; the sons of God, as distinct from the sons of men; which distinction may be observed in (~~Q002~~ Genesis 6:2) and has been retained more or less ever since: some choose to translate the words, “then began men to call in the name of the Lord”^{f312}; that is, to call upon God in the name of the Messiah, the Mediator between God and man; having now, since the birth of Seth, and especially of Enos, clearer notions of the promised seed, and of the use of him, and his name, in their addresses to God; (see ~~B413~~ John 14:13, ~~B414~~ 14:14 16:23,24). The Jews give a very different sense of these words; the Targum of Onkelos is,

“then in his days the children of men ceased from praying in the name of the Lord;”

and the Targum of Jonathan is,

“this was the age, in the days of which they began to err, and they made themselves idols, and surnamed their idols by the name of the Word of the Lord;”

with which agrees the note of Jarchi,

“then they began to call the names of men, and the names of herbs, by the name of the blessed God, to make idols of them:”

and some of them say, particularly Maimonides^{f313}, that Enos himself erred, and fell into idolatry, and was the first inventor of images, by the mediation of which men prayed to God: but all this seems to be without foundation, and injurious to the character of this antediluvian patriarch; nor does it appear that idolatry obtained in the posterity of Seth, or among the people of God so early; nor is such an account agreeable to the history which Moses is giving of the family of Seth, in opposition to that of Cain; wherefore one or other of the former senses is best.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 5

This chapter contains a list or catalogue of the posterity of Adam in the line of Seth, down to Noah; it begins with a short account of the creation of Adam, and of his life and death, (~~<00F0>~~Genesis 5:1-5) next of five of the antediluvian patriarchs, their age and death, namely Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, (~~<00F6>~~Genesis 5:6-20) then a particular relation of Enoch, his character and translation, (~~<00F2>~~Genesis 5:21-24) then follows an account of Methuselah, the oldest man, and Lamech's oracle concerning his son Noah, (~~<00F2>~~Genesis 5:12-29) and the chapter is closed with the life and death of Lamech, and the birth of the three sons of Noah, (~~<00F3>~~Genesis 5:30-32).

Ver. 1. *This is the book of the generations of Adam*, etc.] An account of persons born of him, or who descended from him by generation in the line of Seth, down to Noah, consisting of ten generations; for a genealogy of all his descendants is not here given, not of those in the line of Cain, nor of the collateral branches in the line of Seth, only of those that descended one from another in a direct line to Noah:

in the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; this is repeated from (~~<00C7>~~Genesis 1:27) to put in mind that man is a creature of God; that God made him, and not he himself; that the first man was not begotten or produced in like manner as his sons are, but was immediately created; that his creation was in time, when there were days, and it was not on the first of these, but on the sixth; and that he was made in the likeness of God, which chiefly lay in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, and in dominion over the creatures.

Ver. 2. *Male and female created he them*, etc.] Adam and Eve, the one a male, the other a female; and but one male and one female, to show that one man and one woman only were to be joined together in marriage, and live as man and wife for the procreation of posterity; and these were not made together, but first the male, and then the female out of him, though both in one day:

and blessed them; with a power of propagating their species, and multiplying it, and with all other blessings of nature and providence; with an habitation in the garden of Eden; with leave to eat of the fruit of all the trees in it, but one; with subjection of all the creatures to them, and with communion with God in their enjoyments:

and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created; which, as Philo^{f314} observes, signifies “earth”; and according to Josephus^{f315} red earth, out of which Adam was made; and as soon as he was made, this name was imposed upon him by God, to put him in mind of his original, that he was of the earth, earthly; and the same name was given to Eve, because made out of him, and because other marriage with him, and union to him; on that account, as ever since, man and wife bear the same name: wherefore I should rather think the name was given them from their junction and union together in love; so the name may be derived from the Arabic word^{f316} signifying to “join”: though some think they had it from their beauty, and the elegance of their form^{f317}, being the most fair and beautiful of the whole creation. The names of Adam and Eve in Sanchoniatho^{f318}, as translated into Greek by Philo Byblius, are Protogonos, the first born, and Aeon, which has some likeness to Eve: the name of the first man with the Chinese is Puoncuus^{f319}.

Ver. 3. *And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years*, etc.] The Septuagint version, through mistaken, gives the number two hundred and thirty years:

and begat [a son]; not that he had no other children during this time than Cain and Abel; this is only observed to show how old he was when Seth was born, the son here meant; who was begotten

in his own likeness, after his image; not in the likeness, and after the image of God, in which Adam was created; for having sinned, he lost that image, at least it was greatly defaced, and he came short of that glory of God, and could not convey it to his posterity; who are, and ever have been conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; are polluted and unclean, foolish and disobedient; averse to all that is good, and prone to all that is evil: the sinfulness of nature is conveyed by natural generation, but not holiness and grace; that is not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the flesh, but of God, and produced of his own will, by his mighty power impressing the image of his Son in regeneration on his people; which by beholding his glory they are more and more changed into by the Spirit of God. The

Jewish writers understand this in a good sense, of Seth being like to Adam in goodness, when Cain was not: so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and he begat Seth, who was like to his image and similitude; for before Eve had brought forth Cain, who was not like unto him--- but afterwards she brought forth him who was like unto him, and called his name Seth.”

So they say ^{f320} Cain was not of the seed, nor of the image of Adam, nor his works like Abel his brother; but Seth was of the seed and image of Adam, and his works were like the works of his brother Abel; according to that, “he begat (a son) in his own likeness”. And they assert ^{f321}, that Adam delivered all his wisdom to Seth his son, who was born after his image and likeness; and particularly Maimonides ^{f322} observes, that all the sons of Adam before Seth were rather beasts than men, and had not the true human form, not the form and image of men; but Seth, after Adam had taught and instructed him, was in human perfection, as it is said of him, “and he begat in his likeness”: but the text speaks not of the education of Seth, and of what he was through that, but of his birth, and what he was in consequence of it; and we are told by good authority, that “that which is born of the flesh is flesh”, carnal and corrupt, and such are all the sons of Adam by natural generation; (see ~~<1840>~~ Job 14:4).

Ver. 4. *And the days of Adam, after he had begotten Seth, were eight hundred years*, etc.] The Septuagint version is seven hundred; for having added one hundred years more the should be, to the years of his life before the birth of Seth, here they are taken away to make the number of his years complete:

and he begat sons and daughters; not only after the birth of Seth, but before, though we have no account of any, unless of Cain’s wife; but what their number was is not certain, either before or after; some say he had thirty children, besides Cain, Abel, and Seth; and others a hundred ^{f323}.

Josephus says the number of children, according to the old tradition, was thirty three sons and twenty three daughters. ^{f324}

Ver. 5. *And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years*, etc.] Not lunar years, as Varro ^{f325}, but solar years, which consisted of three hundred and sixty five days and odd hours, and such were in use among the Egyptians in the times of Moses; and of these must be the age of Adam, and of his posterity in this chapter, and of other patriarchs in this

book; or otherwise, some must be said to beget children at an age unfit for it, particularly Enoch, who must beget a son in the sixth year of his age; and the lives of some of them must be very short, even shorter than ours, as Abraham and others; and the time between the creation and the deluge could not be two hundred years: but this long life of the antediluvians, according to the Scripture account, is confirmed by the testimony of many Heathen writers, who affirm that the ancients lived a thousand years, as many of them did, pretty near, though not quite, they using a round number to express their longevity by; for the proof of this Josephus^{f326} appeals to the testimonies of Manetho the Egyptian, and Berosus the Chaldean, and Mochus and Hestiaeus; besides Jerom the Egyptian, and the Phoenician writers; also Hesiod, Hecataeus, Hellanicus, Acusilaus, Ephorus and Nicolaus. And though the length of time they lived may in some measure be accounted for by natural things as means, such as their healthful constitution, simple diet, the goodness of the fruits of the earth, the temperate air and climate they lived in, their sobriety, temperance, labour and exercise; yet no doubt it was so ordered in Providence for the multiplication of mankind, for the cultivation of arts and sciences, and for the spread of true religion in the world, and the easier handing down to posterity such things as were useful, both for the good of the souls and bodies of men. Maimonides^{f327} is of opinion, that only those individual persons mentioned in Scripture lived so long, not men in common; and which was owing to their diet and temperance, and exact manner of living, or to a miracle; but there is no reason to believe that they were the only temperate persons, or that any miracle should be wrought particularly on their account for prolonging their lives, and not others. But though they lived so long, it is said of them all, as here of the first man,

and he died, according to the sentence of the law in (Gen 2:17) and though he died not immediately upon his transgression of the law, yet he was from thence forward under the sentence of death, and liable to it; yea, death seized upon him, and was working in him, till it brought him to the dust of it; his life, though so long protracted, was a dying life, and at last he submitted to the stroke of death, as all his posterity ever since have, one or two excepted, and all must; for “it is appointed unto men once to die”. (~~<8927>~~ Hebrews 9:27). The Arabic^{f328} writers relate, that Adam when he was near death called to him Seth, Enos, Kainan, and Mahalaleel, and ordered them by his will, when he was dead, to embalm his body with myrrh, frankincense, and cassia, and lay it in the hidden cave, the cave of

Machpelah, where the Jews ^{f329} say he was buried, and where Abraham, Sarah, etc. were buried; and that if they should remove from the neighbourhood of paradise, and from the mountain where they dwelt, they should take his body with them, and bury it in the middle of the earth. They are very particular as to the time of his death. They say ^{f330} it was on a Friday, the fourteenth of Nisan, which answers to part of March and part of April, A. M. nine hundred and thirty, in the ninth hour of that day. The Jews are divided about the funeral of him; some say Seth buried him; others, Enoch; and others, God himself ^{f331}: the primitive Christian fathers will have it that he was buried at Golgotha, on Mount Calvary, where Christ suffered.

Ver. 6. *And Seth lived an hundred and five years, and begat Enos.*] Not that this was his firstborn, no doubt but he had other children before this time; but this is only mentioned, because it carried the lineage and descent directly from Adam to Noah, the father of the new world, and from whom the Messiah was to spring; whose genealogy to give is a principal view of this book, or account of generations from Adam to Noah.

Ver. 7. *And Seth lived, after he begat Enos, eight hundred and seven years,* etc.] The Septuagint version makes the same mistake in the numbers of Seth as of Adam, giving him two hundred and five years before the birth of Enos, and but seven hundred and seven years after:

and begat sons and daughters; very probably both before and after Enos was born; but how many is not said.

Ver. 8. *And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died.*] As his father Adam before him. Seth, according to Josephus ^{f332}, was a very good man, and brought up his children well, who trod in his steps, and who studied the nature of the heavenly bodies; and that the knowledge of these things they had acquired might not be lost, remembering a prophecy of Adam, that the world should be destroyed both by fire and by water, they erected two pillars, called Seth's pillars; the one was made of brick, and the other of stone, on which they inscribed their observations, that so if that of brick was destroyed by a flood, that of stone might remain; and which the above writer says continued in his time in the land of Siriad. The Arabic writers ^{f333} make Seth to be the inventor of the Hebrew letters, and say, that when he was about to die he called to him Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, their wives and children, and adjured them by the blood of Abel not to descend from the mountain where

they dwelt, after the death of Adam, nor suffer any of their children to go to, or mix with any of the seed of Cain, which were in the valley; whom he blessed, and ordered by his will to serve the Lord, and then died in the year of his age nine hundred and twelve, on the third day of the week of the month Ab (which answers to part of July and part of August), A. M. 1142, and his sons buried him in the hidden cave in the holy mountain, and mourned for him forty days.

Ver. 9. *And Enos lived ninety years, and begat Cainan.*] According to the Septuagint a hundred and ninety years; it can hardly be thought but that he had sons or daughters before, but this is only taken notice of for a reason before given.

Ver. 10. *And Enos lived, after he begat Cainan, eight hundred and fifteen years,* etc.] The Septuagint version is seven hundred and fifteen; the hundred which is wanting is to be supplied from the preceding verse, which in that version has an hundred too much:

and begat sons and daughters; others besides Enos, as very likely he had before he was born.

Ver. 11. *And all the days of Enos were nine hundred and five years, and he died.*] According to the Arabic writers^{f334}, this man was a very good man, governed his people well, and instructed them in the ways of righteousness, and the fear of God; and when his end drew nigh, his offspring gathered about him for his blessing; and calling them to him, he ordered them by his will to practise holiness, and exhorted them not to mix with the offspring of Cain the murderer; and having appointed Cainan his successor, he died in the year of his age nine hundred and five, A. M. 1340, and was buried in the holy mountain; but according to Bishop Usher it was A. M. 1140.

Ver. 12. *And Cainan lived seventy years, and begat Mahalaleel.*] Here the Septuagint version adds an hundred years, as before.

Ver. 13. *And Cainan lived, after he begat Mahalaleel, eight hundred and forty years,* etc.] The Septuagint has seven hundred and forty, which, added to the years given him before, makes the same sum:

and begat sons and daughters; as his progenitors did.

Ver. 14. *And all the days of Cainan were nine hundred and ten years, and he died.*] The Arabic writers ^{f335} also commend him as a good ruler of his people; and at his death he charged them not to desert the holy mountain, and join themselves with Cain's posterity; and having appointed Mahalaleel, who they say was his eldest son, his successor, he died on the fourth day of the week, and the thirteenth of the month Cheziran, A. M. 1535, and was buried in the double cave, and they mourned for him, according to custom, forty days: according to Bishop Usher it was in A. M. 1235.

Ver. 15. *And Mahalaleel lived sixty and five years, and begat Jared.*] A hundred and sixty, according to the Septuagint version.

Ver. 16. *And Mahalaleel lived, after he begat Jared, eight hundred and thirty years,* etc.] Seven hundred and thirty, as the above version, still making the same mistake:

and he begat sons and daughters; how many cannot be said.

Ver. 17. *And all the days of Mahalaleel were eight hundred ninety and five years, and he died.*] He also is spoken well of by the Arabic writers ^{f336} as a good governor, a pious man that walked in the way of righteousness; and when he died blessed his children, and adjured them by the blood of Abel, not to suffer any of theirs to descend from the mountain to the sons of Cain: according to Bishop Usher he died A. M. 1290.

Ver. 18. *And Jared lived an hundred and sixty two years, and he begat Enoch.*] Here the Septuagint agrees with the Hebrew text, and the Samaritan version differs, reading only sixty two; but this can hardly be thought to be his first son at such an age.

Ver. 19. *And Jared lived, after he begat Enoch, eight hundred years,* etc.] And so, the Greek version, but the Samaritan is seven hundred and eighty five:

and begat sons and daughters; in that time, as well as before; for it is not to be imagined in this, or either of the foregoing or following instances, that these sons and daughters were begotten after living to such an age, since it is plain at that age they died.

Ver. 20. *And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty and two years, and he died.*] The name of this patriarch signifies "descending"; and,

according to the Arabic writers ^{f337}, he had his name from the posterity of Seth, descending from the holy mountain in his time; for upon a noise being heard on the mountain, about an hundred men went down to the sons of Cain, contrary to the prohibition and dehoration of Jared, and mixed themselves with the daughters of Cain, which brought on the apostasy: when Jared was near his end, he called to him Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, and their children, and said unto them, ye know what some have done, that they have gone down from the mountain, and have had conversation with the daughters of Cain, and have defiled themselves; take you care of your purity, and do not descend from the holy mountain; after which he blessed them, and having appointed Enoch his successor, he died the twelfth of Adar, answering to February, A. M. 1922: according to the Samaritan version, he lived only eight hundred and forty seven years: he died, according to Bishop Usher, A. M. 1422.

Ver. 21. *And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah.*]

Here the Septuagint version adds again an hundred years; and that Enoch had a son, whose name was Methuselah, is affirmed by Eupolemus ^{f338}, an Heathen writer; and Enoch being a prophet gave him this name under a spirit of prophecy, foretelling by it when the flood should be; for his name, according to Bochart ^{f339}, signifies, “when he dies there shall be an emission”, or sending forth of waters upon the earth, to destroy it,

Ver. 22. *And Enoch walked with God, after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years,* etc.] The Greek version is two hundred. He had walked with God undoubtedly before, but perhaps after this time more closely and constantly: and this is observed to denote, that he continued so to do all the days of his life, notwithstanding the apostasy which began in the days of his father, and increased in his. He walked in the name and fear of God, according to his will, in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord then made known; he walked by faith in the promises of God, and in the view of the Messiah, the promised seed; he walked uprightly and sincerely, as in the sight of God; he had familiar converse, and near and intimate communion with him: and even the above Heathen writer, Eupolemus, seems to suggest something like this, when he says, that he knew all things by the angels of God, which seems to denote an intimacy with them; and that he received messages from God by them:

and begat sons and daughters; the marriage state and procreation of children being not inconsistent with the most religious, spiritual, and godly conversation.

Ver. 23. *And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty five years.*] A year of years, living as many years as there are days in a year; not half the age of the rest of the patriarchs: our poet ^{f340} calls him one of middle age; though his being taken away in the midst of his days was not a token of divine displeasure, but of favour, as follows; (see ^{<1653>} Psalm 55:23).

Ver. 24. *And Enoch walked with God*, etc.] Which is repeated both for the confirmation of it, and for the singularity of it in that corrupt age; and to cause attention to it, and stir up others to imitate him in it, as well as to express the well pleasedness of God therein; for so it is interpreted, “he had this testimony, that he pleased God”, (^{<8105>} Hebrews 11:5)

and he was not; not that he was dead, or in the state of the dead, as Aben Ezra and Jarchi interpret the phrase following,

for God took him, out of the world by death, according to (^{<1194>} 1 Kings 19:4 ^{<3246>} Ezekiel 24:16,18) “for he was translated, that he should not see death”, (^{<8105>} Hebrews 11:5) nor was he annihilated, or reduced to nothing, “for God took him”, and therefore he must exist somewhere: but the sense is, he was not in the land of the living, he was no longer in this world; or with the inhabitants of the earth, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it; but the Lord took him to himself out of the world, in love to him, and removed him from earth to heaven, soul and body, as Elijah was taken; (see Gill on “^{<8105>} Hebrews 11:5”). The Arabic writers ^{f341} call him Edris, and say he was skilled in astronomy and other sciences, whom the Grecians say is the same with Hermes Trismegistus; and the Jews call him Metatron, the great scribe, as in the Targum of Jonathan: they say ^{f342}, that Adam delivered to him the secret of the intercalation of the year, and he delivered it to Noah, and that he was the first that composed books of astronomy ^{f343}; and so Eupolemus ^{f344} says he was the first inventor of astrology, and not the Egyptians; and is the same the Greeks call Atlas, to whom they ascribe the invention of it. The apostle Jude speaks of him as a prophet, (Jude 14) and the Jews say ^{f345}, that he was in a higher degree of prophecy than Moses and Elias; but the fragments that go under his name are spurious: there was a book ascribed to him, which is often referred to in the book of Zohar, but cannot be thought to be genuine.

Ver. 25. *And Methuselah lived an hundred and eighty and seven years, and beget Lamech.*] The Septuagint version is an hundred and sixty seven; the Samaritan only sixty seven; the same names were given to some of the posterity of Seth as were to those of Cain, as Lamech here, and Enoch before.

Ver. 26. *And Methuselah lived, after he begat Lamech, seven hundred eighty and two years,* etc.] The Greek version is eight hundred and two years, and so makes the sum total of his life the same; but the Samaritan version only six hundred and fifty three, and so makes his whole life but seven hundred and twenty; and thus, instead of being the oldest, he is made the youngest of the antediluvian patriarchs, excepting his father Enoch:

and begat sons and daughters; some, it is highly probable, before he beget Lamech, since then he was near two hundred years of age, as well as others after.

Ver. 27. *And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty nine years, and he died,* etc.] This was the oldest man that ever lived, no man ever lived to a thousand years: the Jews give this as a reason for it, because a thousand years is God's day, according to (^{<19004>}Psalm 90:4) and no man is suffered to arrive to that. His name carried in it a prediction of the time of the flood, which was to be quickly after his death, as has been observed, (see Gill on "^{<00521>}Genesis 5:21"). Some say he died in the year of the flood; others, fourteen years after, and was in the garden of Eden with his father, in the days of the flood, and then returned to the world ^{f346}; but the eastern writers are unanimous that he died before the flood: the Arabic writers ^{f347} are very particular as to the time in which he died; they say he died in the six hundredth year of Noah, on a Friday, about noon, on the twenty first day of Elul, which is Thout; and Noah and Shem buried him, embalmed in spices, in the double cave, and mourned for him forty days: and some of the Jewish writers say he died but seven days before the flood came, which they gather from (^{<00710>}Genesis 7:10) "after seven days"; that is, as they interpret it, after seven days of mourning for Methuselah ^{f348}: he died A. M. 1656, the same year the flood came, according to Bishop Usher.

Ver. 28. *And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat son.*] According to the Septuagint version he was an hundred and eighty eight years old; but according to the Samaritan version only fifty three; the name, of his son, begotten by him, is given in the next verse, with the reason of it.

Ver. 29. *And he called his name Noah*, etc.] Which signifies rest and comfort; for rest gives comfort, and comfort flows from rest, (see ^{<3047>}2 Samuel 14:17), where a word from the same root is rendered “comfortable”, and agrees with the reason of the name, as follows:

saying, this same shall comfort us, concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground, which the Lord hath cursed; this he spake by a spirit of prophecy, foreseeing what his son would be, and of what advantage to him and his family, and to the world, both in things temporal and spiritual. In things temporal: the earth was cursed for the sin of man immediately after the fall, and continued under it to this time, bringing forth thorns and thistles in great abundance of itself, which occasioned much trouble to root and pluck them up, and nothing else, without digging, and planting, and sowing; and being barren through the curse, it was with great difficulty men got a livelihood: now Noah eased them in a good measure of their toil and trouble, by inventing instruments of ploughing, as Jarchi suggests, which they had not before, but threw up the ground with their hands, and by the use of spades, or such like things, which was very laborious; but now, by the use of the plough, and beasts to draw it, their lives were made much more easy and comfortable; hence he is said to begin to be an “husbandman”, or a “man of the earth”, that brought agriculture to a greater perfection, having found out an easier and quicker manner of tilling the earth: and as he was the first that is said to plant a vineyard, if he was the inventor of wine, this was another way in which he was an instrument of giving refreshment and comfort to men, that being what cheers the heart of God and men, (see ^{<0020>}Genesis 9:20) and if the antediluvians were restrained from eating of flesh, and their diet was confined to the fruits of the earth; Noah, as Dr. Lightfoot ^{f349} observes, would be a comfort in reference to this, because to him, and in him to all the world, God would give liberty to eat flesh; so that they were not obliged to get their whole livelihood with their hands out of the ground: and moreover, as Lamech might be apprised of the flood by the name of his father, and the prediction of his grandfather, he might foresee that he and his family would be saved, and be the restorer of the world, and repeople it, after the destruction of it by the flood. And he may have respect to comfort in spiritual things, either at first taking him to be the promised seed, the Messiah, in whom all comfort is; or however a type of him, and from whom he should spring, who would deliver them from the curse of the law, and from the bondage of it, and from toiling and seeking for a

righteousness by the works of it; or he might foresee that he would be a good man, and a preacher of righteousness, and be a public good in his day and generation.

Ver. 30. *And Lamech lived, after he begat Noah, five hundred ninety and five years,* etc.] The Septuagint version is five hundred and sixty five; and the Samaritan version six hundred:

and begat sons and daughters; of which we have no account.

Ver. 31. *And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years, and he died.*] According to the Greek version, he lived but seven hundred and fifty three; and according to the Samaritan version, only six hundred and fifty three: but it is best and safest in these, and all the above numbers, to follow the original Hebrew, and the numbers in that, with which the Targum of Onkelos exactly agrees, written about the time of Christ; and these numbers were just the same when the two Talmuds were composed. Some of the Jewish writers, and so some Christians, confound this Lamech with the other Lamech, who was of the race of Cain, spoken of in the preceding chapter, and say he was a bigamist and a murderer; and that in his days sins were committed openly, and witchcraft was throughout the whole world ^{f350}: he died, according to Bishop Usher, A. M. 1651. Eight times in this chapter the phrase is used, “and he died”, to put us in mind of death; to observe that it is the way of all flesh; that those that live longest die at last, and it must be expected by everyone.

Ver. 32. *And Noah was five hundred years old,* etc.] Or “the son of five hundred years” ^{f351}; he was in his five hundredth year: it can hardly be thought that he should live to this time a single life, and have no children born to him, which he might have had, but were dead; though some think it was so ordered by Providence, that he should not begin to procreate children until of this age, because it being the will of God to save him and his family from the flood, had he began at the usual age he might have had more than could conveniently be provided for in the ark; or some of them might have proved wicked, and so would deserve to perish with others:

and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth; not together, but one after another; and since Ham was the younger son, (see ~~Gen 9:24~~ Genesis 9:24) and Shem was an hundred years old two years after the flood, (~~Gen 11:10~~ Genesis 11:10) he must be born in the five hundred and second year of his father’s age; so that it seems most probable that Japheth was the eldest son, and

born in the five hundred and first year of his age; though Shem is usually mentioned first, because of his superior dignity and excellency, God being in an eminent manner the God of Shem, (~~Gen~~^{Gen} Genesis 9:26) and from whom the Messiah was to spring, and in whose line the church of God was to be continued in future ages. The name of Japheth is retained in Greek and Latin authors, as Hesiod^{f352} Horace^{f353}, and others^{f354}, by whom he is called Japetos and Japetus.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 6

This chapter gives an account of the wickedness of the old world, both among the profane and the professors of religion, which was taken notice of and resented by God, upon which he determined the destruction of it, (^{<0001>}Genesis 6:1-7) only one man, Noah, is excepted, who found favour with God, and whose character is given, (^{<0008>}Genesis 6:8-10) and to whom was observed by God the general corruption of the earth, (^{<0001>}Genesis 6:11-13) and to whom he gave orders and directions for the building an ark for himself, and his family, being determined to destroy the earth with a flood, and all creatures in it, (^{<0004>}Genesis 6:14-17) only he would preserve him and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and two of every living creature, for which, and for himself and his family, he was to take food into the ark when built, (^{<0008>}Genesis 6:18-21) and the chapter is concluded with observing, that Noah did as he was commanded, (^{<0002>}Genesis 6:22).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, when men began to multiply upon the face of the earth*, etc.] Either mankind in general, or rather the posterity of Cain, who were mere natural men, such as they were when born into the world, and as brought up in it, destitute of the grace of God, and of the knowledge and fear of him; and who in proportion much more multiplied than the posterity of Seth, because of the practice of polygamy, which by the example of Lamech, one of that race, might prevail among them:

and daughters were born unto them; not daughters only, but sons also, though it may be more daughters than sons, or it may denote remarkable ones, for their beauty or immodesty, or both; and chiefly this is observed for the sake of what follows.

Ver. 2. *That the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair*, etc.] Or “good”^{f355}, not in a moral but natural sense; goodly to look upon, of a beautiful aspect; and they looked upon, and only regarded their external beauty, and lusted after them: those “sons of God” were not angels either good or bad, as many have thought, since they are incorporeal beings, and cannot be affected with fleshly lusts, or marry and be given in

marriage, or generate and be generated; nor the sons of judges, magistrates, and great personages, nor they themselves, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; but this could be no crime in them, to look upon and take in marriage such persons, though they were the daughters of the meaner sort; and supposing they acted a criminal part in looking at them, and lusting after them, and committing fornication with them, and even in marrying irreligious persons; yet this could only be a partial, not an universal corruption, as is after affirmed, though such examples must indeed have great influence upon the populace; but rather this is to be understood of the posterity of Seth, who from the times of Enos, when then began to be called by the name of the Lord, (~~0025~~ Genesis 4:25) had the title of the sons of God, in distinction from the children of men; these claimed the privilege of divine adoption, and professed to be born of God, and partakers of his grace, and pretended to worship him according to his will, so far as revealed to them, and to fear and serve and glorify him. According to the Arabic writers ^{f356}, immediately after the death of Adam the family of Seth was separated from the family of Cain; Seth took his sons and their wives to a high mountain (Hermon), on the top of which Adam was buried, and Cain and all his sons lived in the valley beneath, where Abel was slain; and they on the mountain obtained a name for holiness and purity, and were so near the angels that they could hear their voices and join their hymns with them; and they, their wives and their children, went by the common name of the sons of God: and now these were adjured, by Seth and by succeeding patriarchs, by no means to go down from the mountain and join the Cainites; but notwithstanding in the times of Jared some did go down, it seems; (see Gill on “~~0050~~ Genesis 5:20”) and after that others, and at this time it became general; and being taken with the beauty of the daughters of Cain and his posterity, they did as follows:

and they took them wives of all that they chose; not by force, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret, for the Cainites being more numerous and powerful than they, it can hardly be thought that the one would attempt it, or the other suffer it; but they intermarried with them, which the Cainites might not be averse unto; they took to them wives as they fancied, which were pleasing to the flesh, without regard to their moral and civil character, and without the advice and consent of their parents, and without consulting God and his will in the matter; or they took women as they pleased, and were to their liking, and committed fornication, to which the Cainites were

addicted; for they spent their time in singing and dancing, and in uncleanness, whereby the posterity of Seth or sons of God were allured to come down and join them, and commit fornication with them, as the Arabic writers ^{f357} relate.

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said*, etc.] Not to Noah, as in (~~Gen~~ Genesis 6:13) for, as yet, he is not taken notice of, or any discourse addressed to him; but rather to or within himself, he said what follows, or thus concluded, and resolved on in his own mind:

my Spirit shall not always strive with man; meaning either the soul of man, called the Spirit of God, (~~Job~~ Job 27:3) because of his creation, and is what he breathes and puts into men, and therefore is styled the Father of spirits; and which is in man, as some in Aben Ezra observe to be the sense the word used, as a sword in the scabbard; and so the meaning is, it shall not always abide there, but be unsheathed and drawn out; man shall not live always, since he is corrupt, and given to carnal lusts: or else, as Jarchi thinks, God himself is meant, and that the sense is, my Spirit shall not always contend within myself; or there shall not always be contention within me concerning man, whether I shall destroy him, or have mercy on him; I am at a point to punish him, since he is wholly carnal: or rather this is to be understood of the Holy Spirit of God, as the Targum of Jonathan, which agrees with (~~1 Pet~~ 1 Peter 3:18-20) and to be thus interpreted; that the Spirit of God, which had been litigating and reasoning the point, as men do in a court of judicature, as the word signifies, with these men in the court, and at the bar of their own consciences, by one providence or by one minister or another, particularly by Noah, a preacher of righteousness, in vain, and to no purpose; therefore, he determines to proceed no longer in this way, but pass and execute the sentence of condemnation on them:

for that he also is flesh; not only carnal and corrupt, but sadly corrupted, and wholly given up to and immersed in sensual lusts and carnal pleasures, so as not to be restrained nor reformed; even the posterity of Seth, professors of religion also, as well as the profane world and posterity of Cain:

yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years: meaning not the term of man's life, reduced to this from the length of time he lived before the flood; but this designs the space that God would give for repentance, before he proceeded to execute his vengeance on him; this is that "longsuffering of God" the apostle speaks of in the afore mentioned place, "that waited in

the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing”; and so both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret it of a space of an hundred and twenty years given them to repent: now whereas it was but an hundred years from the birth of Japheth to the flood, some think the space was shortened twenty years, because of their impenitence; but it is more probable what Jarchi observes, that this decree was made and given out twenty years before his birth, though here related, by a figure called “hysteron proteron”, frequent in the Scriptures.

Ver. 4. *There were giants in the earth in those days*, etc.] That is, in the days before the sons of God took the daughters of men for wives, in such a general manner as before declared, or before the declension and apostasy became so universal; even in the times of Jared, as the Arabic writers ^{f358} understand it, who say that these giants were begotten on the daughters of Cain by the children of Seth, who went down from the mountain to them in the days of Jared, (see ~~Gen~~ Genesis 5:20) the word “Nephilim” comes from a word which signifies to fall; and these might be so called, either because they made their fear to fall upon men, or men, through fear, to fall before them, because of their height and strength; or rather because they fell and rushed on men with great violence, and oppressed them in a cruel and tyrannical manner; or, as some think, because they fell off and were apostates from the true religion, which is much better than to understand them of apostate angels, whom the Targum of Jonathan mentions by name, and calls them Schanchazai and Uziel, who fell from heaven, and were in the earth in those days:

and also after that, which shows that the preceding clause respects giants in former times,

when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, came into their houses and chambers, and lay with them:

and they bare [children] unto them, or giants unto them, as may be supplied from the former clause; for the sense is, as there were giants before this general defection, so there were at this time, when there was a mixture of the Cainites and Sethites; which were the offspring of the sons of God, or posterity of Seth, mixing with the daughters of men, or the posterity of Cain; for this is not to be understood after the flood, as Aben Ezra, Ben Melech; and so they are described in the following words,

the same [became] mighty men; for tallness and strength, for power and dominion, for tyranny and oppression:

which [were] of old: like those that were of old before; or who in after times were spoken of, as in the days of old:

men of renown, or “of name”^{f359}; whose names were often made mention of, both for their size and for their wickedness; they were much talked of, and extolled for their exploits, and even wicked ones: they were famous men, or rather infamous; for some men get a name in the world, not for their goodness, but for their greatness, and sometimes for their great wickedness; which sense is countenanced by what follows: that there were giants in these early times is confirmed by the testimony of many Heathen writers; such were the Titans that made war against Saturn, begotten by Ouranus, who were not only of bulky bodies, but of invincible strength, as Apollodorus^{f360} relates, and Berosus^{f361} speaks of a city about Lebanon, called Enos, which was a city of giants, who were men of vast bodies, and of great strength, inventors of arms and music, were cannibals, and exceedingly debauched.

Ver. 5. *And God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth*, etc.]

That it spread throughout the earth, wherever it was inhabited by men, both among the posterity of Cain and Seth, and who indeed now were mixed together, and become one people: this respects actual transgressions, the wicked actions of men, and those of the grosser sort, which were “multiplied”^{f362} as the word also signifies; they were both great in quality and great in quantity; they were frequently committed, and that everywhere; the degeneracy was become universal; there was a flood of impiety that spread and covered the whole earth, before the deluge of waters came, and which was the cause of it: this God saw, not only by his omniscience, by which he sees everything, but he took notice of it in his providence, and was displeased with it, and determined in his mind to show his resentment of it, and let men see that he observed it, and disapproved of it, and would punish for it:

and [that], every imagination of the thoughts of his heart [was] only evil continually: the heart of man is evil and wicked, desperately wicked, yea, wickedness itself, a fountain of iniquity, out of which abundance of evil flows, by which it may be known in some measure what is in it, and how wicked it is; but God, that sees it, only knows perfectly all the wickedness of it, and the evil that is in it: the “thoughts” of his heart are evil; evil

thoughts are formed in the heart, and proceed from it; they are vain, foolish, and sinful, and abominable in the sight of God, by whom they are seen, known, and understood afar off: the “imagination” of his thoughts is evil, the formation of them; they were evil while forming, the substratum of thought, the very beginning of it, the first motion to it, yea, “every” such one was evil, and “only” so; not one good among them, not one good thing in their hearts, no one good thought there, nor one good imagination of the thought; and so it was “continually” from their birth, from their youth upwards, throughout the whole of their lives, and all the days of their lives, night and day, and day after day, without intermission: this respects the original corruption of human nature, and shows it to be universal; for this was not only true of the men of the old world, but of all mankind; the same is said of men after the flood as before, and of all men in general without any exception, (~~0002~~ Genesis 8:21 ~~0401~~ Psalm 14:1-3 ~~6009~~ Romans 3:9-11). Hence appears the necessity of regeneration, and proves that the new creature is not an improvement of the old principles of corrupt nature, since there is no good thing in man but what is put into him; also the disability of man to do that which is good, even to think a good thought, or do a good action; therefore the works of unregenerate men are not properly good works, since they cannot flow from a right principle, or be directed to a right end.

Ver. 6. *And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth*, etc.].

Because of the wickedness of man, the wickedness of his heart, and the wickedness of his life and conversation, which was so general, and increased to such a degree, that it was intolerable; wherefore God could have wished, as it were, that he had never made him, since he proved so bad; not that repentance, properly speaking, can fall upon God, for he never changes his mind or alters his purposes, though he sometimes changes the course and dispensations of his providence. This is speaking by an anthropopathy, after the manner of men, because God determined to do, and did something similar to men, when they repent of anything: as a potter, when he has formed a vessel that does not please him, and he repents that he has made it, he takes it and breaks it in pieces; and so God, because of man’s wickedness, and to show his aversion to it, and displicency at it, repented of his making him; that is, he resolved within himself to destroy him, as in the next verse, which explains this:

and it grieved him at his heart; this is to be understood by the same figure as before, for there can, no more be any uneasiness in his mind than a

change in it; for God is a simple Being, uncompounded, and not subject to any passions and affections. This is said to observe his great hatred to sin, and abhorrence of it.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord said*, etc.] Not to the angels, nor to Noah, but within himself, on observing to what a height the sin of man had got, and what a spread it made on the earth:

I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth; though he is my creature, the work of my hands, I have made him out of the earth, and made him lord of it; I am now determined to show my detestation of his wickedness, and for the honour of my justice to destroy him from off it; just as a potter takes a vessel he dislikes, when he has made it, and dashes it to pieces: or “I will wipe men off of the earth”^{f363}; like so much dust; man was made of the dust of the earth, he is dust, yea, sinful dust and ashes; and God resolved to send a flood of waters on the earth, which should wash off man from it, like so much dust upon it, just as dust is carried off by a flood of water, (see ^{<1213>}2 Kings 21:13) or “I will blot out man”^{f364}, as most render the words; that is, out of the book of the living, he shall no longer live upon the earth; out of the book of creation, or of the creatures, he shall have no more a being, or be seen among them, any more than what is blotted out of a book:

both man and beast; or “from man to beast”^{f365}; even every living creature upon the earth, from man to beast, one as well as another, and one for the sake of the other, the beasts for the sake of man; these were made for his use and benefit, but he sinning against God, and abusing his mercies, they are to be taken away, and destroyed for his sake, and as a punishment for his sins:

and the creeping things, and the fowls of the air; not the creeping things in the great and wide sea, for the fishes died not in the deluge, but the creeping things on the earth, (^{<003>}Genesis 6:20)

for it repenteth me that I have made them; man, male and female, whom he created; Adam and Eve, and their posterity, and particularly the present inhabitants of the earth: but though it may respect men principally, yet is not to be restrained to them, but takes in all the creatures before mentioned, made for the use of man; and the ends not being answered by them, God repented that he had made them, as well as man. Some think the repentance, attributed to God in this and the preceding verse, is not to be

understood of him in himself, but of his Spirit in good men, particularly Noah, producing grief, sorrow, and repentance in him, who wished that man had never been, than to be so wicked as he was; but for such a sense there seems to be no manner of foundation in the text.

Ver. 8. *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*] This man and his family were the only exception to the general apostasy; God always reserves some, in the worst of times, for himself; there is a remnant, according to the election of grace; it was but a small one, and that now appeared; and this was owing to the grace of God, and his choice upon that, and not to the merits of the creature. This grace, which Noah found and shared in, was the favour and good will of God; Noah was grateful and acceptable to him; he was well pleased with him in Christ; his person, services, and sacrifices, were acceptable to him through the Beloved; though he might not be acceptable in the eyes of men, who derided him for his piety and devotion, and especially for his prediction of the flood, and making an ark to save him and his family from it; yet he was very acceptable in the eyes of the Lord, and grateful in his sight, and was favoured with grace from him, who is the God of all grace, and with all the supplies of it: the Jerusalem Targum is, he

“found grace and mercy;”

the grace he found was not on account of his own merit, but on account of the mercy of God: and this shows that he was not without sin, or he would have stood in no need of the mercy and grace of God to save him; and as he found grace and favour in things spiritual, so in things temporal; he found favour with God, and therefore he and his family were spared, when the whole world of the ungodly were destroyed; he found favour with God, and therefore was directed by him to build an ark, for the saving of himself and his; he found favour with him, and therefore he had the honour of being the preserver of mankind, and the father of a new world.

Ver. 9. *These are the generations of Noah,* etc.] Or this is the account of his posterity, of the persons that were generated by him, that sprung from him, and peopled the earth after the flood, who are mentioned in the next verse, what follows being to be put in a parenthesis; as the genealogy of Adam is carried on from Adam to Noah, (~~GEN~~Genesis 5:1-32) so the old world ending at the flood, the genealogy of the new world begins with Noah: though Aben Ezra and Ben Gersome interpret the word “events”, things which days bring forth, (~~PROV~~Proverbs 27:1) these are the events or

the things which befell Noah, of which an account is given in this and some following chapters, whose character is next observed:

Noah was a just man; not only before men, but in the sight of God; and not by his own works of righteousness, for no man is just by them before God, but by the righteousness of the promised seed, the Messiah; for he “became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”, (~~3107~~ Hebrews 11:7) the righteousness which was to be brought in by the Son of God, and which was revealed to him from faith to faith; and which by faith he received and lived upon, as every just man does, and believed in as his justifying righteousness before God; though he also lived a holy and righteous conversation before men, which may rather be intended in the next part of his character:

and perfect in his generations; not that he was perfectly holy, or free from sin, but was a partaker of the true grace of God; was sincere and upright in heart and life; lived an unblemished life and conversation, untainted with the gross corruptions of that age he lived in, which he escaped through the knowledge, grace, and fear of God; and therefore it is added, that he was holy, upright, and blameless “in his generations”: among the men of the several generations he lived in, as in the generation before the flood, which was very corrupt indeed, and which corruption was the cause of that; and in the generation after the flood: or “in his ages” ^{f366}, in the several stages of his life, in youth and in old age; he was throughout the whole course of his life a holy good man.

[*And*] *Noah walked with God*: walked according to his will, in the ways of truth and righteousness; walked in a manner well pleasing to him, and enjoyed much communion with him, as Enoch had done before him, (~~0152~~ Genesis 5:22,24).

Ver. 10. *And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*] When he was five hundred years of age, and before the flood came upon the earth; and when it was so wicked as is next described: of these sons of his, and of the order in which they are placed, (see Gill on “~~0152~~ Genesis 5:32”).

Ver. 11. *The earth also was corrupt before God*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the earth were corrupt in their lives and conversations; they were corrupt both in principle and practice, and did abominable things; and those corruptions were, according to Jarchi, uncleanness and idolatry; they were corrupt in the worship of God, worshipping the creature more, or

besides the Creator; and they were corrupt in their manners and behaviour to one another, being guilty of fornication and adultery, and other enormous crimes; of some against God, and of others against their neighbours; and these they committed openly and impudently, without any fear of God, or dread of his wrath and displeasure, and in contempt of him, his will and laws:

and the earth was filled with violence; with doing injury to the persons and properties of men; with oppression and cruelty, by tyrannical decrees and unrighteous judgments; or with rapines and robberies, as the Targums and Jarchi; and with rapes, as Aben Ezra adds: the account that Lucian^{f367} gives from tradition agrees with this; that the present race of men is not the first, they totally perished by a flood; and those men were very insolent and addicted to unjust actions; for they neither kept their oaths, nor were hospitable to strangers, nor gave ear to suppliants, for which reason they were destroyed.

Ver. 12. *And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt*, etc.] This is spoken as if he had never looked upon it before; whereas his eyes are always upon the earth, and the inhabitants of it, and upon all their ways and works: but this denotes the special notice he took, and the particular observation he made upon the condition and circumstances the earth, and its inhabitants, were in. And this is remarked, as well as the particle “behold” is used, to denote the certainty of this corruption; it must needs be true, that the earth was corrupted, since the omniscient God had declared it to be so, who sees and knows all things:

for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth: that is, all men, excepting Noah; who were flesh, carnal and unregenerate persons; these had corrupted the way of God, the true religion, with their idolatries: and they had corrupted their own way, their manners, their life and conversation with their uncleanness and wickedness of various sorts: the Arabic writers^{f368} say, that after Enoch was taken away, the children of Seth and of Cain worshipped idols, everyone as he pleased, and were immersed in wickedness, and gave their right hands to each other, and joined in fellowship in committing sin and vice; and that in the times of Noah, none were left in the holy mount but he and his wife, and his three sons and their wives; all went down below and mixed with the daughters of Cain, and were immersed in sins, and worshipped strange gods, and so the earth was corrupted and filled with lasciviousness. The Jewish writers also

observe^{f369}, that the generations of Cain were guilty of uncleanness, men and women, like beasts, and defiled themselves with all kind of fornication and incest, everyone with his mother, and with his own sister, and with his brother's wife, and that openly, and in the streets: and Sanchoniatho^{f370}, the Heathen historian, the writer of the history of Cain's line, says of the fifth generation before the flood, that the women of those times, without shame, lay with any man they could meet with.

Ver. 13. *And God said unto Noah*, etc.] This is a proof that he found favour in his eyes, since he spake to him, and told him what he had observed, and what he was determined to do, and gave him directions to make an ark for the security of himself and family, when he should destroy the world:

the end of all flesh is come before me; that is, it was determined to put an end to the lives of all men, and of all cattle, and fowl and creeping things on the earth; all which are included in the phrase, "all flesh", even every living substance on the earth:

for the earth is filled with violence through them; that is, through men, for they are principally intended in the preceding clause, though not only; and it was through them, and not through other creatures, that the earth was filled with violence, in the sense in which it is explained in (see Gill on "~~GEN~~ Genesis 6:11"):

and behold, I will destroy them with the earth; meaning, that he would destroy all men, together with the cattle and creeping things of the earth, the trees, and herbs, and plants in it, yea, that itself, for that is said to perish by the flood, (~~GEN~~ 2 Peter 3:6). Some render it, "out of the earth"^{f371}; that is, would destroy them from it, that they should be no more on it.

Ver. 14. *Make thee an ark of Gopher wood*, etc.] It is not called a ship, for it was not made for sailing to any distant parts, but an ark or chest, being like one, flat bottomed, and ridged and sloping upwards, and was made for floating on the waters for a little way. So Lucian^{f372}, and other Heathen writers, call it λαρναξ, "an ark" or "chest": this was made of "Gopher wood", which all the Targums, and the more ancient Rabbins, understand of cedar wood; some the box tree, as the Arabic version; others, the pine; others, fir; the Mahometans say it was the Indian plane tree; and others, the turpentine tree: but the cypress tree bids fairest to be the wood of which, the ark was made, as Fuller^{f373}, Bochart^{f374}, and others^{f375} have shown;

that being nearest to “Gopher” in sound, and being a wood very durable and incorruptible, and fit for shipping. Alexander made a navy of cypress trees in the groves and gardens about Babylon, as Strabo^{f376} relates: where this ark was made, is not easy to say: some think in Palestine; others, near Mount Caucasus, on the borders of India; others, in China: but it is most likely it was near the garden of Eden, where Noah lived, and not far from Ararat, where the ark rested. Bochart^{f377} conjectures, that “Gopher” is the name of the place where it was made, as well as of the wood of which it was made; and that it might be Cupressetum or Cyparisson, which Strabo^{f378} places in Assyria. How long Noah was building the ark is variously conjectured: a Jewish^{f379} writer says fifty two years; and an Arabic writer^{f380} an hundred years; others think Noah was building it the whole one hundred and twenty years^{f381}, the time of God’s longsuffering and forbearance, which some conclude from (~~1~~1 Peter 3:20) but though it would require not a few years to build such a vessel, and prepare everything necessary for the use of it, yet one would think it should not take so many years as the least account gives unto it: it may be observed, the order is, “make thou”, or “for thyself”^{f382}; for thy use and benefit, for the saving of thyself and family, as well as for the preservation of the several creatures which were for the service of him and his posterity:

rooms shalt thou make in the ark; or “nests”^{f383}; little apartments, and many of them for the several creatures, and for their provisions, as well as for Noah and his family. The Targum of Jonathan gives us the number of them, paraphrasing the words thus,

“one hundred and fifty cells shalt thou make for the ark on the left hand, and ten apartments in the middle to put food in, and five cabins on the right, and five on the left:”

and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch; it was pitched without to keep out the waters, and that they might more easily slide off, and to preserve the ark from being eat with worms, or hurt with the wind and sun; and it was pitched within, to take off the ill smell that might arise from the several creatures, as well as for the better security of the ark. Some take it to be bitumen, a sort of clay or slime like pitch, such as was used at the building of Babel, and of the walls of Babylon. De Dieu conjectures it was that kind of bitumen which the Arabs calls Kaphura, which agrees in sound with the word here used; but why not the pitch of the pine tree, or the rosin

of the cypress tree, and especially the latter, if the ark was made of the wood of it ^{f384}?

Ver. 15. *And this [is the fashion] which thou shall make it of*, etc.] The form and size of it, its length, breadth, and height, as follows:

the length of the ark [shall be] three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits; which some interpret of geometrical cubits, each of which contained six ordinary cubits; others of sacred cubits, which were larger by an hand's breadth than the common cubit; but the general opinion of learned men now is, that they were common cubits of eighteen inches long; and by the geometrical calculations made by them it is found, that the ark of such dimensions was abundantly sufficient to contain Noah, and his family, and the various creatures, and all necessary provisions for them ^{f385}. But if the Jewish and Egyptian cubit, the cubit of the Scriptures, as Dr. Cumberland ^{f386} has shown it to be, consisted of twenty one inches and upwards, the ark according to them must be very near twice as great, and so more convenient for all the ends to which it was designed; for, as he observes, the cube of such a cubit is very near double to the cube of eighteen inches, and therefore so must the capacity be.

Ver. 16. *A window shalt thou make to the ark*, etc.] Or a "light", such as is that at noon, for which the word in the dual number is used; and therefore Junius and Tremellius translate it a "clear light". The Jewish writers ^{f388} will have it to be a precious stone, a pearl which Noah fetched from the river Pison, and hung up in the ark, and it gave light to all the creatures, like a large chandelier; but a window no doubt it was to let light into the several apartments, and to look out at on occasion, since Noah is afterwards said to open it; but what it was made of is difficult to say, since it does not appear that as yet glass was invented. Some think it was made of crystal, which would let in light, and keep off the water. A very learned ^{f389} man is of opinion, that Noah understanding chemistry, prepared a fine subtle fragrant spirit, of an oily nature and luminous, which he put into vessels made of crystal or glass, and hung them up in every room in the ark, and which was both illuminating and refreshing; and this he thinks is what is meant by the "Zohar", or "light", which we translate a "window"; but this is afterward said to be opened by Noah, to send forth the raven and the dove, which will not agree with such a vessel of spirituous liquor:

and in a cubit shall thou finish it above; not the window, as some think, which they place at top of the ark, and suppose to be a cubit in length, but

the ark itself, which was finished with a roof raised up a cubit high in the middle:

and the door of the ark shall thou set in the side thereof; on which it is not said; an Arabic writer ^{f390} places it on the east side of it, on which side he supposes Noah and his sons dwelt, and on the west side his wife and his sons' wives. How large this door was is not said; it is reasonably supposed ^{f391} to be ten cubits high and eight broad, that there might be room enough for an elephant to enter in by it; and it seems it was so large, that Noah, and those with him, could not shut it, but it was done by the Lord, (^{<0076>}Genesis 7:16)

[with] lower, second, and third [stories] shalt thou make it: the above Arabic writer ^{f392} makes the lower story to be for the beasts, the second for the birds, and the third for Noah and his children; and with him agrees a Jewish writer ^{f393}: but as by this distribution no place is left for provisions, they seem most correct who place the beasts in the lower story, and the birds with Noah and his family in the uppermost, and the provisions for all in the middle. This ark was a type of the church of God. As to the form and pattern of it, it was of God, so the separation of men from the world in a church state is of God; it is by his appointment, and it is his will, that when any numbers of men are converted in a place, that they should be incorporated together in a church state, the form of which is given by him, its officers appointed, and the laws and ordinances of it fixed by him: and as to the matter of it, "Gopher wood", a lasting and incorruptible wood, denoting the duration of the church; God ever had, and ever will have a church in the world: as to the parts of it, and rooms in it, the rooms may point at particular churches, of which there have been many; or may signify, that there is always room enough in the church of God to receive saints. The ark had three stories in it, as the tabernacle and temple had three divisions, which were types of the same also; and may have respect to the visible church, consisting of believers and unbelievers, the invisible church, or general assembly of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, and the church triumphant. The door into the ark may signify Christ, who, and faith in him, may be said to be the door into the church, and to all the ordinances of it: the window may either typify the glorious light of the Gospel, held forth in the church, or the ordinances of it, to which sensible souls betake themselves, as doves to their windows, (^{<2318>}Isaiah 60:8). Into this ark not only Noah and his family, but creatures of all sorts were admitted, as sinners of all sorts called by grace, and

become peaceable, are received into the church of God; yea, even good and bad have a place here, though the latter under the notion and character of the former, but are hypocrites in Zion: here also were plenty of provisions for all in it, as there are in the church of God fulness of spiritual provisions for all the people of God. The ark was of the use of a ship, and was the means of saving a few men, even Noah and his family; so the church of God has the nature and use of a ship, of which Christ is the pilot, and conducts it through the sea of this world, in which it is often tossed with tempests, and distressed; but at last brought to its haven, in which a few are saved, not as the cause, which alone is Christ, but as the means. The Apostle Peter makes baptism its antitype, (~~¶~~^{f392} 1 Peter 3:21) which is God's ordinance, and not man's, of his appointing; as to the form and manner of it, is the object of the world's scorn, when rightly administered, as Noah's ark was; represents a burial, as that did when Noah entered into it; and was an emblem of Christ's resurrection and ours, when he came out of it: it was a type of baptism in its salutary effect, it saves by water, as that does by leading to the resurrection of Christ; it saves not as a cause, but as a means of directing to Christ, the author of salvation; and saves not all in the water, only those that are in the ark, that is, truly and rightly in the church, and real members of it, or that are in Christ; and so many make the ark also a type of Christ.

Ver. 17. *And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth,* etc.] That there was such a flood of waters brought upon the earth, is confirmed by the testimonies of Heathen writers of all nations; only instead of Noah they put some person of great antiquity in their nation, as the Chaldeans, Sisithrus or Xisuthrus; the Grecians and Romans, Prometheus or Deucalion, or Ogyges. Josephus ^{f394} says, all the writers of the Barbarian or Heathen history make mention of the flood and of the ark; and he produces the authorities of Berosus the Chaldean, and Hieronymus the Egyptian, who wrote the Phoenician antiquities, and Mnaseas, and many others, and Nicolaus of Damascus: and there are others that Eusebius ^{f395} makes mention of, as Melo, who wrote against the Jews, yet speaks of the deluge, at which a man with his sons escaped; and Abydenus the Assyrian, whose account agrees with this of Moses that follows in many things; as also what Lucian ^{f396} and Ovid ^{f397} have wrote concerning it, excepting in the name of the person in whose time it was: and not only the Egyptians had knowledge of the universal deluge, as appears from the testimony of Plato, who says ^{f398}, that an Egyptian priest related to Solon, out of their

sacred books, the history of it; and from various circumstances in the story of Osiris and Typhon, which name they give to the sea, and in the Chaldee language signifies a deluge; and here the Targum of Onkelos renders e word by “Tuphana”; and the Arabs to this day call the flood “Al-tufan”; but the Chinese also frequently speak of the deluge^{f399}; and even it is said the Americans of Mexico and Peru had a tradition of it^{f400}; and the Bramines also^{f401}, who say that 21,000 years ago the sea overwhelmed and drowned the whole earth, excepting one great hill, far to the northward, called “Biudd”; and that there fled thither one woman and seven men (whose names they give, (see ~~<0073>~~ Genesis 7:13) those understanding out of their books that such a flood would come, and was then actually coming, prepared against the same, and repaired thither; to which place also went two of all sorts of creatures (see ~~<0069>~~ Genesis 6:19) herbs, trees, and grass, and of everything that had life, to the number in all of 1,800,000 living souls: this flood, they say, lasted one hundred and twenty years (see ~~<0068>~~ Genesis 6:3) five months and five days; after which time all these creatures that were thus preserved descended down again, and replenished the earth; but as for the seven men and woman, only one of them came down with her, and dwelt at the foot of the mountain.

And this flood was not topical or national only, but general and universal: it was brought “upon the earth”, upon the whole earth, as the following account shows; and by the Lord himself, it was not through second causes, or the common course of things: and to show it possible and certain, this form of expression is used, “behold, I, even I, do bring”; it was wonderful, beyond the power of nature, and therefore a “behold” is prefixed; it was possible, because the Almighty God declares he would bring it; and it was certain, which the redoubling of the word points at; and would be quickly, since he said, “I am bringing”, or “do bring”; just about to do it; wherefore the ark was not so long preparing as some have thought, and the command to build it was not long before the flood came. The word for the flood comes from one which signifies to fall^{f402}, either because of the fall of the waters at it, or because it made all things to fall, wither, and decay, as herbs, plants, men, beasts, and all creatures; or from one that signifies to consume, or to mix and confound, and bring all things to confusion, as Jarchi suggests^{f403}: and the end and intention of it, as here expressed, was

to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; every living creature, men and women, the beasts and cattle of the earth, and

every creeping thing on it, and the fowls of the heaven, man principally, and these for his sake.

[And] everything that is in the earth shall die; but not what was in the waters, the fishes of the sea, which could live in the flood.

Ver. 18. *But with thee will I establish my covenant,* etc.] Made with Noah at this time, though not expressed, that on his making an ark, as God directed him, and going into it at his command, he would preserve him while building it from the rage of wicked men, and save him in it and his family, when the flood should come; and that they should come safe out of it, and repeople the world, which should be no more destroyed by one; for this covenant respects that later mentioned, (~~GEN~~ Genesis 9:11-17) so Aben Ezra; or the promise of the Messiah, which should spring from him, for the fulfilment of which Noah and his family were spared; and this in every article God would confirm, of which he might be assured from his power, veracity, and faithfulness, and other perfections of his:

and thou shalt come into the ark; when the covenant would begin more clearly to be established, and more plainly to be fulfilling; Noah on the one hand being obedient to the divine will, having built an ark, and entering into it; and on the other, God giving him leave, and an order to enter into it, and shutting him up in it to preserve him:

thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee; that is, Noah and his wife, and his sons and their wives, in all eight persons; and eight only, as the Apostle Peter observes, (~~1P~~ 1 Peter 3:20) by this it appears that Noah's three sons were married before the flood, but as yet had no children. Jarchi concludes, from the mode of expression used, that the men and women were to be separate; that they entered the ark in this manner, and continued so, the use of the marriage bed being forbidden them while in the ark.

Ver. 19. *And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark,* etc.] That is, of fowls, cattle, and creeping things, as after explained; and two of each sort at least were to be brought, as Jarchi observes, and not fewer; though of the clean sort there were to be more, even seven, as after directed; and these were to be brought, that they might preserve their species, as it follows:

to keep [them] alive with thee; to be fed and nourished by him in the ark, while others perished by the flood, that so they might propagate their own species, and be continued, for which reason it is further ordered:

they shall be male and female; not any two, but one male and one female, for the end before mentioned.

Ver. 20. *Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind*, etc.] What before is generally expressed by “every living thing”, is here particularly explained of every sort of them; and from the order of them some have thought that in the same manner they were disposed of in the ark, the fowls in the first story, the cattle in the next, and the creeping things in the lowermost: but others place them in a different manner, (see Gill on “[¶]Genesis 6:16”) the roots and grain in the lower story, the living creatures of all sorts in the second, and their hay and litter in the third: the second story being three hundred cubits long, and fifty broad, contained in the whole fifteen thousand cubits, which is supposed to be divided into an hundred and fifty equal rooms; so the Targum of Jonathan on ([¶]Genesis 6:14) of these, four are allowed for Noah and his family, two with earth for those animals that live underground, one for those which live on herbs and roots, and the other for those which live on flesh; and the other one hundred and forty four rooms are divided into three parts, that is, twenty four for birds, twenty five for beasts, and the other ninety five for such animals as are designed to be food for the rest; and according to the calculations of learned men, there appear to have been in this story rooms sufficient for all sorts of birds, beasts, and creeping things ^{f404}:

two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive; that is, they shall come of themselves, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra observe, the providence of God so directing and impelling them, just as the creatures came to Adam; so that there was no need for Noah to take any pains by hunting or hawking to get such a number together: the Targum of Jonathan is,

“they shall come unto thee by the hand of an angel, who shall take and cause them to come.”

So says another Jewish ^{f405} writer, that they were collected by the angels who presided over each species; in which, except the notion of angels presiding over every kind of creature, there is no incongruity, as Bishop Patrick observes; and two of every sort were to come to the ark, to be

preserved alive there, that they might propagate their species. So Lucian says ^{f406}, that swine, and horses, and lions, and serpents, and all other creatures which were on the earth, entered into the ark “by pairs”.

Ver. 21. *And take thou unto thee of all food that is eaten*, etc.] By man and beast; of which (see ^{<0029>}Genesis 1:29,30)

and thou shall gather [it] to thee; to lay up in the ark:

and it shall be for food for thee, and for them: during the flood, a quantity sufficient for them: and according to the calculation of learned men ^{f407}, well versed in mathematics, there was room enough in the ark, and to spare, to put food for them all during the time the flood was on the earth.

Ver. 22. *Thus did Noah*, etc.] Or “and” or “therefore Noah made” ^{f408} the ark; and “all things”, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions:

according to all that God commanded him, so did he; he made the ark according to the pattern God gave him, he gathered together food for himself and family, and for all the creatures, and laid it up in the ark as God directed him; and when the time was come, he and they not only entered into it, but he took with him all the creatures he was ordered, as after related; in this we have an instance of his fear of God, of his faith in his word, and of his obedience to his will, (see ^{<8107>}Hebrews 11:7) in all which he was a type of Christ, the builder of his church the ark was a figure of, and the pilot of it through the tempestuous sea of this world, and the provider of all good things for it, for the sustenance of it, and of those who are in it.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 7

This chapter begins with an order to Noah to come with his family and all the creatures into the ark, that they might be safe from the flood, which would quickly be upon the earth, (^{<00701>}Genesis 7:1-4) and then gives an account of Noah's obedience to the divine command in every particular, (^{<00705>}Genesis 7:5-9) and of the time of the beginning of the flood, and its prevalence, (^{<00710>}Genesis 7:10-12) then follows a repetition of Noah, his family, and the creatures entering into the ark, (^{<00713>}Genesis 7:13-16) and next a relation is given of the increase of the waters, and of the height they arrived unto, (^{<00717>}Genesis 7:17-20) and of the consequences of the flood, the death and destruction of every living creature, except those in the ark, fowl, cattle, beast, creeping things, and men, (^{<00721>}Genesis 7:21-23) and the chapter is closed with an account how long the waters continued before they began to ebb, even one hundred and fifty days, (^{<00724>}Genesis 7:24).

Ver. 1. *And the Lord said unto Noah*, etc.] After Noah had built the ark, and got all things ready as were commanded him; and when it was but seven days ere the flood would begin:

Come thou and all thy house into the ark; that is, he and his wife, his three sons and their wives;

for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation: this was a great character of Noah; that he was a "righteous" person, not by his own righteousness, but by the righteousness of faith he was both heir and preacher of; and this he was "before" God, in his sight, seen, known, and acknowledged by him as righteous; and therefore must be really so: and this shows that he was not so by the works of the law, but by the righteousness of Christ; because by them no flesh living is justified in the sight of God: and Noah was a rare instance of this character; there was none besides him in that wicked generation, so that he was very conspicuous and remarkable; and it was wonderful grace to him, that he should have this blessing to be righteous in an age so sadly corrupt, which was the cause of his being saved; for whoever are justified shall be saved

eternally, (^{<B8D>}Romans 8:30) as well as they are often saved from temporal calamities, (see ^{<28D>}Isaiah 3:10).

Ver. 2. *Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens*, etc.] From hence it appears, that the distinction of clean and unclean beasts, at least for sacrifice, if not for food, was known before the flood, and so before the law of Moses; though some think this is said by anticipation, and as providing a large stock of such creatures for the propagation of their species; because they would be most serviceable to men both for food and sacrifice: but as it is certain that sacrifices were offered ever since the fall of man; by the same way, namely, by divine revelation, that men were taught to sacrifice creatures as typical of the sacrifice of Christ, they were directed what sort of creatures to offer, as were most suitable figures of him; those beasts that were clean, and used under the law, and so no doubt, at this time, were oxen, sheep, and goats: and these were to be taken into the ark by “sevens”, or “seven seven” ^{f409}; either only three pairs, male and female, for procreation, and the seventh a male for sacrifice, when the flood was over; or rather fourteen, seven couple, an equal number of male and female, as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom, that there might be enough for propagation; since a large number of them would be consumed, both for food and sacrifice:

the male and his female, or “the man and his wife” ^{f410}; which confirms the sense given, that there were seven pairs, or otherwise, if there had been an odd seventh, there would not have been a male and his female:

and of beasts that are not clean by two, or only two:

the male and his female, or “the man and his wife”; which was a number sufficient for the propagation of creatures neither used for food nor sacrifice; and many of which are harmful to mankind, as lions, wolves, tigers, bears, etc.

Ver. 3. *Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and his female*, etc.] That is, of such as were clean; seven couple of these were to be brought into the ark, for the like use as of the clean beasts, and those under the law; and so at this time, and here meant were turtledoves, and young pigeons that were for sacrifice; and the rest were for food: and the design of bringing both into the ark was,

to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth; that the species of creatures might be continued, both of beasts and birds, clean and unclean.

Ver. 4. *For yet seven days*, etc.] Or one week more, after the above orders were given, which, the Jews say, were for the mourning at Methuselah's death; others, that they were an additional space to the one hundred and twenty given to the old world for repentance; in which time some might truly repent, finding that the destruction of the world was very near, and who might be saved from everlasting damnation, though not from perishing in the flood: but it rather was a space of time proper for Noah to have, to settle himself and family, and all the creatures in the ark, and dispose of everything there, in the best manner, for their sustenance and safety:

and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights: this was not an ordinary but an extraordinary rain, in which the power and providence of God were eminently concerned, both with respect to the continuance of it, and the quantity of water that fell:

and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth: not every substance that has a vegetative life, as plants, herbs, and trees, which were not destroyed, (see ^{<0081>}Genesis 8:11) but every substance that has animal life, as fowls, cattle, creeping things, and men.

Ver. 5. *And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him*, etc.] He prepared for his entrance into the ark, and all the creatures with him; got everything ready for them, the rooms for their habitation, and food for their sustenance.

Ver. 6. *And Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters was upon the earth*, etc.] When it began, for he was in his six hundred and first year when it ended, (^{<0083>}Genesis 8:13) his eldest son was now an hundred years old, since when Noah was five hundred years old he begat children, (^{<0082>}Genesis 5:32).

Ver. 7. *And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark*, etc.] Within the space of the seven days, between the command of God to go into it, and the coming of the flood; or rather on the seventh day, on which it began to rain; when he saw it was coming on, (see ^{<0071>}Genesis 7:11,13)

because of the waters of the flood; for fear of them, lest, before he entered into the ark with his family, he and they should be carried away with them; or "from the face of the waters"^{f411}, which now began to appear and spread; or rather, "before the waters"^{f412}, before they came to any height.

Ver. 8. *Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean*, etc.] Seven couple of the one, and a couple of the other:

and of fowls, clean and unclean, also a like number:

and of everything that creepeth upon the earth; and upon that only, not in the water, for these had no need of the ark, they could live in the waters.

Ver. 9. *There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark*, etc.] Of themselves, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra, being impressed with an instinct from God so to do; or by the ministry of angels, as observed (see Gill on “~~Gen~~Genesis 6:20”) there were two of a sort, and some think four:

the male and the female; and of some seven, or seven pairs, as before observed:

as God commanded Noah; which respects his own and his family’s entrance and the creatures; both were commanded by God, and attended to by Noah, who was obedient in all things.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass after seven days*, etc.] Were ended, or on the seventh day, after God had given the orders to Noah, to prepare for his going into the ark, with his family, and all the creatures:

that the waters of the flood were upon the earth: that is, they began to be upon the earth; for it continued to rain from hence forty days and forty nights; and still the waters continued to increase, and it was an hundred and fifty days before they began to ebb.

Ver. 11. *In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life*, etc.] Not complete, but current, for otherwise Noah would have lived after the flood three hundred and fifty one years, whereas he lived but three hundred and fifty; (~~Gen~~Genesis 9:28)

in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month: as the Jews had two ways of beginning their year, one at the spring, and the other at autumn; the one on ecclesiastical accounts, which began at Nisan, and which answers to March and April; and then the second month must be Ijar, which answers to part of April and part of May: and the other on civil accounts, which began at Tisri, and answers to part of September and part of October; and then the second month must be Marchesvan, which answers to part of October and part of November; so they are divided about this month in which the flood was: one says it was Marchesvan;

another that it was Ijar^{f413}; a third in particular says^{f414} it was on the tenth of Marchesvan that all the creatures came together into the ark, and on the seventeenth the waters of the flood descended on the earth; and this is most likely, since this was the most ancient way of beginning the year; for it was not until after the Jews came out of Egypt that they began their year in Nisan on sacred accounts; and besides the autumn was a proper time for Noah's gathering in the fruits of the earth, to lay up in the ark, as well as for the falling of the rains; though others think it was in the spring, in the most pleasant time of the year, and when the flood was least expected: the Arabic writers^{f415}, contrary to both, and to the Scripture, say, that Noah, with his sons, and their wives, and whomsoever the Lord bid him take into the ark, entered on a Friday, the twenty seventh day of the month Adar or Agar: according to the Chaldean account by Berosus^{f416}, it was predicted that mankind would be destroyed by a flood on the fifteenth of the month Daesius, the second month from the vernal equinox: it is very remarkable what Plutarch^{f417} relates, that Osiris went into the ark the seventeenth of Athyr, which month is the second after the autumnal equinox, and entirely agrees with the account of Moses concerning Noah: according to Bishop Usher, it was on the seventh of December, on the first day of the week; others the sixth of November; with Mr. Whiston the twenty eighth:

the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened; and by both these the flood of waters was brought upon the earth, which drowned it, and all the creatures in it: by the former are meant the vast quantities of subterraneous waters, which are more or greater than we know; and might be greater still at the time of the deluge:

“there are large lakes, (as Seneca observes^{f418},) which we see not, much of the sea that lies hidden, and many rivers that slide in secret:”

so that those vast quantities of water in the bowels of the earth being pressed upwards, by the falling down of the earth, or by some other cause unknown to us, as Bishop Patrick observes, gushed out violently in several parts of the earth, where holes and gaps were made, and where they either found or made a vent, which, with the forty days' rain, might well make such a flood as here described: it is observed^{f419}, there are seas which have so many rivers running into them, which must be emptied in an unknown manner, by some subterraneous passages, as the Euxine sea; and

particularly it is remarked of the Caspian sea, reckoned in length to be above one hundred and twenty German leagues, and in breadth from east to west about ninety, that it has no visible way for the water to run out, and yet it receives into its bosom near one hundred rivers, and particularly the great river Volga, which is of itself like a sea for largeness, and is supposed to empty so much water into it in a year's time, as might suffice to cover the whole earth, and yet it is never increased nor diminished, nor is it observed to ebb or flow: so that if, says my author, the fountains of the great deep, or these subterraneous passages, were continued to be let loose, without any reflux into them, as Moses supposes, during the time of the rain of forty days and forty nights; and the waters ascended but a quarter of a mile in an hour; yet in forty days it would drain all the waters for two hundred and forty miles deep; which would, no doubt, be sufficient to cover the earth above four miles high: and by the former, "the windows" or flood gates of heaven, or the "cataracts", as the Septuagint version, may be meant the clouds, as Sir Walter Raleigh^{f420} interprets them; Moses using the word, he says, to express the violence of the rains, and pouring down of waters; for whosoever, adds he, hath seen those fallings of water which sometimes happen in the Indies, which are called "the spouts", where clouds do not break into drops, but fall with a resistless violence in one body, may properly use that manner of speech which Moses did, that the windows or flood gates of heaven were opened, or that the waters fell contrary to custom, and that order which we call natural; God then loosened the power retentive in the uppermost air, and the waters fell in abundance: and another writer upon this observes^{f421}, that thick air is easily turned into water; and that round the earth there is a thicker air, which we call the "atmosphere"; which, the further it is distant from the earth, the thinner it is, and so it grows thinner in proportion, until it loseth all its watery quality: how far this may extend cannot be determined; it may reach as far as the orb of the moon, for aught we know to the contrary; now when this retentive quality of waters was withdrawn, Moses tells us, that "the rain was upon the earth forty days" and "forty nights": and therefore some of it might come so far as to be forty days in falling; and if we allow the rain a little more than ten miles in an hour, or two hundred and fifty miles in a day, then all the watery particles, which were 10,000 miles high, might descend upon the earth; and this alone might be more than sufficient to cover the highest mountains.

Ver. 12. *And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights*, etc.] So long it was falling upon it, after the windows of heaven were opened. Aben Ezra would have it, that all things were in such confusion, during the flood, that there was no difference between day and night, since, it is said, “day and night shall not cease any more”; and that after the waters ceased, then Noah knew that forty days and nights had passed, for God had revealed this secret to him; but the text seems more to make against him than for him.

Ver. 13. *In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah*, etc.] That is, on the seventeenth day of the second month; (see Gill on “~~CH071~~Genesis 7:11”) the names of Noah and his three sons are expressed, but not the names of his wife, and of the wives of his sons; they are only described by their relation as follows:

and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons, into the ark: but other writers pretend to give us their names; Berosus ^{f424} calls the wife of Noah “Tytea”, the great, and Aretia, plainly from “Tit”, clay, and “Aerets”, the earth; and his sons’ wives Pandora, Noela, and Noegla: according to Sanchoniatho ^{f425}, the name of Noah was “Epigeus”, a man of the earth, (see ~~CH020~~Genesis 9:20) and afterwards “Ouranus”, heaven; and he had a sister whom he married, called “Ge”, earth; and with this agrees the account that the Allantes give of their deities; the first of which was Uranus, and his wife’s name was Titaea; who, after her death, was deified, and called “Ge” ^{f426}: so the Jewish writers say ^{f427}, the wife of Noah was called Titzia, and others say Aritzia, from the word “Eretz”, earth ^{f428}; though others will have it, that she was Naamah, the daughter of Lamech: the Arabic writers ^{f429} tell us, that the name of Noah’s wife was Hancel, the daughter of Namusa, the son of Enoch; that the name of Shem’s wife was Zalbeth, or, as other copies, Zalith or Salit; that the name of Ham’s Nahalath; and of Japheth’s Aresisia; who were all three the daughters of Methuselah; and they also relate ^{f430}, that when Noah entered the ark, he took the body of Adam with him, and placed it in the middle of the ark.

Ver. 14. *They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind*, etc.] They, Noah and his family, went into the ark; as did all sorts of beasts and cattle, reckoned one hundred and thirty sorts, by some one hundred and fifty, including serpents:

and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind; supposed to be scarce thirty sorts; not one sort of creature was left out, though ever so small, and despicable:

every fowl after his kind; Bishop Wilkins has divided them into nine sorts, and reckons them up to be one hundred and ninety five in the whole;

every [bird of] every sort, or “bird of every wing”^{f431}, let their wings be what they will; some, as Ainsworth observes, are winged with feathers, others with skin, as bats.

Ver. 15. *And they went in unto Noah into the ark,* etc.] Noah went in first, and the creatures of themselves came to him, or were conducted by the ministry of angels; and they were delivered into his hands, and he placed them in the ark as was most convenient for them: it is very likely he went in and out as occasion required, for the better management and disposition of things; for he seems to be the last of all that went in, (see ^{<0076>}Genesis 7:16):

two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life; they that went by sevens, yet being seven couples, as has been observed, as those which were only two or four, went by pairs: this is true of them all.

Ver. 16. *And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh,* etc.] These pairs were not two males or two females, but one male and one female; so they were coupled for the propagation of their species, which was the end of their entering into the ark, and being preserved:

as God had commanded him: Noah, who took care, as they entered, that there were so many of a sort as was enjoined, and these were male and female:

and the Lord shut him in; or shut the door after him^{f432}, he being the last that entered; and which he could not so well shut himself, at least so close, as was done by the Lord, or by the angels; and this was done to keep out the waters, and all within in safety; and to shut out others, and preserve Noah from the rage of wicked men, as well as the violence of the waters: some^{f433} have thought that not so much the door of the ark is meant, as the way to it, the pensile bridge which was necessary for the creatures to enter the ark; which being carried away by the force of the waters near the ark, that not being joined to it, precluded all access of the scoffers, whose scoffs were soon turned to lamentation and howling.

Ver. 17. *And the flood was forty days upon the earth*, etc.] This is said with respect to what follows, and the meaning is, that when and after the flood had been upon the earth so long, then

the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth; after this they were so many and so strong that they lifted up the ark from the place where it stood, and bore it up, that it touched not the earth; and Aben Ezra from hence infers, that the ark did not remove from its place after the flood began, until forty days.

Ver. 18. *And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth*, etc.] Still they became greater and more powerful, as to bear up the ark, so to cast down houses, trees, etc. by the continual rains that fell, though perhaps they were not so violent as before, and by the constant eruptions of water out of the earth:

and the ark went upon the face of the waters; it floated about upon them, in an easy gentle manner; for there were no storms of wind or tempests raised, which might endanger it.

Ver. 19. *And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth*, etc.] Yet more and more, so that the people without the ark were obliged to remove, not only from the lower to the higher rooms in their houses, and to the tops of them, but to the highest trees; and when these were bore down, to the highest hills and mountains; and to those it was in vain to fly, by what follows:

and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered: whence it appears there were hills before the flood, and that these were not caused by it, and that the deluge was universal, since there was not a hill under the whole heaven but what was covered with it. In Deucalion's flood all men are said to perish, except a few who fled to the high mountains^{f434}; which story seems to be hammered out of this account.

Ver. 20. *Fifteen cubits upwards did the waters prevail*, etc.] Either to such an height above the earth, upwards from that, or from the high hills; for though the words do not necessarily imply that, yet it may be allowed, since there was water enough to cover the highest of them; and fifteen cubits of water were enough to drown the tallest man, or largest beast that should be upon the top of any of them:

and the mountains were covered, with water, even it may be allowed fifteen cubits high; nor will this furnish out so considerable an objection to the history of the flood as may be thought at first sight, since the highest mountains are not near so high as they are by some calculated. Sir Walter Raleigh allows thirty miles for the height of the mountains, yet the highest in the world will not be found to be above six direct miles in height. Olympus, whose height is so extolled by the poets, does not exceed a mile and a half perpendicular, and about seventy paces. Mount Athos, said to cast its shade into the isle of Lemnos (according to, Pliny eighty seven miles) is not above two miles in height, nor Caucasus much more; nay, the Peak of Teneriff, reputed the highest mountain in the world, may be ascended in three days (according to the proportion of eight furlongs to a day's journey), which makes about the height of a German mile perpendicular; and the Spaniards affirm, that the Andes, those lofty mountains of Peru, in comparison of which they say the Alps are but cottages, may be ascended in four days' compass ^{f435}.

Ver. 21. *And all flesh died that moved upon the earth*, etc.] That had animal life in them, of which motion was a sign:

both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth on the earth; excepting those that were in the ark. This general destruction of the creatures, as it was for the sins of men, whose they were, and by whom they were abused, and is expressive of God's hatred of sin, and of his holiness and justice in the punishment of it; so, on the other hand, it is a display both of the wisdom of God, in causing a decrease of the creatures, in proportion to the decrease of men, who now would not need so many; and of the goodness of God to those that were spared, that so the beasts of the field, especially the wilder sort, might not multiply against them, and prevail over them, (see ⁽¹²⁷⁹⁾Exodus 23:29)

and every man: except those in the ark; and the number of them is supposed to be as great, if not greater, than of the present inhabitants of the earth, by those who are skilful in the calculation of the increase of men. It is thought it may be easily allowed, that their number amounted to eleven billion; and some have made their number to be eighty billion ^{f436}. The Apostle Peter calls them, the world of the ungodly, (⁽⁶⁰¹⁵⁾2 Peter 2:5).

Ver. 22. *All in whose nostrils [was] the breath of life*, etc.] Whether of fowls, beast, cattle, or creeping things:

of all that was in the dry land, died; by which description fishes were excepted, since they breathe not, having no lungs, and are not on the dry land, where they cannot live, but in the waters. Some pretend it to be the opinion of some Jewish writers, that the fishes did die, the waters being made hot, and scalded them; but this fable I have not met with.

Ver. 23. *And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground*, etc.] Not everything, particularly trees; for after the flood was abated there was an olive tree, a leaf of which was brought to Noah by the dove, (^{<081>}Genesis 8:11) but all animals,

both men and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven, and they were destroyed from the earth; this is repeated, partly for explanation of the preceding clause, and partly for confirmation of this general destruction, which might seem almost incredible; there never was such a destruction of creatures before, or since, nor never will be till the general conflagration; and is a proof of the sovereignty of God, his almighty power, the purity and holiness of his nature, and the strictness and severity of his justice, and shows what a fearful thing it is to fall into his hands:

and Noah only remained [alive], and they that [were] with him in the ark; besides those, of the millions of mankind that were upon the earth, not one was left, the flood came and destroyed them all, (^{<077>}Luke 17:27) the fable some Jewish writers relate of Og being found alive, and which they gather from (^{<081>}Deuteronomy 3:11) by sitting upon a piece of wood of one of the ladders of the ark, to whom Noah reached out food every day, and so he remained alive^{f437}, deserves no regard; though perhaps from hence arose the Grecian fable of the flood of Ogyges, which seems to be the same with this of Noah.

Ver. 24. *And the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days*.] Which is to be reckoned not from the end of the forty days' rain, but from the beginning of the flood; for from the seventeenth day of the second month, when the fountains of the deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, unto the seventeenth day of the seventh month, when the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, and the waters decreased, were just five months, or one hundred and fifty days; until which time the waters increased yet more and more, even after the forty days' rain; so that it seems there was a continual rain afterwards, as Aben Ezra observes,

though not so vehement; or otherwise it is not so easy to account for the increase of the waters.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 8

This chapter gives an account of the going off of the waters from the earth, and of the entire deliverance of Noah, and those with him in the ark, from the flood, when all the rest were destroyed: after an one hundred and fifty days a wind is sent over the earth, the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven are stopped, the waters go off gradually, and the ark rests on Mount Ararat, (^{<0081>}Genesis 8:1-4) two months and thirteen days after that the tops of the mountains were seen, (^{<0085>}Genesis 8:5) and forty days after the appearance of them, Noah sent forth first a raven, and then a dove, and that a second time, to know more of the abatement of the waters, (^{<0086>}Genesis 8:6-12). When Noah had been in the ark ten months and thirteen days, he uncovered it, and the earth was dry, yet not so dry as to be fit for him to go out upon, until near two months after, (^{<0083>}Genesis 8:13,14) when he had an order from God to go out of the ark, with all that were with him, which was accordingly obeyed, (^{<0085>}Genesis 8:15-19) upon which he offered sacrifice by way of thankfulness for his great deliverance, which was accepted by the Lord; who promised him not to curse the earth any more, nor to drown it, but that it should remain, and as long as it did there would be the constant revolutions of the seasons of the year, and of day and night, (^{<0083>}Genesis 8:20-22).

Ver. 1. *And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that [was] with him in the ark,* etc.] Not that God had forgotten Noah, for he does not, and cannot forget his creatures, properly speaking; but this is said after the manner of men, and as it might have seemed to Noah, who having heard nothing of him for five months, and having been perhaps longer in the ark than he expected, might begin to think that he was forgotten of God; but God remembered him, and his covenant with him, and the promise that he had made to him, that he and his family, and all the living creatures in the ark, should be preserved alive during the flood, (^{<0067>}Genesis 6:17-19) and God may be said particularly to remember him, and them, when he began to take measures for removing the waters from the earth, as he did by sending a wind, next mentioned: and thus

God's helping his people when in difficulties and in distress, and delivering out of them, is called his remembrance of them; and he not only remembered Noah and his family, who are included in him, but every living creature also, which is expressed; for as the creatures suffered in the flood for the sins of men, so those in the ark were remembered and preserved for the sake of Noah and his family, and the world of men that should spring from them:

and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; not a stormy blustering one, that would have endangered the ark, but a gentle, hot, drying one; which stopped the increase of the waters, and made them less, and both drove away the rain, as the north wind does, as this perhaps was ^{f438}, and caused the waters to move wards their proper channels and receptacles: this was the work of God, who has the command of the winds and waters, brings the former out of his storehouses, and restrains the latter at his pleasure; and this wind had this effect to assuage the waters, not from its own nature, but was attended with the mighty power of God to make it effectual, in an extraordinary manner: and it was, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it, “a wind of mercies”, or a merciful wind; or a wind of comforts, as Jarchi; for so it was to Noah and his family, and to all the creatures, since it served to dry up the waters of the flood, and caused them to subside.

Ver. 2. *The fountains also of the deep, and the windows of heaven, were stopped*, etc.] The passages which let out the subterraneous waters in great quantity upon the earth, and the clouds of heaven, which poured down water upon it like spouts, were stopped from sending forth any more, as they had from the first of the flood unto one hundred and fifty days from thence: Jarchi observes, that it is not said that “all” the fountains of the deep, as when they were broken up, (^{<00711>}Genesis 7:11) because some of them were left open for the use and benefit of the world; besides, some must be left for the return of the waters:

and the rain from heaven was restrained: which seems to confirm what has been before observed, that after the rain of forty days and nights it ceased not to rain, more or less, though not so vehemently, until the end of an hundred and fifty days, and then it entirely ceased.

Ver. 3. *And the waters returned from off the earth continually*, etc.] Or “going and returning” ^{f439}; they went off from the earth, and returned to their proper places appointed for them; some were dried up by the wind,

and exhaled by the sun into the air: and others returned to their channels and cavities in the earth, or soaked into it:

and after the end of the hundred and fifty days, the waters were abated; or began to abate, as Jarchi and the Vulgate Latin version; which days are to be reckoned from the beginning of the flood, including the forty days' rain; though Jarchi reckons them from the time of the ceasing of it; so that there were from the beginning of the flood one hundred and ninety days; six months, and ten days of the year of the flood now past; and in this he is followed by Dr. Lightfoot^{f440}: but the former reckoning seems best, and agrees better with what follows.

Ver. 4. *And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month*, etc.] That is, five months after the flood began, and when the waters began to decrease; for this is not the seventh month of the flood, but of the year, which being reckoned from Tisri, or the autumnal equinox, must be the month Nisan, which answers to part of our March, and part of April; and so the Targum of Jonathan explains it,

“this is the month Nisan;”

but Jarchi makes it to be the month Sivan, which answers to part of May, and part of June, taking it to be the seventh month from Cisleu, when the forty days' rain ceased; in which he is followed by Dr. Lightfoot^{f441}; and according to Bishop Usher^{f442} the seventeenth day of the seventh month, on which the ark rested, was Wednesday the sixth of May: and then it rested

upon the mountains of Ararat; that is, on one of them, for Ararat is said to be a long ridge of mountains like the Alps, or the Pyrenean mountains; which, as Sir Walter Raleigh^{f443} thinks, are the same which run through Armenia, Mesopotamia, Assyria, etc. and are by Pliny^{f444} called Taurus. But what is now called Ararat, and by the Armenians Messis or Macis, and by the Turks Augri-daugh or Agrida, is a single mountain, and is so high that it overtops all the mountains thereabout; and that which makes it seem so very high is, that it stands by itself in the form of a sugar loaf, in the middle of one of the greatest plains one can see; it has two tops, one greater, and the smaller is most sharp pointed of the two^{f445}. The Vulgate Latin version renders it the mountains of Armenia; and so Ararat in the Septuagint of (⁻²³⁷⁸Isaiah 37:38) is rendered Armenia, and in our version also; and it is the more commonly received opinion, that Ararat was a

mountain there; and this agrees with the testimonies of various Heathen writers, which are produced by Josephus and Eusebius. Berosus the Chaldean ^{f446} says,

“it is reported that in Armenia, on a mountain of the Cordyaeans, there is part of a ship, the pitch of which some take off, and carry about with them, and use it as an amulet to avert evils.”

And Nicholas of Damascus ^{f447} relates, that in Minyas in Armenia is an huge mountain called Baris, to which, as the report is, many fled at the flood, and were saved; and that a certain person, carried in an ark or chest, struck upon the top of it, and that the remains of the timber were preserved a long time after; and, adds he, perhaps he may be the same that Moses, the lawgiver of the Jews, writes of. Now this mountain seems plainly to have its name from the ark of Noah, for a boat, or ship, is, with the Egyptians, called Baris. Herodotus ^{f448} gives a large account of ships they call by this name; and the boat in which Charon is said to carry the dead bodies over the lake Acherusia, near Memphis, is said by Diodorus Siculus ^{f449} to have the same name. Abydenus the Assyrian ^{f450} tells us, that

“Saturn having foretold to Sisithrus, that there would be a vast quantity of rain on the fifteenth of the month Daesius, he immediately sailed to the Armenians; and that the ship being driven to Armenia, the inhabitants made amulets of the wood of it, which they carried about their necks, as antidotes against diseases.”

And hence Melo ^{f451}, who wrote against the Jews, suggests, as if the deluge did not reach Armenia; for he says,

“at the deluge a man that had escaped with his sons went from Armenia, being driven out of his possession by those of the country, and passing over the intermediate region, came into the mountainous part of Syria, which was desolate.”

And with what Berosus says of a mountain of the Cordyaeans, in Armenia, agree the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and the Syriac and Arabic versions, who all render the words here the mountains of Cardu or Carda: from the resting of the ark on this day on the mountains of Ararat, Jarchi concludes, and Dr. Lightfoot ^{f452} after him, that the ark drew eleven cubits water, which, according to them, thus appears; on the first day of the month Ab, the mountain tops were first seen, and then the waters had fallen fifteen cubits, which they had been sixty days in doing, namely, from

the first day of Sivan, and so they had abated the proportion of one cubit in four days: by this account we find, that on the sixteenth day of Sivan they had abated but four cubits, and yet on the next day, the seventeenth, the ark resteth on a hill, where the waters yet lay eleven cubits above it.

Ver. 5. *And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month*, etc.]

That is, from the seventeenth of the seventh month, to the first of the tenth month, a space of two months and thirteen days, and being summer time, through the heat of the sun, they decreased apace:

in the tenth [month], on the first [day] of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen; not the tenth month of the flood, but of the year; the month Tammuz, as the Targum of Jonathan, and answers to part of June, and part of July; and the first day of this month, according to Bishop Usher^{f453}, was Sunday the nineteenth of July: but according to Jarchi, whom Dr. Lightfoot^{f454} follows, this was the month Ab, which answers to July and August, the tenth from Marchesvan, when the rain began.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass at the end of forty days*, etc.] From the appearance of the mountains, that is, from the first day of the tenth month, to forty days after; and being ended, this must be the eleventh day of the eleventh month, the month Ab, which answers to July and August; and according to Bishop Usher^{f455} it was Friday the twenty eighth of August:

that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made; of which (see Gill on “~~0066~~Genesis 6:16”).

Ver. 7. *And he sent forth a raven*, etc.] That by it he might make his observation, how high or low the waters were upon the earth; and the rather he sent out the raven, a bird of prey, which feeds on carrion, that if the earth had been dry, the smell of the dead carcasses would have invited it to go far off from the ark, and not return; but if not, he would see it again:

which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth; or, “and it went forth, going forth and returning”^{f456}; it went forth out of the ark, and returned, but might not go into it, but went forth again, and then returned; and thus it continued going backwards and forwards, until the waters were dried up, when it returned no more: the Septuagint version is, “and it returned not”; and so some Jewish writers^{f457} say, it found the carcass of a man on the top of the mountains, and sat upon it for food, and returned not: hence came the fable of Apollo’s sending a raven to fetch

water, while he was sacrificing, which lighting on a large corn field, yet green, and being willing to enjoy some grains of it, waited till it was ripe, and neglected its orders ^{f458}; and hence is the proverb, “corvus nuntius”. Some make this creature to be an emblem of the law, first sent forth, but brought no good tidings of the waters of God’s wrath being assuaged, but worketh wrath, and is the ministration of condemnation and death: rather it is an emblem of unregenerate men, who are, like it, black through original sin and actual transgressions; are unclean and polluted in all the powers and faculties of their souls; are hateful, hating one another, and live in carnal and sensual lusts pleasures.

Ver. 8. *Also he sent forth a dove from him*, etc.] Seven days after he had sent out the raven, as in (~~0080~~ Genesis 8:10)

to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; for the dove is a creature that delights in cleanness, flies low, and goes far off, so that if it returned not again, he might conclude that the waters were gone off the earth; but being a sociable creature, and familiar to men, and especially loving to its mate, if they were not gone off, it would certainly return again. This some take to be an emblem of the Gospel, bringing the good tidings of peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ: rather it is an emblem of a sensible sinner, and true believer in Christ, being mournful, timorous, swift, modest, and affectionate; such persons, like doves of the valley, mourn for their iniquities; tremble at the sight of their sins, and the curses of the law, at the apprehension of divine wrath, at the awful judgment of God; and are fearful lest Christ should not receive them, to whom they swiftly fly for refuge, as doves to their windows; and who are modest, meek, and lowly, and affectionate to Christ, and one another. The Targum of Jonathan calls this an house dove, or tame one: hence, perhaps, came the practice of making use of doves as messengers to carry letters from place to place ^{f459}.

Ver. 9. *But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, [and] she returned unto him into the ark*, etc.] It being a creature that feeds upon seeds it picks off from the ground, and loving cleanness, it could find no place where it could alight, and have food to live upon, and retain its cleanness; for though the tops of the mountains were clear of the waters, yet they might be muddy and filthy with what the waters had raised up in them, or left upon them; and therefore it returned to Noah again, and not only like the raven unto the ark, but into it:

for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: there was no place dry, and so neither food nor footing for this creature; and which was an emblem of a sensible sinner, who finds no rest in anything short of Christ; not in worldly enjoyments; nor in external duties, not in hearing, reading, praying, fasting, nor in external humiliation and tears; nor in the law, and in the works of it; nor in natural descent, nor in education principles, nor in a profession of religion, and subjection to ordinances; only in Christ, where it finds rest from the burden and guilt of sin, and the tyrannical power of it; from the bondage, curse, and condemnation of the law, and from a sense of divine wrath and fear of it; and though not from afflictions, yet it finds rest in Christ amidst them:

then he put forth his hand and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark: she hovered about it, and got near the window, which Noah opened and took her in; which may represent the gracious reception sensible souls meet with from Christ, who apply to him; he kindly embraces them, and they find room in his heart and affections, fulness of everything they want, and security from all danger.

Ver. 10. *And he stayed yet other seven days,* etc.] As he had stayed seven days between the sending out of the raven and the dove, so he stayed seven days more after he had sent out the dove, and it returned to him, waiting patiently for his deliverance, and the signs of it; though he could have been glad to have known its near approach, for which he made the experiments he did:

and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; very probably the selfsame dove he had sent out before.

Ver. 11. *And the dove came in to him in the evening,* etc.] It having been out all day delighting itself in a free air, and perching upon the trees, but yet not finding sufficient food, or a proper lodging, it returned to Noah at the evening for food and dwelling in the ark:

and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: which might easily be done, and even an “olive branch”, as the word sometimes signifies, and is by some ^{f460} rendered; for it being now the summer season, young branches sprouted out, which being tender, were easily cropped: the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“which it had took from the mount of Olives;”

but there is no necessity to suppose it went so far from the ark, since Assyria, a country nearer, was a land of olive oil, like that of Judea; (^{f462}2 Kings 18:32) and besides, olives grew in Armenia itself, where the ark rested. Gogarene, in Armenia, is said by Strabo ^{f461} to produce olive trees; though a modern author says ^{f462}

“I do not see where the dove which was sent out of the ark could find an olive branch, if the ark be supposed to have rested on Mount Ararat, or any of the mountains in Armenia; for this sort of trees is not found hereabout, where the species must be lost, and yet olives are known to be a kind of trees which never die:”

but the above accounts show it to be otherwise in ancient times:

so Noah knew the waters were abated from off the earth: by this he perceived not only that they were gone off the mountains, but the lower grounds, at least the hills on which olive trees delight to grow; and yet that they were only abated, and not entirely gone off, since the dove returned to him: this dove sent out the second time, and returning, may be considered as an emblem of a Gospel minister, comparable to a dove, for the dove like gifts of the Spirit of God, by which he is qualified for his work, and for his simplicity, harmlessness, meekness, and humility; and the olive leaf in its mouth may be an emblem of the Gospel, which is from Christ, the good olive; is the Gospel of peace, which an olive branch is a symbol of, proclaiming and publishing peace and reconciliation by Christ; and as that is ever green, the Gospel always continues, and is the everlasting Gospel, and which was brought, and more fully and clearly dispensed in the evening of the world; and by it, it is known that the waters of divine wrath are assuaged, and the people of God may be assured they will never return to come upon them.

Ver. 12. *And he stayed yet other seven days,* etc.] After the dove had returned:

and sent forth the dove; the same dove again;

which returned not again unto him any more: the earth being dry, it found rest for the sole of its feet, sufficient food to eat, and a proper place for its habitation; and liking to be at liberty, and in the open air, chose not to return to the ark, even though its mate was there: of those birds sent out, the Heathen writers make mention: Abydenus says ^{f463}, that Sisithrus, the same with Noah, sent out birds making an experiment to see whether the

earth was emersed out of the water, which returned again to him; and after them he sent out others; and having done so three times, obtained what he wished for, since the birds returned with their wings full of clay or mud; and so Josephus^{f464} says, the dove which brought the olive leaf was all over with clay or mud: and Plutarch^{f465} makes particular mention of the dove, and says that, according to the mythologists, a dove was let out of the ark; and that her going out was to Deucalion, (the same with Noah) a sign of fair weather, and her return of foul: and the story that Lucian^{f466} tells of a golden dove upon the head of a statue in the temple of Hierapolis, supposed to be Deucalion's, seems plainly to refer to this dove of Noah; for the report, he says, was, that this golden dove flew away twice in a year, at the commemoration there made of the flood, by pouring out abundance of water into a chasm or cleft of the earth, then not very large; and which, it was told him, was formerly a very great one, and swallowed up all the flood that drowned the world.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, in the six hundred and first year,* etc.] Of Noah's life, and so the Septuagint adds, in the first month,

[the first day] of the month; so that it was the first day of the year, New Year's Day, and a joyful one it was to Noah and his family, when they saw dry ground; which they had not seen for above ten months: according to R. Joshua, this was the month Nisan, which was the first month with the Jews on sacred accounts; but according to R. Eliezer it was the month of Tisri, as Jarchi observes, which was their first month on civil accounts, and was their most ancient way of reckoning; and so the Targum of Jonathan explains it, adding, and Tisri; which answers to part of September, and part of October; and according to Bishop Usher^{f467}, this day was Friday, October 23, A. M. 1657:

the waters were dried up from off the earth: by the wind that continued to pass over it, and by the sun, which exhaled great quantities of it throughout the whole summer season; as it was from the end of the one hundred days, when the wind was first made, and the waters began to assuage to this time; as well as also by their soaking into the earth, and by returning to the cavities and receptacles in it:

and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked; not the roof of it, at least not the whole, only a board or two; though perhaps this was a covering made of skins, that was thrown over the ark, like that which was put over the tabernacle of Moses, and was made of skins, (⁽¹⁰²³⁴⁾Exodus

26:14) where the same word is used as here: the use of this might be to hang over the window and defend it from the rain; so that the uncovering of the ark was only putting by, or turning up this covering, that he might be able more clearly to see, out of the window, how things were:

and, behold, the face of the ground was dry; the ground or surface of the earth looked dry; but was not so dry and hard as to bear heavy bodies, or the foot to tread on it, being soft and tender, through the water so long upon it, and had left mud and slime, not yet sufficiently hardened by the wind and sun to walk upon.

Ver. 14. *And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month*, etc.] This was the month Marchesvan, as the Targum of Jonathan, which answers to part of our October, and part of our November; though according to Bishop Usher^{f468}, this day was Friday the eighteenth of December, A. M. 1657; it was on the seventeenth of this month that Noah went into the ark, (^{<0071>}Genesis 7:11) so that he was in it twelve months and ten days, according to a solar year; but if the reckoning is made according to Jewish months, six of which consisted of thirty days, and six of twenty nine only, then the twelve months made but three hundred and fifty four days, add to which eleven days to the twenty seventh, fully ended, it makes three hundred and sixty five days; so that he was in the ark just a full year, according to the course of the sun; but it seems very plain that the months here reckoned consisted of thirty days, since the one hundred and fifty, days when the waters abated are reckoned, from the seventeenth day of the second month, to the seventeenth day of the seventh month; which make exactly five months, and allow thirty days to a month: and at this time, when Noah had waited almost two months, after he had removed the covering of the ark,

was the earth dried; so that it was fit to walk upon, and was become commodious both for man and beast: a different word from that in the preceding verse is here used for “dry”, this being a different kind, or, however, a greater degree of dryness than the other.

Ver. 15. *And God spake unto Noah, saying*, etc.] Whether in a dream or vision, or by an articulate voice, appearing in an human form, or by an impulse on his mind, is not certain; however, the Lord spoke so to him, that he heard him and understood him: it was, no doubt, very rejoicing to him, since he had not heard his voice for a year or more, at least that we read of; and what he said to him was as follows.

Ver. 16. *Go forth of the ark*, etc.] Though the earth was dry and fit to be inhabited, yet he would not go out without orders, as he had to go in; which he waited for before he would, and now he has them:

thou and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives, with thee: the Jewish writers ^{f469} observe, that the manner of Noah and his family coming out of the ark is different from that of their going into it: when they went into it then went the men by themselves, and the women by themselves, and so continued apart in the ark, the use of the marriage bed being forbidden them, being a time of distress; but now when they came out they are coupled together, signifying that they were now free to cohabit together.

Ver. 17. *Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee*, etc.] There is a various reading of the word for “bring forth”; according to the margin, as Jarchi observes, the sense is, order them to come forth; and according to the Scripture, if they will not, oblige them to come:

of all flesh, [both] of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; for of each of these there were some that went with him into the ark, and continued there:

that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth, for which end they were preserved in the ark. Jarchi observes, it is said “on the earth”, not in the ark, which shows he thinks that birds and beasts were not allowed to couple, and that they did not breed there. It is a question with some, how the creatures, which were only in Asia at their coming out of the ark, could spread themselves all over the earth; particularly how they could get into islands, and especially into America: to which it may be answered, that this might be done by many of them, by swimming over narrow seas, for some wild creatures will swim whole days and nights together, when they are forced to it; and by men’s carrying others in vessels to distant and different parts, on one account or another, either for profit or pleasure; and especially, what is it the power and providence of God cannot do, who could not be at a loss for ways and means to replenish a world in all the parts of it he had made desolate, when it was his pleasure?

Ver. 18. *And Noah went forth*, etc.] Being obedient to the divine command, and no doubt with great pleasure in his countenance, and with a heart full of thankfulness for so great a deliverance;

and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: in all eight persons, and no more were saved in the ark, as Peter observes, (~~1~~¹ Peter 3:20) and the Arabic writers say ^{f470}, Noah and his sons built a city near the place where they came out of the ark, and called it Themanin, giving this as a reason of the name, we are eight, that is, who have escaped; so Berosus says ^{f471}, that the earth being dried of the waters, there were then only eight men in Armenia, from whence all mankind sprung.

Ver. 19. *Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, [and] whatsoever creepeth upon the earth,* etc.] All went out, not one was left, and they went out

after their kind; not in a confused disorderly manner, mixing with one another; but as they went in by pairs, male and female of every sort, so they came forth in like manner, or, “according to their families” ^{f472}; by which it seems as if the creatures did breed in the ark, and had their families of young ones; and which is the sense of some in Aben Ezra, and he himself thinks it not foreign, though he interprets it as we do, and as the Greek version does, “after their kind”: thus they

went forth out of the ark; everyone with his mate, in order to procreate and multiply upon the earth.

Ver. 20. *And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord,* etc.] Not an house for himself and his family, but an altar for God; his first and greatest concern being for the glory of God, and not for the temporal good of himself and his: this altar was erected, and devoted to the service of God; it was built according to his will, and by his direction: Noah’s view was to renew the worship of God, preserve and propagate it by his example; and this was done by way of thanksgiving to God for his wonderful preservation of him, and was also propitiatory and typical of Christ: the Jewish writers ^{f473} say, this was the altar on which Adam sacrificed, when expelled the garden of Eden, and on which Cain and Abel offered; and being demolished by the flood, was rebuilt by Noah, which is not at all probable; it is much more likely what Aben Ezra says, that it was built on one of the mountains of Ararat, and that as Noah took the first opportunity, so he built it in the first place he came to, or at least not far from the place where he came out of the ark:

and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar; the clean beasts were the bullock, the sheep, and

goat, and the clean fowl, the turtle and young pigeon, one of each sort at least was taken. The Targum of Jonathan says, he offered four upon the altar: these were typical of Christ; the bullock or heifer might denote his strength, the sheep or lamb his patience and harmlessness, the turtle or dove his meekness; and being burnt offerings, may signify the painful and dolorous sufferings of Christ, when the wrath of God was poured on him like fire.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord smelled a sweet savour*, etc.] Or a “savour of rest”^{f474}; he was delighted and well pleased with his sacrifice, which was offered up in the faith of the sacrifice of Christ; the apostle says, “is for a sweetsmelling savour”, (~~481~~ Ephesians 5:2) referring to this passage; that being a satisfaction to the justice of God, an appeasing of his wrath, and a propitiation for the sins of men:

and the Lord said in his heart; within himself; it was awhile a secret there, but Noah being a prophet, as Aben Ezra observes, he revealed it to him, or “to his heart”^{f475}, that is, to the heart of Noah, as some interpret it, he spoke comfortably to him, as follows, when the Jewish writers^{f476} say he stretched out his right hand and swore, agreeably to (~~250~~ Isaiah 54:9)

I will not again curse the ground for man’s sake, or drown it for the sin of man, as he had cursed it for the sin of Adam, and which continued till this time; but now was taken off, and it became more fruitful, and very probably by means of the waters which had been so long upon it, and had left a fructifying virtue in it, as the waters of the Nile do in Egypt. Some interpret the phrase, “for man’s sake”, for the man Christ’s sake, for the sake of his sacrifice, of which Noah’s was a type, and the sense be, that God would no more curse the earth; for by his sacrifice the curse of the law is removed, with respect to his people; they are redeemed from it, and shall inherit that new earth, of which this earth, renewed after the flood, was a type, in which there will be no more curse, (~~601~~ Revelation 21:1 22:3) which sense, though evangelical, cannot be admitted, because of the reason following, unless the first word be rendered “though”, as it may:

for the imagination of man’s heart [is] evil from his youth; his nature is depraved, his heart is corrupt, the thoughts of it evil, yea, the imagination of it, and of them, is sinful, and that originally, even from his birth; from the time he is shook out of his mother’s womb, as Jarchi interprets the phrase: man is conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and is a transgressor from the womb, and so a child of wrath, and deserving of the

curse of the law upon himself, and all that belong to him; and yet this is given as a reason why God will not any more curse the ground for his sake: that which was a reason for destroying the earth, is now one against it, (see ~~<1000>~~Genesis 6:5) which may be reconciled thus, God for this reason destroyed the earth once, for an example, and to display his justice; but such is his clemency and mercy, that he will do it no more to the end of the world; considering that man has brought himself into such a condition, that he cannot but sin, it is natural to him from his birth; his nature is tainted with it, his heart is full of it, and all his thoughts and imaginations are wicked and sinful, from whence continually flow a train of actual sins and transgressions; so that if God was to curse and drown the world as often as man sins, he must be continually doing it; for the words may be rendered, “though the imagination of man’s heart is evil”, etc. ^{f477}; yet I will not do it; and so they are expressive of the super abounding grace of God over abounding sin:

neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done; this hinders not but that there might be, as has been since, partial calamities, or particular judgments on individual persons, towns, and cities, as those of Sodom and Gomorrah, or partial inundations, but not a general deluge, or an universal destruction of the world and creatures in it, at least not by water, as has been, but by fire, as will be; for that the earth will have an end, at least as to its present nature, form, and use, may be concluded from the following words.

Ver. 22. *While the earth remaineth*, etc.] Which as to its substance may remain for ever, (~~<2000>~~Ecclesiastes 1:4) yet as to its form and quality will be changed; that and all in it will be burnt up; there will be an end of all things in it, for so the words are in the original, “as yet all the days of the earth”, or “while all the days of the earth” are ^{f478}; which shows that there is a time fixed for its continuance, and that this time is but short, being measured by days: but however, as long as it does continue,

seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease; as they had done, or seemed to do during the flood; for the year past there had been no seedtime nor harvest, and it must have been for the most part damp and cold, through the rains, and the abundance of water on earth, that the difference of seasons was not very discernible; as neither of days and nights at some times, especially when the clouds were so black and thick over the heavens, that neither sun, moon, or

stars could be seen; and such floods of water continually pouring down, that it must be difficult to know when it was day, and when night; but for the future it is promised, that these should not cease as long as the world stands: “seedtime and harvest”; the time of sowing seed in the earth, and the time of gathering in the fruits of it when ripe, so necessary for the sustenance of man and beast: once in seven years, and once in fifty years indeed, these ceased in the land of Judea, while the people of Israel resided there; but then this was not general all the world over, in other places there were seedtime and harvest: “and cold and heat, and summer and winter”; in some places indeed there is but little cold, in others but little heat, and the difference of summer and winter is not so discernible in some places as in others, yet there is of all these in the world in general. According to Jarchi, “cold” signifies a more severe season than “winter”, or the severer part of the winter; and “heat” a hotter season than the summer, or the hotter part of it. The Jews observe, that the seasons of the year are divided into six parts, and two months are to be allowed to each part; which Lyra, from them, and chiefly from Jarchi, thus gives,

“to seedtime the last half of September, all October, and half November; to cold, the other half of November, all December, and half January; to winter, half January, all February, and half March: to harvest, half March, all April, and half May; to summer, half May, all June, and half July; to heat, half July, all August, and the first half of September.”

But these accounts refer to the land of Judea only: it is enough for the fulfilment of the promise, that they are more or less, at one time of the year or another, in all parts of the world, and so will be until the world shall be no more; and may, in a mystic sense, denote the continuance of the church of God in the world, as long as it endures, and its various vicissitudes and revolutions; sometimes it is a time of sowing the precious seed of the Word; and sometimes it is an harvest, is an ingathering of souls into it; sometimes it is a winter season with it, and all things seem withered and dead; and at other times it is summer, and all things look smiling and cheerful; sometimes it is in a state of coldness and indifference, and at other times exposed to the heat of persecution, and more warm and zealous usually then; sometimes it is night with it, and sometimes day, and so it is like to be, until that state takes place described in (~~Rev~~ Revelation 7:16 21:25).

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 9

In this chapter we have an account of God's blessing Noah and his sons, being just come out of the ark, with a renewal of the blessing of propagating their species, and replenishing the earth, the dominion over the creatures, and a freedom from the fear of them; with liberty to eat flesh, only it must not be eaten with blood; with a providential care and preservation of their lives from men and beasts, by making a law that that man or beast should die that shed man's blood, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:1-6) and after repeating the blessing of procreation, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:7) mention is made of a covenant God made with Noah, his sons, and all the creatures, that he would drown the world no more, the token of which should be the rainbow in the cloud, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:8-17) the names of the sons of Noah are observed, by whom the earth was repopled, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:18,19) and seem to be observed for the sake of an event after recorded; Noah having planted a vineyard, and drank too freely of the wine of it, lay down uncovered in his tent, which Ham seeing, told his two brothers of it, who in a very modest manner covered him, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:20-23) of all which Noah being sensible when he awoke, cursed Canaan the son of Ham, and blessed Shem and Japheth, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:24-27) and the chapter is concluded with the age and death of Noah, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:28,29).

Ver. 1. *And God blessed Noah and his sons*, etc.] With temporal blessings, not spiritual ones; for though some of them were blessed with such, yet not all, particularly Ham:

and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth; depopulated by the flood: this is a renewal of the blessing on Adam, a power and faculty of propagating his species, which was as necessary now as then, since there were so few of the human race left in the world; and the renewal of this grant was the rather necessary, if, as has been observed, Noah and his sons were restrained from cohabiting with their wives while in the ark: but though these words are not an express command for the propagation of their species, yet more than a bare permission, at least they are a direction and instruction to it, and even carry in them a promise of

fruitfulness, that they should multiply and increase, which was very needful at this time.

Ver. 2. *And the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth*, etc.] This is a renewal, at least in part, of the grant of dominion to Adam over all the creatures; these obeyed him cheerfully, and from love, but sinning, he in a good measure lost his power over them, they rebelled against him; but now though the charter of power over them is renewed, they do not serve man freely, but are in dread of him, and flee from him; some are more easily brought into subjection to him, and even the fiercest and wildest of them may be tamed by him; and this power over them was the more easily retrieved in all probability by Noah and his sons, from the inhabitation of the creatures with them for so long a time in the ark:

and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; as appears by fowls flying away, by beasts and creeping things getting off as fast as they can, and by fishes swimming away at the sight of men:

into your hand are they delivered; as the lords and proprietors of them, for their use and service, and particularly for what follows, (see ¹⁹⁸⁶Psalm 8:6-8) where there is an enumeration of the creatures subject to men.

Ver. 3. *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you*, etc.] That is, every beast, fowl, and fish, without exception; for though there was a difference at this time of clean and unclean creatures with respect to sacrifice, yet not with respect to food; every creature of God was good then, as it is now, and it was left to man's reason and judgment what to make use of, as would be most conducive to his health, and agreeable to his taste: and though there was a distinction afterwards made under the Levitical dispensation among the Jews, who were forbid the use of some creatures; yet they themselves say ¹⁴⁷⁹, that all unclean beasts will be clean in the world to come, in the times of the Messiah, as they were to the sons of Noah, and refer to this text in proof of it; the only exception in the text is, that they must be living creatures which are taken, and used for food; not such as die of themselves, or are torn to pieces by wild beasts, but such as are taken alive, and killed in a proper manner:

even as the green herb have I given you all things; as every green herb was given for meat to Adam originally, without any exception, (¹⁰⁰⁹Genesis

1:29,30) so every living creature, without exception, was given to Noah and his sons for food. Some think, and it is a general opinion, that this was a new grant, that man had no right before to eat flesh, nor did he; and it is certain it is not before expressed, but it may be included in the general grant of power and dominion over the creatures made to Adam; and since what is before observed is only a renewal of former grants, this may be considered in the same light; or otherwise the dominion over the creatures first granted to Adam will be reduced to a small matter, if he had no right nor power to kill and eat them; besides, in so large a space of time as 1600 years and upwards, the world must have been overstocked with creatures, if they were not used for such a purpose; nor will Abel's offering the firstling and fattest of his flock appear so praiseworthy, when it made no difference with him, if he ate not of them, whether they were fat or lean; and who will deny that there were peace offerings before the flood, which the offerer always ate of? to which may be added the luxury of men before the flood, who thereby were given to impure and carnal lusts; and our Lord expressly says of the men of that age, that they were "eating and drinking", living in a voluptuous manner, which can hardly be accounted for, if they lived only on herbs, (see ^{<472>}Luke 17:22) though it must be owned, that it was a common notion of poets and philosophers ^{f480}, that men in the golden age, as they call it, did not eat flesh, but lived on herbs and fruit.

Ver. 4. *But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, shall you not eat.*] This is the only exception to the eating of flesh; it was not to be eaten with the blood in it, which is said to be its life; not that the blood is of itself the life, but because it is a means of life, and that being exhausted, the creature must die, and because the animal and vital spirits appear to us most vigorous in it; yea, it is the ailment and support of them, and which furnishes out the greatest quantity of them: or rather it may be rendered, "the flesh with its life in its blood" ^{f481}; while there is life in the blood, or while the creature is living; the meaning is, that a creature designed for food should be properly killed, and its blood let out; that it should not be devoured alive, as by a beast of prey; that raw flesh should not be eaten, as since by cannibals, and might be by riotous flesh eaters, before the flood; for notwithstanding this law, as flesh without the blood might be eaten, so blood properly let out, and dressed, or mixed with other things, might be eaten, for aught this says to the contrary; but was not to be eaten with the flesh, though it might separately, which was afterwards forbid by another law. The design of this was to restrain cruelty in men,

and particularly to prevent the shedding of human blood, which men might be led into, were they suffered to tear living creatures in pieces, and feed upon their raw flesh, and the blood in it. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“but the flesh which is torn from a living beast at the time that its life is in it, or which is torn from a beast while it is slain, before all its breath is gone out, ye shall not eat.”

And the Jewish writers generally interpret this of the flesh of a creature taken from it alive, which, they say, is the seventh precept given to the sons of Noah, over and above the six which the sons of Adam were bound to observe, and they are these;

1. Idolatry is forbidden.
2. Blasphemy is forbidden.]
3. The shedding of blood, or murder is forbidden.
4. Uncleaness, or unjust carnal copulations is forbidden.
5. Rapine or robbery is forbidden.
6. The administration of justice to malefactors is required.
7. The eating of any member or flesh of a creature while alive ^{f482} is forbidden.

Such of the Heathens who conformed to those precepts were admitted to dwell among the Israelites, and were called proselytes of the gate.

Ver. 5. *And surely your blood of your lives will I require*, etc.] Or “for surely your blood”, etc. ^{f483}; and so is a reason of the preceding law, to teach men not to shed human blood; or though, “surely your blood”, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; though God had given them liberty to slay the creatures, and shed their blood, and eat them, yet he did not allow them to shed their own blood, or the blood of their fellow creatures; should they do this, he would surely make inquisition, and punish them for it:

at the hand of every beast will I require it; should a beast kill a man, or be the instrument of shedding his blood, it should be slain for it; not by means of another beast, God so ordering it, as Aben Ezra suggests, but by the hands or order of the civil magistrate; which was to be done partly to show the great regard God has to the life of man, and partly to punish men for

not taking more care of their beasts, as well as to be an example to others to be more careful, and to lessen, the number of mischievous creatures:

and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man; which may be reasonably supposed; for if it is required of a beast, and that is punished for the slaughter of a man, then much more a man himself, that is wilfully guilty of murder; and the rather, since he is by general relation a brother to the person he has murdered, which is an aggravation of his crime: or it may signify, that though he is a brother in the nearest relation, as his crime is the greater, he shall not go unpunished.

Ver. 6. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*, etc.] That is, he that is guilty of wilful murder shall surely be put to death by the order of the civil magistrate; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“by witnesses the judges shall condemn him to death,”

that is, the fact being clearly proved by witnesses, the judges shall condemn

“him to death,”

that is, the fact being clearly proved by witnesses, the judges shall pass the sentence of death upon him, and execute it; for this is but the law of retaliation, a just and equitable one, blood for blood, or life for life; though it seems to be the first law of this kind that empowered the civil magistrate to take away life; God, as it is thought, reserving the right and power to himself before, and which, for some reasons, he thought fit not to make use of in the case of Cain, whom he only banished, and suffered not others to take away his life, but now enacts a law, requiring judges to punish murder with death: and which, according to this law, ought never to go unpunished, or have a lesser punishment inflicted for it: the reason follows,

for in the image of God made he man; which, though sadly defaced and obliterated by sin, yet there are such remains of it, as render him more especially the object of the care and providence of God, and give him a superiority to other creatures; and particularly this image, among others, consists in immortality, which the taking away of his life may seem to contradict; however, it is what no man has a right to do.

Ver. 7. *And you, be ye fruitful and multiply*, etc.] Instead of taking away the lives of men, the great concern should be to multiply them; and this indeed is one reason of the above law, to prevent the decrease and ruin of

mankind; and which was peculiarly needful, when there were so few men in the world as only four, and therefore it is repeated in stronger terms:

bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein; that the whole earth might be overspread with men, and repopled sufficiently, as it was by the sons of Noah, (see ~~<0099>~~ Genesis 9:19 10:32).

Ver. 8. *And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him*, etc.] Not only what is contained in the preceding verses, but in the subsequent ones:

saying; as follows.

Ver. 9. *And [I], behold, [I] establish my covenant with you*, etc.] Not the covenant of grace in Christ, but of the preservation of the creatures in common, a promise that they should not be destroyed any more by a flood; to which promise it seems an oath was annexed, as appears from (~~<2549>~~ Isaiah 54:9) which passage refers to this covenant, as Aben Ezra on the place observes; and both to raise attention to what is here affirmed, and to show the certainty of it, the word “behold” is prefixed to it; nor is it amiss what Jarchi observes, that this follows upon the direction and exhortation to procreation of children, and is an encouragement to it; since it is assured that posterity should be no more cut off in the manner it had been; for this covenant was made and established not only with Noah, and his sons, but with all their succeeding offspring, as follows:

and with your seed after you; with all their posterity to the end of the world; so that this covenant was made with all the world, and all the individuals in it, from Noah’s time to the end of it; for from him and his sons sprung the whole race of men that peopled the world, and still continue to inhabit it; hence here is nothing in it peculiar to the seed of believers.

Ver. 10. *And with every living creature that is with you*, etc.] This is a further proof that this was not the covenant of grace, but of conservation, since it is made with irrational as well as rational creatures:

of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; the birds of the air, the tame cattle, and the wild beasts:

from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth; which take in the creeping things not mentioned, for these were in the ark, and came out of the ark with Noah; and this covenant not only included all the several

kinds of creatures that came out of the ark with Noah, but it reached to all that should spring from them in future ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 11. *And I will establish my covenant with you*, etc.] This is repeated to denote the certainty of it, as well as to lead on to the particulars of it:

neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither man nor beast, at least not all of them, and especially by water:

neither shall there be any more a flood to destroy the earth; not a general deluge, otherwise notwithstanding this promise there might be, as there have been, particular inundations, which have overflowed particular countries and places, but not the whole earth; and this hinders not but that the whole earth may be destroyed by fire, as it will be at the last day, only not by water any more; and this is the sum and substance of the covenant with Noah, his sons, and all the creatures that have been, or shall be.

Ver. 12. *And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you*, etc.] Meaning the bow in the cloud, and which might be formed in the cloud at this time, that Noah might see it, and know it when he saw it again, and seems to be pointed unto: “this is the token”; or sign of the covenant made between God and Noah, and his sons:

and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; which more clearly shows and proves, that this covenant reaches to all creatures that then were, or should be in all ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 13. *I do set my bow in the cloud*, etc.] Or “I have given”, or “have set it”^{f484}; which seems as if it was at that instant set; this is the same we call the “rainbow”: and so Horace^{f485} calls it “arcus pluvius”: it is called a “bow”, because of its form, being a semicircle, and a “rainbow”, because it is seen in a day of rain, and is a sign of it, or of its being quickly over, (²⁰¹²Ezekiel 1:28) and this appears in a moist dewy cloud, neither very thick nor very thin, and is occasioned by the rays of the sun opposite to it, refracted on it: and this God calls “his bow”, not only because made by him, for, notwithstanding the natural causes of it, the cloud and sun, the disposition of these to produce it, such a phenomenon is of God; but also because he appointed it to be a sign and token of his covenant with his creatures; so the Heathen poets^{f486} call the rainbow the messenger of Juno. It is a question whether there was a rainbow before the flood, and it is not easily answered; both Jews and Christians are divided about it; Saadia thought there was one; but Aben Ezra disapproves of his opinion, and

thinks it was first now made. The greater part of Christian interpreters are of the mind of Saadiah, that it was from the beginning, the natural causes of it, the sun and cloud, being before the flood; and that it was now after it only appointed to be a sign and token of the covenant; but though the natural causes of it did exist before, it does not follow, nor is it to be proved, that there was such a disposition of them to produce such an effect; and it might be so ordered in Providence, that there should not be any, that this might be entirely a new thing, and so a wonderful one, as the word for “token”^{f487} signifies; and the Greeks calls the rainbow the “daughter of Thaumas” or “Wonder”^{f488}; and be the more fit to be a sign and token of the covenant, that God would no more destroy the earth with water; for otherwise, if this had been what Noah and his sons had been used to see, it can hardly be thought sufficient to take off their fears of a future inundation, which was the end and use it was to serve, as follows:

it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth; that is, between God and the creatures of the earth; or of a promise that God would no more destroy the earth, and cut off the creatures in it by a flood; for though it is a bow, yet without arrows, and is not turned downwards towards the earth, but upwards towards heaven, and so is a token of mercy and kindness, and not of wrath and anger.

Ver. 14. *And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth,* etc.] Or “cloud a cloud”^{f489}, cause the clouds to gather thick in the heavens, and to hang over the earth ready to pour down great quantities of water; by reason of which the inhabitants might dread another flood coming upon them: wherefore, in order to dissipate such fears, it shall be so ordered,

that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; after it has pretty much discharged itself; for the rainbow is always in a thin, not a thick cloud; after the heavy showers are fallen from the thick clouds, and a small thin one remains, then the rainbow is seen in it; not always, but very frequently, and when the sun and clouds are in a proper position: and this is often so ordered, to put men in mind of this covenant, and to divest them of, or prevent their fears of the world being drowned by a flood; for when they see this, it is a sure sign the rain is going off, since the cloud is thinned, or otherwise the rainbow could not appear: and a most glorious and beautiful sight it is, having such a variety of colours in it, and in such a position and form. Some think that it serves both to put in mind of the destruction of the old world by water,

through its watery colours, and of the present world by fire, through its fiery ones. Others make the three predominant colours to denote the three dispensations before the law, under the law, and under the Gospel: rather they may signify the various providences of God, which all work together for the good of his people; however, whenever this bow is seen, it puts in mind of the covenant of preservation made with all the creatures, and the firmness, stability, and duration of it; and is by some considered as an emblem of the covenant of grace, from (²⁵⁴⁹Isaiah 54:9,10) which is of God's making, as this bow is; is a reverberation of Christ the sun of righteousness, the sum and substance of the covenant; consists of various blessings and promises of grace; is expressive of mercy and peace, and is a security from everlasting destruction: or rather it may be thought to be an emblem of Christ himself, who was seen by John clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow on his head, (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 10:1) this being a wonderful thing, as Christ is wonderful in his person, office, and grace; and as it has in it a variety of beautiful colours, it may represent Christ, who is full of grace and truth, and fairer than the children of men; and may be considered as a symbol of peace and reconciliation by him, whom God looks unto, and remembers the covenant of his grace he has made with him and his chosen ones in him; and who is the rainbow round about the throne of God, and the way of access unto it; (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 4:3) the Jews have a saying,

“till ye see the bow in its luminous colours, do not look for the feet of the Messiah, or his coming^{f490}.”

Ver. 15. *And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh*, etc.] (see ⁴⁰⁰Genesis 9:11,12)

and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh; this is repeated to remove those fears which would naturally arise, upon the gathering of the clouds in the heavens; but as God would remember his covenant, which he can never forget; and is always mindful of, so men, when they see the bow in the cloud, may be assured, that whatever waters are in the heavens, they shall never be suffered to fall in such quantity as to destroy all creatures as they have done.

Ver. 16. *And the bow shall be in the cloud*, etc.] Not whenever there is a cloud, but at some certain times, when that and the sun are in a proper position to form one, and when divine wisdom sees right there should be one; then it appears and continues for a time, and as the cloud becomes thinner and thinner, it disappears:

and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth; not that forgetfulness, or remembrance, properly speaking, belong to God, but this is said after the manner of men; who by this token may be assured, whenever they see the bow in the cloud, that God is not unmindful of the covenant he has made with all creatures, and which is to continue to the end of the world.

Ver. 17. *And God said to Noah, this is the token of the covenant,* etc.] Which is repeated for the greater confirmation and certainty of it, since the fears of men would be apt to run very high, especially while the flood was fresh in memory;

which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth: (see ^{<009>}Genesis 9:9-11), it is highly probable, that from the rainbow being the token of the covenant between God and Noah, and the creatures, sprung the fable of the Chinese concerning their first emperor, Fohi, who seems to be the same with Noah, and whom they call the son of heaven, and say he had no father; which is this, that his mother, walking on the bank of a lake near Lanthien, in the province of Xensi, trod upon a large footstep of a man impressed upon the sand, and from thence, being surrounded with the rainbow, conceived and brought forth Fohi ^{f491}.

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth,* etc.] These were born before the flood, and went into the ark with Noah, and came out with him; (see ^{<005>}Genesis 5:32 6:10)

and Ham [is the] father of Canaan; this is observed for the sake of the following history, concerning the behaviour of the one to Noah, and of the curse of the other by him, which would not have been so well understood if this remark had not been made: the father and the son, as they were, related in nature, they were much alike in manners and behaviour. Cush, the firstborn of Ham, is not mentioned, but Canaan, his youngest son, because he was cursed, as Aben Ezra observes; and who remarks that the paragraph is written to show that the Canaanites were accursed, the father of whom this Canaan was; and who is the same Sanchoniatho ^{f492} calls Cna, and says he was the first that was called a Phoenician.

Ver. 19. *These are the three sons of Noah,* etc.] And his only ones; and if he had any more, they left no posterity behind them, since it follows,

and of them was the whole earth overspread, with inhabitants, by them and their posterity only: Berosus^{f493} indeed says, that Noah, after the flood, begat more sons, and giants; and his commentator, Annius, talks of seventeen of them, among whom was Tuiscon, the father of the Germans; and the author of Juchasin^{f494} ascribes a fourth son to Noah, whose name he calls Joniko, who taught astronomy in the world, and taught Nimrod the art of war; but these are fabulous stories, and contrary to the sacred Scriptures, which speak of three sons of Noah, and no more, and say that by these the earth was replenished after the flood: hence, among the Heathen writers, we read of Saturn and his three children, who by many circumstances appears to be the same with Noah, as Bochart^{f495} hath proved at large.

Ver. 20. *And Noah began to be an husbandman*, etc.] Or “a man of the earth”^{f496}, not lord of it, as Jarchi, though he was, but a tiller of the earth, as he had been before the flood, and now began to be again; he returned to his old employment, and which perhaps he improved, having invented, as the Jews^{f497} say, instruments of husbandry; it may be, the use of the plough, which made the tillage of the ground more easy; he was expert in husbandry, as Aben Ezra observes, and which, as he remarks, is great wisdom; and though he was so great a man, yet he employed himself in this way:

and he planted a vineyard; not vines, but a vineyard; there were vines before scattered up and down, here one and there another, but he planted a number of them together, and set them in order, as the Jewish writers say^{f498}; and some of them^{f499} will have it that he found a vine which the flood brought out of the garden of Eden, and planted it; but this is mere fable: where this plantation was cannot be said with certainty; the Armenians have a tradition that Noah, after quitting the ark, went and settled at Erivan, about twelve leagues from Ararat, a city full of vineyards; and that it was there he planted the vineyard, in a place where they still make excellent wine, and that their vines are of the same sort he planted there^{f500}; which contradicts what Strabo^{f501} says of the country of Armenia, its hills and plains, that a vine will not easily grow there.

Ver. 21. *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken*, etc.] Either not being acquainted with the strength of it, as is thought by many; or having been used to weaker liquor, as water; or through the infirmity of his age; however, he was overtaken with it, and which is recorded, not to disgrace

him, but to caution men against the evil of intemperance, as well as to encourage repenting sinners to expect pardon: and this shows that the best of men are not exempted from sin, nor secure from falling; and that though Noah was a perfect man, yet not as to be without sin; and that whereas he was a righteous man, he was not so by the righteousness of works, but by the righteousness of faith:

and he was uncovered within his tent; being in liquor when he laid down, he was either negligent of his long and loose garments, such as the eastern people wore without breeches, and did not take care to wrap them about him; or in his sleep, through the heat of the weather, or of the wine, or both, threw them off.

Ver. 22. *And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father,* etc.] Which, had it been through surprise, and at an unawares, would not have been thought criminal; but he went into his father's tent, where he ought not to have entered; he looked with pleasure and delight on his father's nakedness: Ham is represented by many writers as a very wicked, immodest, and profligate creature: Berosus^{f502} makes him a magician, and to be the same with Zoroast or Zoroastres, and speaks of him as the public corrupter of mankind; and says that he taught men to live as before the flood, to lie with mothers, sisters, daughters, males and brutes, and creatures of all sorts; and that he actually did so himself, and therefore was cast out by his father Janus, or Noah, and got the name of "Chem", the infamous and immodest:

and told his two brethren without; he went out of the tent after he had pleased himself with the sight; (see ~~<3025>~~ Habakkuk 2:15) and in a wanton, ludicrous, and scoffing manner, related what he had seen: some of the Jewish Rabbins^{f503}, as Jarchi relates, say that Canaan first saw it, and told his father of it; and some say^{f504}, that he or Ham committed an unnatural crime with him; and others^{f505}, that he castrated him; and hence, it is supposed, came the stories of Jupiter castrating his father Saturn, and Chronus his father Uranus: and Berosus^{f506} says, that Ham taking hold of his father's genitals, and muttering some words, by a magic charm rendered him impotent: and some^{f507} will have it that he committed incest with his father's wife; but these things are said without foundation: what Noah's younger son did unto him, besides looking on him, we are not told, yet it was such as brought a curse on Canaan; and one would think it

would be more than bare sight, nay, it is expressly said there was something done, but what is not said, (^{<00924>}Genesis 9:24).

Ver. 23. *And Shem and Japheth took a garment*, etc.] Who were the two brothers Ham told what he had seen, and who, no doubt, reproved him for his ill behaviour, and then took a garment, a coat of their own, very probably, some large garment fit for the purpose;

and laid it upon both their shoulders; one part of it on the right shoulder of the one, and the other on the left shoulder of the other:

and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; going backward when they came into the tent, and to the place where their father lay, they threw the garment off from their shoulders over him, and so covered him:

and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness: which they purposely shunned, for which reason they went backwards, and their faces were backwards to their father; which showed their modesty, and their filial piety and duty, and thus by their actions reproved Ham, as well as doubtless they did by words.

Ver. 24. *And Noah awoke from his wine*, etc.] From his sleep, which his wine brought on him; when the force and strength of that was gone, and when not only he awaked, but came to himself, and was sober;

and knew what his younger son had done to him; either by revelation, as some, or prophecy, as Ben Gersom, or by the relation of his two sons, whom, when finding himself covered with another's garment, he might question how it came about, and they told him the whole affair: some, as Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, and Abendana, think that this was not Ham, the younger son of Noah, and whom some also will have not to be the youngest, being always placed middlemost, but Canaan, the fourth and youngest son of Ham; and whom Noah indeed might call his younger, or "his son, the little one"^{f508}; as it was usual for grandchildren to be called the sons of their grandfather; (see ^{<00235>}Genesis 29:5) and Noah might be informed how his little son, or rather grandson Canaan, had been in his tent, and seeing him in the posture he was, went very merrily, and told his father Ham of it, who made a jest of it also; and this seems the more reasonable, since Canaan was immediately cursed by Noah, as in the following verse; (see Gill on "^{<0002>}Genesis 9:22") this affair must happen many years after Noah's coming out of the ark, since then his sons had no

children; whereas Ham had at this time four sons, and Canaan was the youngest of them; and he was grown up to an age sufficient to be concerned in this matter, of treating his grandfather in an ill way, so as to bring his curse upon him: Jarchi interprets “little” by abominable and contemptible, supposing it refers not to age, but character, and which was bad both in Ham and Canaan: (see Gill on “⁴⁰¹²²Genesis 9:22”).

Ver. 25. *And he said*, etc.] Not in a drunken fit, as some profane persons would suggest, for he was awaked from his wine; nor in the heat of passion, but by inspiration, under a spirit of prophecy:

cursed [be] Canaan; or, “O cursed Canaan”, or rather, “Canaan is”, or “shall be cursed”^{f509}; for the words are either a declaration of what was his case, or a prediction of what it should be. It may seem strange that Canaan should be cursed, and not Ham, who seems to be the only aggressor, by what is said in the context; hence one copy of the Septuagint, as Ainsworth observes, reads Ham, and the Arabic writers the father of Canaan; and so Saadiah Gaon supplies it, as Aben Ezra relates; and the same supplement is made by others^{f510}: but as both were guilty, as appears from what has been observed on the former verses, and Canaan particularly was first in the transgression; it seems most wise and just that he should be expressly named, since hereby Ham is not excluded a share in the punishment of the crime he had a concern in, being punished in his son, his youngest son, who perhaps was his darling and favourite, and which must be very afflicting to him to hear of; and since Canaan only, and not any of the other sons of Ham were guilty, he, and not Ham by name, is cursed, lest it should be thought that the curse would fall upon Ham and all his posterity; whereas the curse descends on him, and very justly proceeds in the line of Canaan; and who is the rather mentioned, because he was the father of the accursed race of the Canaanites, whom God abhorred, and, for their wickedness, was about to drive out of their land, and give it to his people for an inheritance; and in order to which the Israelites were now upon the expedition, when Moses wrote this account, and which must animate them to it; for by this prediction they would see that they were an accursed people, and that they were to be their servants:

a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren; the posterities of Shem and Japheth, who stood in the relation of brethren to Canaan and his posterity; and to those he and his offspring were to become the most mean abject servants, as the phrase implies: this character agrees with the name

of Canaan, which may be derived from [nk, “to depress”, “humble”, and “make mean and abject”.

Ver. 26. *And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem*, etc.] Shem was blessed before Japheth, because he was the first and principal in advising and conducting the affair before ascribed to them, as Jarchi on (^{<0023>}Genesis 9:23) suggests; and though the words are in the form of an ascription of blessedness to God, the fountain of all good, and by whose grace Shem was influenced and enabled to do the good he did, for which the Lord’s name was to be praised and blessed; yet it includes the blessing of Shem, and indeed the greatest blessing he could possibly enjoy; for what greater blessing is there, than for a man to have God to be his God? this includes everything, all blessings temporal and spiritual; (see ^{<9315>}Psalm 144:15) some interpret the God of Shem of Christ, who, according to the human nature, was a descendant of Shem; and according to the divine nature the God of Shem, God over all, blessed for ever, (^{<8004>}Romans 9:4,5).

And Canaan shall be his servant; the posterity of Canaan be servants to the posterity of Shem: this was fulfilled in the times of Joshua, when the Israelites, who sprung from Shem, conquered the land of Canaan, slew thirty of their kings, and took their cities and possessed them, and made the Gibeonites, one of the states of Canaan, hewers of wood and drawers of water to them, or the most mean and abject servants.

Ver. 27. *God shall enlarge Japheth*, etc.] Or give him a large part of the earth, and large dominions in it, as his posterity have had; for, as Bochart ^{&511} observes, to them belonged all Europe, and lesser Asia, Media, Iberia, Albania, part of Armenia, and all those vast countries to the north, which formerly the Scythians, and now the Tartars inhabit; not to say anything of the new world (America), into which the Scythians might pass through the straits of Anian;

and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; inhabit the countries belonging to the posterity of Shem: this was verified by the Medes, who were the descendants of Japheth, together with the Babylonians seizing upon the Assyrian empire and overthrowing that, for Ashur was of Shem; and in the Greeks and Romans, who sprung from Japheth, when they made conquests in Asia, in which were the tents of Shem’s posterity; and who, according to the prophecy in (^{<0024>}Numbers 24:24) that ships from the coast of Chittim, Greece, or Italy, or both, should afflict Ashur and Eber, the Assyrians and

the Hebrews, or those beyond the river Euphrates, who all belonged to Shem; and particularly this was fulfilled when the Romans, who are of Japheth, seized Judea, which had long been the seat of the children of Shem, the Jews; and at this day the Turks, who are also Japheth's sons, literally dwell in the tents of Shem, or inhabit Judea: the Targums understand this in a mystical sense. Onkelos thus:

“God shall cause his Shechinah or glorious Majesty to dwell in the tents of Shem;”

which was remarkably true, when Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Word, was made flesh, and tabernacled in Judea: Jonathan Ben Uzziel thus;

“and his children shall be proselytes, and dwell in the school of Shem;”

and many Christian writers interpret them of the conversion of the Gentiles, and of their union and communion with the believing Jews in one Gospel church state, which was very evidently fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel: and they read these words in connection with the former clause thus, “God shall persuade Japheth^{f512}, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem”; that is, God shall persuade the Gentiles, the posterity of Japheth, by the sweet alluring voice of his Gospel, and through the power of his grace accompanying it, to embrace and profess Christ and his Gospel, and join with his churches, and walk with them in all the commandments and ordinances of Christ; and at this day all the posterity of Japheth, excepting Magog, or the Turks, bear the name of Christians: the Talmudists^{f513} interpret the passage of the language of Japheth being spoken in the tents of Shem; which had its accomplishment when the apostles of Christ spoke and wrote in Greek, one of the languages of Japheth's sons. Some understand this of God himself, he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, or in Israel, as Jarchi, and was verified remarkably in the incarnation of the Son of God;

and Canaan shall be his servant; the posterity of Canaan servants to the posterity of Japheth; as they were when Tyre, which was built by the Sidonians, and Sidon, which had its name from the eldest son of Canaan, fell into the hands of Alexander the Grecian, who sprung from Japheth; and when Carthage, a colony of the Phoenicians of Canaan's race, was taken and demolished by the Romans of the line of Japheth, which made

Hannibal, a child of Canaan, say, “agnoscere se fortunam Carthaginiis”^{f514}, that he owned the fate of Carthage; and in which some have thought that he refers to this prophecy.

Ver. 28. *And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.*] So that he not only saw the old world, and the wickedness of that, and the destruction of it for it, but an increase of wickedness again, the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, the dispersion of his offspring, and the wars among them in the times of Nimrod, and others: however, it was a blessing to mankind that he lived so long after the flood in the new world, to transmit to posterity, by tradition, the affairs of the old world; and to give a particular account of the destruction of it, and to instruct them in the doctrines and duties of religion. By this it appears, that he lived within thirty two years of the birth of Abraham. The Jews conclude from hence, that he lived to the fifty eighth year of Abraham’s life: it may be remarked, that it is not added here as usual to the account of the years of the patriarchs, “and he begat sons and daughters”; from whence it may be concluded, that he had no more children than the three before mentioned, as well as from the silence of the Scriptures elsewhere, and from the old age of himself and his wife, and especially from what is said, (see Gill on “~~Genesis 9:19~~” Genesis 9:19”).

Ver. 29. *And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years,* etc.] He lived twenty years more than Adam did, and within nineteen of Methuselah, and his age must be called a good old age; but what is said of all the patriarchs is also said of him,

and he died: the Arabic writers say^{f515}, when the time of his death drew nigh, he ordered his son Shem by his will to take the body of Adam, and lay it in the middle of the earth, and appoint Melchizedek, the son of Peleg, minister at his grave; and one of them is very particular as to the time of his death; they say^{f516} he died on the second day of the month Ijar, on the fourth day (of the week), at two o’clock in the morning.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 10

This chapter gives an account of the posterity of the three sons of Noah, by whom the world was peopled after the flood, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:1) of the posterity of Japheth, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:2-5) of the posterity of Ham, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:6-20) and of the posterity of Shem, (^{<0100>}Genesis 10:21-32).

Ver. 1. *Now these are the generations of the sons of Noah*, etc.] The genealogy of them, and which is of great use to show the original of the several nations of the world, from whence they sprung, and by whom they were founded; and to confute the pretended antiquity of some nations, as the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Chinese, and others; and to point out the particular people, which were to be the seat of the church of God for many ages, and from whom the Messiah was to spring; which seems to be the principal view of the history of Moses, and of this genealogy, with which should be compared (^{<0100>}1 Chronicles 1:1-25) Shem, Ham, and Japheth; (see ^{<0100>}Genesis 5:32 6:10 7:13 9:18)

and unto them were sons born after the flood; for they had none born to them either before the flood or in it; they were married before the flood, for their wives went into the ark with them; but it does not appear they had any children before, though they then were near an hundred years old; and if they had, they were not in the ark, and therefore must perish with the rest, which is not likely: Shem's son Arphaxad was born two years after the flood, (^{<0100>}Genesis 11:10) when the rest were born, either his or his brethren's, is not said; however they were all born after the flood; though some pretend that Canaan was born in the ark ^{f517}, during the flood, for which there is no authority; yea, it is confuted in this chapter, where Canaan stands among the sons of Ham, born to him after the flood.

Ver. 2. *The sons of Japheth*, etc.] Who though mentioned last, the genealogy begins with him, by a figure which rhetoricians call a "chiasm". The posterity of Japheth are those whom Hesiod ^{f518} often calls **ιαπετιονιδης**, "Iapetionides", and him **ιαπετος**, "Iapetus". According to Josephus ^{f519}, the sons of Japheth inhabited the earth, beginning from the

mountains Taurus and Amanus, and then went on in Asia unto the river Tanais, and in Europe unto Gadir. Seven of his sons are mentioned, and the first is Gomer; from whom, according to the same writer ^{f520}, came the Gomareans or Gomerites, in his time called by the Greeks Galatians, that is, the Gauls of Asia minor, who inhabited Phrygia; both Gomer and Phrygia signifying the same, as Bochart ^{f521} observes, and the country looking as if it was torrifed or burnt; and Pliny ^{f522} makes mention of a town in Phrygia, called Cimmeris; and the Cimmerians and Cimbri are derived by some from this Gomer, whom Herodotus ^{f523} makes mention of as in Asia and Scythia, and speaks of a country called Cimmerius, and of the Cimmerian Bosphorus; and these seem to be the Gauls before mentioned, under a different name; and it is to be observed, that the Welsh, who sprung from the Gauls, call themselves to this day Cumero, or Cymro and Cumeri. It is plain from (~~2886~~ Ezekiel 38:6) that Gomer and his people lay to the north of Judea, and the posterity of Japheth went first into the northern parts of Asia, and then spread themselves into Europe: six more of his sons follow, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meshech, and Tiras; the first of these, Magog, was the father of a northern people which bore his name, (see ~~2886~~ Ezekiel 38:2,15) and according to Josephus ^{f524}, who is generally followed, are the same that were called Scythians; from Madai came the Medes, often spoken of in Scripture, along with the Persians; so Josephus ^{f525} says, from him came the nation of Madaeans, whom the Greeks call Medes; and very frequently in Scripture the Medes go by the name of Madai, their original ancestor; (see ~~2788~~ Daniel 5:28 6:8,12,15) but Mr. Mede ^{f526} is of opinion, that Macedonia was the seat of this Madai, which was formerly called Aemathia; that is, as he gives the etymology of it, **αἰα**, “Madai”, the country of Madai; but the former sense is generally received. Javan is by all agreed to be the father of the Grecians; hence Alexander, king of Grecia, is in (~~2788~~ Daniel 8:21) called king of Javan; and one part of Greece bore the name of Ionia; and the sea that washed it is called the Ionian sea. And his posterity are **ἰαονες**, “Iaonians”, in Homer ^{f527} and Aristophanes ^{f528}; and the scholiast of the latter says, that the Barbarians call all Greeks Iaonians. The next son of Japheth is Tubal or Thobel, as Josephus calls him, who says ^{f529} the Thobelians in his time were called Iberians, a people in Asia, that dwelt near the Euxine sea; and in Albania was a place called Thabilaca, as may be seen in Ptolemy ^{f530}, and another called Thilbis, from whom might spring the Iberians in Europe, now called Spaniards; but Bochart ^{f531} thinks that the Tibarenes are the descendants of Tubal, a people that dwelt between

the Trapezuntii and Armenia the less; and he wonders that this never was thought of by any; but in that he is mistaken, for our countryman Mr. Broughton^{f532} makes the Tibarenes to spring from Tubal; and Epiphanius^{f533} many hundreds of years before him. Meshech, his next son, is mentioned along with Tubal in (^{<32713>}Ezekiel 27:13 38:2 39:1) from him came the Mosocheni, as Josephus^{f534}, who in his time were called Cappadocians, with whom there was a city then named Mazaca, since Caesarea^{f535}; and these seem to be the same that Pliny^{f536} calls Moscheni, who inhabited the mountains Moschici, which were at the north east of Cappadocia. Some derive the Muscovites from them, which is not improbable: the last of Japheth's sons is Tiras or Thiras, which Jarchi interprets very wrongly by Paras, or Persia; much better the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, and so a Jewish chronologer^{f537}, by Thracia; for the descendants of Thiras, as Josephus^{f538} observes, the Greeks call Thracians; and in Thrace was a river called Atyras^{f539}, which has in it a trace of this man's name; and Odrysus, whom the Thracians worshipped, is the same with Tiras, which god sometimes goes by the name of Thurax; and is one of the names of Mars, the god of the Thracians.

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Gomer*, etc.] Who was the first of the sons of Japheth, three of whose sons are mentioned, and they are as follow:

Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah; the first of these seated himself in the lesser Asia, in Pontus and Bithynia, where were some traces of his name in the river Ascanius, and in the Ascanian lake or bay; and also in the lesser Phrygia or Troas, where was a city called Ascania, and where were the Ascanian isles^{f540}, and the Euxine Pontus, or Axeine^{f541}, as it was first called, which is the sea that separates Asia and Europe, and is no other than a corruption of the sea of Ashkenaz. It seems to have been near Armenia, by its being mentioned along with Minni or Armenia, in (^{<25127>}Jeremiah 51:27). Germany is by the Jews commonly called Ashkenaz; perhaps some of the posterity of Ashkenaz in Asia might pass into Europe, and Germany might be a colony of them; so Mr. Broughton^{f542} observes of the sons of Gomer, that they first took their seat in Asia, and then came north and west into Muscovy and Germany. The next son of Gomer was Riphath. Josephus^{f543} says, that the Riphathaeans which came from him are the Paphlagonians, a people of Asia Minor, near Pontus, so that he settled near his brother Ashkenaz; perhaps his posterity are the Arimphaei of Pliny^{f544}, and the Riphaeans of Mela^{f545}, who inhabited near the Riphaeon mountains, which might have their name from this son of Gomer, who in

(~~13006~~ 1 Chronicles 1:6) is called Diphath, the letters **r** and **d** being very similar. His third son is called Togarmah, who had his seat in the north of Judea, (see ~~26806~~ Ezekiel 38:6) his posterity are the Phrygians, according to Josephus ^{f546}; but some place them in Galatia and Cappadocia; and Strabo ^{f547}

makes mention of a people called Trocmi, on the borders of Pontus and Cappadocia; and Cicero ^{f548} of the Trogmi or Trogini, who may have their name from hence; for the Greek interpreters always call him Torgama or Thorgana. The Jews make the Turks to be the posterity of Togarmah. Elias Levita says ^{f549}, there are some that say that Togarmah is the land of Turkey; and Benjamin of Tudela ^{f550} calls a Turkish sultan king of the Togarmans, that is, the Turks; and among the ten families of Togarmah, which Josephus ben Gorion ^{f551} speaks of, the Turks are one; and perhaps this notion may not be amiss, since the company of Togarmah is mentioned with Gog, or the Turk, (See Gill on "~~26806~~ Ezekiel 38:6"). The Armenians pretend to be the descendants of Togarmah, who, with them, is the son of Tiras, the son of Gomer, by his son Haik, from whom they and their country, from all antiquity, have bore the name of Haik ^{f552}.

Ver. 4. *And the sons of Javan*, etc.] Another son of Japheth; four sons of Javan are mentioned, which gave names to countries, and are as follow:

Elishah, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim; the first of these, Elishah, gave name to the Elysaeans, now called Aeoles, as Josephus ^{f553} says; hence the country Aeolia, and the Aeolic dialect, all from this name; and there are many traces of it in the several parts of Greece. Hellas, a large country in it, has its name from him; so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem interpret Elishah by Allas. Elis in Peloponnesus, Eleusis in Attica, the river Elissus, or Ilissus, and the Elysian fields, are so called from him. Tarshish, second son of Javan, gave name to Tarsus, by which Cilicia was formerly called, as Josephus says ^{f554}, of which the city named Tarsus was the metropolis, the birth place of the Apostle Paul, (~~4218~~ Acts 22:3). Hence the Mediterranean sea is called Tarshish, because the Cicilians were masters of it; and Tartessus in Spain might be a colony from them, as Broughton observes; and so Eusebius says, from the Tarsinns are the Iberians, or Spaniards; and which Bochart ^{f555} approves of, and confirms by various evidences; and Hillerus, ^{f556} makes Tarshish to be the author of the Celtae, that is, of the Spanish, French, and German nations. The third son of Javan is Kittim, whom Josephus ^{f557} places in the island of Cyprus, a city there

being called Citium, from whence was Zeno the Citian: but rather the people that sprung from him are those whom Homer^{f558} calls Cetii; and are placed by Strabo^{f559} to the west of Cilicia, in the western parts of which are two provinces, mentioned by Ptolemy^{f560}, the one called Cetus, the other Citis: likewise this Kittim seems to be the father both of the Macedonians and the Latines; for Alexander the great is said to come from Cittim, and Perseus king of Macedon is called king of Cittim,

“And it happened, after that Alexander son of Philip, the Macedonian, who came out of the land of Chetiiim, had smitten Darius king of the Persians and Medes, that he reigned in his stead, the first over Greece,” (1 Maccabees 1:1)

“Beside this, how they had discomfited in battle Philip, and Perseus, king of the Citims, with others that lifted up themselves against them, and had overcome them:” (1 Maccabees 8:5)

and Macedonia is sometimes called Macetia, as it is in Gellius^{f561}, which has something of the name of Cittim or Cetim in it; and also the Latines or Romans seem to spring from hence, who may be thought to be meant by Cittim in (~~0024~~ Numbers 24:24) (~~2713~~ Daniel 11:30) and Eusebius says the Citians are a people from whom came the Sabines, who also are Romans; and in Latium was a city called Cetia, as says Halicarnassensis^{f562}; and Bochart^{f563} has shown, that Latium and Cethem signify the same, and both have their names from words that signify to hide; “latium a latendo”, and “celhem”, from **طك**, “to hide”, (see ~~2402~~ Jeremiah 2:22) in which sense the word is frequently used in the Arabic language; and Cittim in the Jerusalem Targum is here called Italy. The last son of Javan mentioned is Dodanim; he is omitted by Josephus: his country is by the Targum of Jonathan called Dordania; and by the Jerusalem Targum Dodonia; and he and his posterity are placed by Mr. Mede in part of Peloponnessus and Epirus, in which was the city of Dodona, where were the famous temple and oracle of Jupiter Dodonaeus, under which name this man was worshipped. In (~~13007~~ 1 Chronicles 1:7) he is called Rodanim, and in the Samaritan version here; and the word is by the Septuagint translated Rodians; which have led some to think of the island of Rhodes as the seat, and the inhabitants of it as the posterity of this man; but Bochart^{f564} is of opinion, that they settled in the country now called France, gave the name to the river Rhodanus, and called the adjacent country Rhodanusia, and where formerly was a city of

that name, much about the same tract where now stands Marseilles; but this seems too remote for a son of Javan.

Ver. 5. *By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands*, etc.]

That is, by those sons of Japheth before mentioned; and by “isles” are meant, not countries surrounded with water, for the isles in this sense would not have been sufficient for the posterity of Japheth; nor can it be thought they would leave the continent, where there was room enough for them, and go into islands; and besides must have found it difficult to get there, when shipping and navigation were little known: but it is usual with the Hebrews, of whom Moses, the writer of this history, was, to call all places beyond the Mediterranean sea, or whatsoever they went to by sea, or that were upon the sea coasts, islands, as Greece, Italy, etc. Moreover, the word sometimes signifies countries, as it does in (^{<8220>}Job 22:30

^{<306>}Isaiah 20:6) and so should be rendered here, as it is by some ^{f565}, “the countries of the Gentiles”; so called, because in the times of Moses, and at the writing of this history, those countries were inhabited by Heathens and idolaters, strangers to the true religion: and this division was not made at random, and at the pleasure of a rude company of men, but in an orderly regular manner, with the consent, and by the advice and direction of the principal men of those times; and especially it was directed by the wise providence of the most High, who divided to the nations their inheritance, and set the bounds of the people, (^{<6308>}Deuteronomy 32:8).

everyone after his tongue, after their families, in their nations; this shows, that what is said concerning the division of countries to the sons of Japheth is by way of anticipation; and that, though thus related, was not done till after the confusion of languages, since the partition was made according to the different languages of men; those that were of the same language went and dwelt together, the several nations of them, and the several families in those nations; by which it appears that this was done by consultation, with great care and wisdom, ranging the people according to their tongues; of which nations were formed, and with them were taken the several families they consisted of.

Ver. 6. *And the sons of Ham*, etc.] Next to the sons of Japheth, the sons of Ham are reckoned; these, Josephus ^{f566} says, possessed the land from Syria, and the mountains of Amanus and Lebanon; laying hold on whatever was towards the sea, claiming to themselves the countries unto the ocean, whose names, some of them, are entirely lost, and others so greatly

changed and deflected into other tongues, that they can scarcely be known, and few whose names are preserved entire; and the same observation will hold good of others. Four of the sons of Ham are mentioned,

Cush, and Mizraim, and Phut, and Canaan; the first of these, Cush, Josephus^{f567} says, has suffered no loss by time; for the Ethiopians, whose prince he was, are to this day by themselves, and all in Asia, called Chusaeans: but though this word Cush, as used in Scripture, is generally rendered by us Ethiopia, this must not be understood of Ethiopia in Africa, but in Arabia; and indeed is always to be understood of one part of Arabia, and which was near to the land of Judea; so Moses's wife is called an Ethiopian, when she was an Arabian, or of Midian, (^{<0420>}Numbers 12:1 ^{<0420>}Exodus 2:16,21) and Chusan and Midian are mentioned together, (^{<0420>}Habakkuk 3:7) see ^{<0420>}2 Kings 19:9 ^{<0420>}2 Chronicles 14:9 and Bochart^{f568} has shown, by various arguments, that the land of Cush was Arabia; and so the Targum of Jonathan interprets it here Arabia. There was a city called Cutha in Erac, a province in the country of Babylon^{f569}, where Nimrod the son of Cush settled, which probably was called so from his father's name. Here the eastern writers say^{f570} Abraham was born, and is the same place mentioned in (^{<0420>}2 Kings 17:24,30). The second son of Ham was Mizraim, the same with the Misor of Sanchoniatho^{f571}, and the Menes of Herodotus^{f572}, the first king of Egypt, and the builder of the city of Memphis in Egypt, called by the Turks to this day Mitzir^{f573}. Mitzraim is a name by which Egypt is frequently called in Scripture, and this man was the father of the Egyptians; and because Egypt was inhabited by a son of Ham, it is sometimes called the land of Ham, (^{<0420>}Psalm 105:23,27). The word is of the dual number, and serves to express Egypt by, which was divided into two parts, lower and upper Egypt. Josephus says^{f574}, we call Egypt, Mestres, and all the Egyptians that inhabit it, Mestraeans; so the country is called by Cedrenus^{f575}, Mestre; and Kairo, a principal city in it, is to this day by the Arabians called Al-messer, as Dr. Shaw^{f576} relates. The third son of Ham is Phut; of whom Josephus^{f577} says, that he founded Libya, calling the inhabitants of it after his name, Phuteans; and observes, that there is a river in the country of the Moors of his name; and that many of the Greek historians, who make mention of this river, also make mention of a country adjacent to it, called Phute: mention is made of this river as in Mauritania, both by Pliny^{f578} and Ptolemy^{f579} and by the latter of a city called Putea: this Phut is the Apollo Pythius of the Heathens, as some think. The last son of Ham is Canaan, the father of the Canaanites, a people

well known in Scripture. Concerning these sons of Ham, there is a famous fragment of Eupolemus preserved in Eusebius^{f580}; and is this;

“the Babylonians say, that the first was Belus, called Cronus or Saturn (that is, Noah), and of him was begotten another Belus and Chanaan (it should be read Cham), and he (i.e. Ham) begat Chanaan, the father of the Phoenicians; and of him another son, Chus, was begotten, whom the Greeks call Asbolos, the father of the Ethiopians, and the brother of Mestram, the father of the Egyptians.”

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Cush*, etc.] The first born of Ham, who had five sons, next mentioned, besides Nimrod, spoken of afterwards by himself:

Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah, and Raamah, and Sabtechah; the first of these is Seba, the founder of the Sabaeans, according to Josephus^{f581}, a people seated in Arabia Deserta, which seem to be the Sabaeans brought from the wilderness, (^{f582}Ezekiel 23:42) and very probably the same that plundered Job of his cattle, (^{f583}Job 1:14,15). The second son is Havilah, who, as Josephus^{f582} says, was the father of the Evilaeanes, now called Getuli; but the posterity of Havilah seem to be the same whom Strabo^{f583} calls Chaulotaeans, and whom he speaks of along with the Nabataeans and Agraeans, a people near Arabia Felix; and by Pliny^{f584} they are called Chavelaeans, and whom he speaks of as Arabians, and places them to the east of the Arabian Scenites. The third son is Sabtah; from him, Josephus^{f585} says, came the Sabathenes, who, by the Greeks, are called Astabari; the posterity of this man seemed to have settled in some part of Arabia Felix, since Ptolemy^{f586} makes mention of Sabbathath as the metropolis of that country, called by Pliny^{f587} Sabotale, or rather Sabota, as it should be read; Ptolemy places another city in this country he calls Saphtha, which seems to have its name from this man. The fourth son is Raamah or Ragmas, as Josephus calls^{f588} him, from whom sprung the Ragmaeans he says; and most of the ancients call him Rhegmah, the letter [being pronounced as a “G”, as in Gaza and Gomorrah: his posterity were also seated in Arabia Felix, near the Persian Gulf, where Ptolemy^{f589} places the city Rhegama, or as it is in the Greek text, Regma. The fifth son is Sabtechah, whom some make to be the father of a people in the same country, Arabia Felix, near the Persian Gulf, called Sachalitae; but Dr. Wells^{f590} thinks, that the descendants of this man might be from him regularly enough styled at first by the Greeks, Sabtaceni, which name might be afterwards softened into

Saraceni, by which name it is well known the people of the northern parts of Arabia, where he places the descendants of this man, were formerly denominated; though Bochart^{f591} carries them into Carmania in Persia, there being a short cut over the straits of the Persian Gulf, out of Arabia thither, where he finds a city called Samydace, and a river, Samydachus, which he thinks may come from Sabtecha, the letters “B” and “M” being frequently changed, as Berodach is called Merodach, and Abana, Amana, and so in other names.

And the sons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan; no account is given of any of the posterity of the other sons of Cush, only of this his fourth son Raamah, who is said to have two sons; the first is called Sheba, from whom came the Sabaeans, according to Josephus^{f592}; not the Sabaeans before mentioned in Arabia Deserta, but those in Arabia Felix, where Pomponius Mela^{f593} and Strabo^{f594} seat a people called Sabaeans, and whose country abounded with frankincense, myrrh, and cinnamon; the latter makes mention of a city of theirs called Mariaba, and seems to be the same that is now called Mareb, and formerly Saba^{f595}, very likely from this man. The other son, Dedan, is called by Josephus^{f596} Judadas, whom he makes to be founder of the Judadaeans, a nation of the western Ethiopians; but the posterity of this man most probably settled in Arabia, and yet are to be distinguished from the Dedanim in (²⁰¹³Isaiah 21:13) who were Arabians also, but descended from Dedan the son of Jokshan, a son of Abraham by Keturah, (⁰²³⁸Genesis 25:3) as well as from the inhabitants of Dedan in Edom, (²⁴⁵³Jeremiah 25:23 49:8) it is observed, that near the city Regma before mentioned, on the same coast eastward, was another city called Dedan; and to this day Daden, from which the neighbouring country also takes its name, as Bochart^{f597} has observed, from Barboza, an Italian writer, in his description of the kingdom of Ormus: so that we need not doubt, says Dr. Wells^{f598}, but that here was the settlement of Dedan the son of Raamah or Rhegma, and brother of Sheba.

Ver. 8. *And Cush begat Nimrod,* etc.] Besides the other five sons before mentioned; and probably this was his youngest son, being mentioned last; or however he is reserved to this place, because more was to be spoken of him than of any of the rest. Sir Walter Raleigh^{f599} thinks that Nimrod was begotten by Cush after his other children were become fathers, and of a later time than some of his grandchildren and nephews: and indeed the sons of Raamah, the fourth son of Cush, are taken notice of before him: however, the Arabic writers^{f600} must be wrong, who make him to be the

son of Canaan, whereas it is so clear and express from hence that he was the son of Cush. In the Greek version he is called Nebrod, and by Josephus, Nebrodes, which is a name of Bacchus; and indeed Nimrod is the same with the Bacchus of the Heathens, for Bacchus is no other than Barchus, the son of Cush; and Jacchus, which is another of his names in Jah of Cush, or the god the son of Cush; and it is with respect to his original name Nebrod, or Nebrodes, that Bacchus is represented as clothed with the skin of **νεβρις**, “nebris”, or a young hind, as were also his priests; and so in his name Nimrod there may be an allusion to **armn**, “Nimra”, which, in the Chaldee language, signifies a tiger, and which kind of creatures, with others, he might hunt; tigers drew in the chariot of Bacchus, and he was sometimes clothed with the skin of one; though the name of Nimrod is usually derived from **drm**, “to rebel”, because he was a rebel against God, as is generally said; and because, as Jarchi observes, he caused all the world to rebel against God, by the advice he gave to the generation of the division, or confusion of languages, the builders of Babel: he seems to be the same with Belus, the founder of Babel and of the Babylonian empire, whom Diodorus Siculus^{f601} confounds with Ninus his son:

he began to be a mighty man in the earth: that is, he was the first that formed a plan of government, and brought men into subjection to it; and so the Jews^{f602} make him to be the first king after God; for of the ten kings they speak of in the world, God is the first, and Nimrod the second; and so the Arabic writers^{f603} say, he was the first of the kings that were in the land of Babylon; and that, seeing the figure of a crown in the heaven, he got a golden one made like it, and put it on his head; hence it was commonly reported, that the crown descended to him from heaven; for this refers not to his gigantic stature, as if he was a giant, as the Septuagint render it; or a strong robust man, as Onkelos; nor to his moral character, as the Targum of Jonathan, which is,

“he began to be mighty in sin, and to rebel before the Lord in the earth;”

but to his civil character, as a ruler and governor: he was the first that reduced bodies of people and various cities into one form of government, and became the head of them; either by force and usurpation, or it may be with the consent of the people, through his persuasion of them, and on account of the mighty and heroic actions done by him.

Ver. 9. *He was a mighty hunter before the Lord*, etc.] Which might be literally true; for, from the time of the flood to his days, wild beasts might increase very much, and greatly annoy men who dwelt very likely for the most part in tents scattered up and down in divers places: so that he did a good office in hunting and destroying them. An Arabic writer^{f604}, of some authority in the eastern parts, says, that by hunting he got food sufficient for the builders of Babel, while they were employed therein; and Aben Ezra interprets it in his favour, that he built altars, and the creatures he took in hunting he offered them on them a burnt offering to God. But neither of these is probable; however, it may be observed, that in this way by hunting he arrived to the power and dominion over men he afterwards had; for not only he ingratiated himself into their favour by hunting down and destroying the wild beasts which molested them, but by these means he might gather together a large number of young men, strong and robust, to join him in hunting; whereby they were inured to hardships, and trained up to military exercises, and were taught the way of destroying men as well as beasts; and by whose help and assistance he might arrive to the government he had over men; and hunting, according to Aristotle^{f605}, is a part of the military art, which is to be used both on beasts, and on such men who are made to be ruled, but are not willing; and it appears, from Xenophon^{f606}, that the kings of Persia were fitted for war and government by hunting, and which is still reckoned in many countries a part of royal education. And it may be remarked, that, as Nimrod and Bacchus are the same, as before observed, one of the titles of Bacchus is ζαγρευς, “an hunter”. Cedrenus^{f607} says, that the Assyrians deified Nebrod, or Nimrod, and placed him among the constellations of heaven, and called him Orion; the same first discovered the art of hunting, therefore they joined to Orion the star called the dog star. However, besides his being in a literal sense an hunter, he was in a figurative sense one, a tyrannical ruler and governor of men. The Targum of Jonathan is;

“he was a powerful rebel before the Lord;”

and that of Jerusalem,

“he was powerful in hunting in sin before the Lord,”

and another Jewish writer^{f608} says, he was called a mighty hunter, because he was all his days taking provinces by force, and spoiling others of their substance; and that he was “before the Lord”, truly so, and he seeing and taking notice of it, openly and publicly, and without fear of him, and in a

bold and impudent manner, in despite of him, (see ~~Gen~~ Genesis 6:11 13:13). The Septuagint render it, “against the Lord”; he intended, as Jarchi’s note is, to provoke him to his face:

wherefore it is said; in a proverbial way, when any man is grown mighty and powerful, or is notoriously wicked, or is become a tyrant and an oppressor of the people, that he is

even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. This was a proverb used in the times of Moses, as it is common now with us to call a hunter Nimrod.

Ver. 10. *And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel*, etc.] The city of Babel, or Babylon, which was built by his direction; for though Babylon is by some writers said to be built by Semiramis, the wife of Ninus, and others by Ninus himself, yet the truest account is, that it was built by Belus, the same with Nimrod. Curtius^{f609} says, Semiramis built it; or, as most believe, adds he, Belus, whose royal palace is shown: and Berosus^{f610}, the Chaldean, blames the Greek writers for ascribing it to Semiramis; and Abydenus^{f611}, out of Megasthenes, affirms, that Belus surrounded Babylon with a wall: however, this was the head of the kingdom of Nimrod, as Onkelos renders it, or his chief city, or where he first began to reign. Here he set up his kingdom, which he enlarged and extended afterwards to other places; and from hence it appears, that what is related in this context, concerning Nimrod, is by way of anticipation; for it was not a fact that he was a mighty man, or a powerful prince possessed of a kingdom, until after the building of Babel, and the confusion of languages there; when those that continued on the spot either chose him for their ruler, or he, by power or policy, got the dominion over them. Artapanus^{f612}, an Heathen writer, relates, that the giants which inhabited Babylon being taken away by the gods for their impiety, one of them, Belus, escaped death and dwelt in Babylon, and took up his abode in the tower which he had raised up, and which, from him the founder of it, was called Belus; so that this, as Moses says, was the beginning of his kingdom, together with

Erech, and Accad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar, where the city and tower of Babel were built: for of these four cities, which were all in the same country, did the kingdom of Nimrod consist; they all, either by force or by consent, were brought into subjection to him, and were under one form of government, and is the first kingdom known to be set up in the world. Erech, according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, is

Hades, or Edessa, a city in Mesopotamia; but it is rather thought to be the name with the Aracca of Ptolemy^{f613}, and the Arecha of Marcellinus^{f614}, placed by them both in Susiana; though one would think it should be that city in Chaldea which took its present Arabic name of Erak from Erech: the Arabic writers say^{f615}, when Irac or Erac is absolutely put, it denotes Babylonia, or Chaldea, in the land of Shinar; and they say that Shinar is in Al-Erac. The next city, Accad, according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, is Netzibin, or Nisibis, a city in Mesopotamia; in the Septuagint version it is called Archad; and Ctesias^{f616} relates, that at the Persian Sittace was a river called Argad, which Bochart^{f617} thinks carries in it a manifest trace of this name; and observes, from Strabo^{f618}, that that part of Babylon nearest to Susa was called Sitacena. And the other city, Calneh, according to the above Targums, is Ctesiphon, and is generally thought to be the place intended, and was a town upon the Tigris, near to Seleucia in Babylon; it was first called Chalone, and its name was changed to Ctesiphon by Pacorus, king of the Persians. It is in (~~2309~~ Isaiah 10:9) called Calno, and by the Septuagint version there the Chalane, which adds,

“where the tower was built;”

and from whence the country called the Chalonitis by Pliny^{f619} had its name, the chief city of which was Ctesiphon; and who says^{f620} Chalonitis is joined with Ctesiphon. Thus far goes the account of Nimrod; and, though no mention is made of his death, yet some writers are not silent about it. Abulpharagius^{f621}, an Arabic writer, says he died in the tower of Babel, it being blown down by stormy winds; the Jewish writers say^{f622} he was killed by Esau for the sake of his coat, which was Adam’s, and came to Noah, and from him to Ham, and so to Nimrod. When he began his reign, and how long he reigned, is not certain; we have only some fabulous accounts: according to Berosus^{f623}, he began to reign one hundred and thirty one years after the flood, and reigned fifty six years, and then disappeared, being translated by the gods: and, indeed, the authors of the Universal History place the beginning of his reign in the year of the flood one hundred and thirty one, and thirty years after the dispersion at Babylon^{f624}; and who relate, that the eastern writers speak of his reign as very long: a Persian writer gives his name a Persian derivation, as if it was Nemurd, that is, “immortal”, on account of his long reign of above one hundred and fifty years: and some of the Mahometan historians say he reigned in Al-Sowad, that is, the “black country”, four hundred years^{f625}.

Ver. 11. *Out of that land went forth Ashur*, etc.] It is a question whether Ashur is the name of a man or of a country; some take it in the latter sense, and render the words, “and out of that land he went forth into Assyria”; so Onkelos; and in this way go Junius and Tremellius, Piscator, Bochart, Cocceius, and others, and the margin of our Bible, and interpret it of Nimrod; and the Targum of Jonathan is express for him, which is this:

“out of that land went forth Nimrod, and reigned in Assyria, because he would not be in the council of the generation of the division, and he left four cities; and the Lord gave him therefore a place (or Assyria), and he built four other cities, Nineveh, etc.”

so Theophilus of Antioch says ^{f626}, that Nebroth (Nimrod) built the same; but then the generality of interpreters which take this way give another and better reason for Nimrod’s going out of Shinar or Babylon into Assyria than the Targumist gives; which is, that not content with his own dominions, and willing to enlarge them, he went out and made war upon Assyria, and seized upon it, and built cities in it, and added them to his former ones; in favour of this sense it is urged, that Moses is speaking of what Nimrod the son of Cush did, of the line of Ham, and not of the sons of Shem, among whom Ashur was; and that it is not probable he should introduce a passage relating to a branch of Shem, when he is professedly writing about that of Ham; nor is it agreeable to the history to speak of what Ashur did, before any mention of his birth, which is in (~~1012~~ Genesis 10:22) nor was it peculiar to him to go out of the land of Shinar, since almost all were dispersed from thence; add to which, that Assyria is called the land of Nimrod, (~~3116~~ Micah 5:6) to which it may be replied, that parentheses of this sort are frequent in Scripture, (see ~~1004~~ 2 Samuel 4:4 ~~1001~~ 1 Kings 10:11,12) besides, it seems appropriate enough, when treating of Nimrod’s dominion and power, in order to show his intolerable tyranny, to remark, that it was such, that Ashur, a son of Shem, could not bear it, and therefore went out from a country he had a right unto; and as for the text in (~~3116~~ Micah 5:6) the land of Nimrod and the land of Assyria are manifestly distinguished from one another: add to this, that, if Nimrod so early made a conquest of Assyria, it would rather have been called by his own name than his uncle’s; and it is allowed by all that the country of Assyria had its name from Ashur, the son of Shem; and who so likely to have founded Nineveh, and other cities, as himself? Besides these, interpreters are obliged to force the text, and insert the particle “into”, which is not in it; and the order and construction of the words are more

natural and agreeable to the original, as in our version and others, which make Ashur the name of a man, than this, which makes it a country: but then it is not agreed on who this Ashur was; some will have him to be of the posterity of Ham, and a son of Nimrod, as Epiphanius^{f627} and Chrysostom^{f628}; but this is not probable, nor can any proof be given of it; Josephus^{f629} is express for it, that Ashur, the son of Shem, built Nineveh, and gave the name of Assyrians to those that were subject to him. The reason of his going out from Shinar, as given by Jarchi, is, when he saw his sons hearkening to Nimrod, and rebelling against the Lord, by building a tower, he went out from them; or it may be, he was drove out by Nimrod by force, or he could not bear his tyrannical government, or live where such a wicked man ruled: and as Nimrod built cities and set up an empire, Ashur did the same in his own defence and that of his posterity:

and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah. The first of these cities, Nineveh, the Greeks commonly call Ninus, is placed by Strabo^{f630} in Atyria, the Chaldee name of Assyria, who generally suppose it had its name from Ninus, whom Diodorus Siculus^{f631} makes the first king of the Assyrians, and to whom he ascribes the building of this city; and who, one would think, should be Ashur, and that Ninus was another name of him, or however by which he went among the Greeks; and so this city was called after him; or rather it had its name from the beauty of it, the word signifying a beautiful habitation, as Cocceius^{f632} and Hillerus^{f633} give the etymology of it; or perhaps, when it was first built by him, it had another name, but afterwards was called Nineveh, from Ninus, who lived many years after him, who might repair, adorn, and beautify it. It was destroyed by the Medes and Babylonians, as foretold by Nahum, and it is difficult now to say where it stood; the place where it is supposed to have been is now called Mosul; of which place Rauwolff^{f634} says, who was there in 1574, that

“there are some very good buildings and streets in it, and it is pretty large, but very ill provided with walls and ditches;--besides this, I also saw, (says he,) just without the town, a little hill, that was almost quite dug through, and inhabited by poor people, where I saw them several times creep in and out as pismires in ant hills: in this place, or thereabouts, stood formerly the potent town of Nineveh, built by Ashur, which was the metropolis of Assyria;--at this time there is nothing of antiquities to be seen in it, save only the fort that lieth upon the hill, and some few villages, which the

inhabitants say did also belong to it in former days. This town lieth on the confines of Armenia, in a large plain.”

The next city, Rehoboth, signifies “streets”, and so it is rendered in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; and, because in the Chaldee language streets are called “Beritha”, Bochart ^{f635} thinks that this Rehoboth is the city which Ptolemy ^{f636} calls BIRTHA, on the west of Tigris, at the mouth of the river Lycus, though he places it by Euphrates; wherefore it should rather be Oroba, he places at the river Tigris ^{f637}, near to Nineveh also. The last city, Calah, or Calach, was a principal city in the country, by Ptolemy ^{f638} called Calacine, and by Strabo ^{f639} Calachene, and mentioned by both along with Adiabene, a country in Assyria.

Ver. 12. *And Resen, between Nineveh and Calah*, etc.] This was another city built by Ashur, situated between those two cities mentioned: the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call it Talsar, or Thalassar, (see ^{<2372>}Isaiah 37:12) The conjecture of Bochart ^{f640} is more probable, that it is the Larissa of Xenophon, situated on the Tigris; though Junius thinks it is either Bassora, or Belcina, which Ptolemy ^{f641} places on the Tigris, near Nineveh:

the same is a great city: which Jarchi interprets of Nineveh, called a great city, and was indeed one, being sixty miles in circumference, (Jon 1:2 3:3) but the construction of the words carries it to Resen, which might be the greatest city when first built; and, if understood of Larissa, was a great city, the walls of it being one hundred feet high, and the breadth twenty five, and the compass of it eight miles. Benjamin of Tudela says ^{f642}, that in his time Resen was called Gehidagan, and was a great city, in which were 5000 Israelites; but according to Schmidt, this refers to all the cities in a coalition, Nineveh, Rehoboth, Calah, and Resen, which all made that great city Nineveh; or were a Tetropolis, as Tripoli was anciently three cities, built by the joint interest of the Aradians, Sidonians, and Tyrians, as Diodorus Siculus ^{f643} relates.

Ver. 13. *And Mizraim begat Ludim*, etc.] Mizraim was the second son of Ham, of whom (see Gill on “^{<0106>}Genesis 10:6”). Ludim he is said to beget, the word being plural, is not the name of a man, but of his posterity; and the sense is, that Mizraim begat the father of the Ludim, whose name very probably was Lud, which name is preserved in (^{<2369>}Isaiah 66:19). These Ludim are the same with the Lydians, (^{<2409>}Jeremiah 46:9) and whose country is called Lydia, (^{<2505>}Ezekiel 30:5) but to be distinguished from

Lydia in Asia Minor, and the Lydians there who sprung from Lud, a son of Shem, (^{<1112>}Genesis 10:22) for, as these sprung from Mizraim, the founder of Egypt, they must be somewhere thereabout; and Bochart ^{f644} has proved, by various arguments, that they are the Ethiopians in Africa, now called Abyssines, whose country lies to the south of Egypt, a people formerly famous for archery, as Lud and the Lydians are said to be, (^{<266>}Isaiah 66:19 ^{<2410>}Jeremiah 46:9) and whoever reads the accounts Diodorus Siculus ^{f645} gives of the Egyptians and Ethiopians, will easily discern a likeness between them, and that the one sprung from the other; both deifying their kings; showing a like carefulness about their funerals; both using hieroglyphics; having the like order of priests, who used shaving; and circumcision was common to them both, as Herodotus observes ^{f646}:

and Ananzim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim: the name of the father of the Anamim very probably was Anam, though we have no account of him elsewhere: according to Hillerus ^{f647}, the Anamim were called so from the pastoral life they led; and, by a transposition of letters, were the same with the Maeonians, who inhabited that tract of land in Asia which was washed by the river Maeonia, or Maeander, and bordered on Lydia; but, as these were the descendants of Mizraim, they must be sought for somewhere about Egypt: much better therefore does Mr. Broughton ^{f648} take them to be the Nubians and Numidians, which were near both Egypt and Ethiopia; though Bochart ^{f649} seems to be most correct, in making them to be the Ammonians, who, Herodotus says, were a colony of the Egyptians and Ethiopians; these lived about Ammon and Nasamonitis, and in that part of Lybia in which the temple of Jupiter Ammon stood, and are the Nomades, that lived a pastoral life; and Bochart ^{f650} thinks they are called Anamim, from Anam, which in the Arabic language, signifies a “sheep”, because they fed sheep, and lived upon them, and clothed themselves with their skins. The word Lehabim, the name of another people from Mizraim, signifies “flames”; and were so called, as Jarchi observes, because their faces were like flames, (see ^{<2318>}Isaiah 13:8) burnt with the heat of the sun, living near the torrid zone; and therefore could not be the Lycians, as Hillerus ^{f651} thinks, the inhabitants of a country in Asia, between Caria and Pamphylia, formerly called Lycia, now Aidimelli, which he observes abounds with places that have their names from fire and flames, as Mount Chimaera, the cities Hephaestium, Myra, Lemyra, Habessus, Telmessus, Balbura, and Sirbis; but these were too far from Egypt, near which it is more probable the Lehabim were, and seem to be the same with the Lubim, which came

with Shishak out of Egypt to invade Judea, (^{<412B>}2 Chronicles 12:3) and who were called Lybians, (^{<241D>}Jeremiah 46:9) and their country Lybia, (^{<331B>}Ezekiel 30:5) of which Leo Africanus ^{f652} says, that it is a desert, dry and sandy, having neither fountains nor springs; which was near Egypt as well as Ethiopia, with which it is joined in the above place, (see ^{<412D>}Acts 2:10). The word Naphtuhim, the name of another people that sprung from Mizraim, according to Hillerus ^{f653}, signifies “open”; and he thinks they are the Pamphylians, who used to admit promiscuously all into their ports and towns, which were open to all strangers, and even robbers, for the sake of commerce; but, as these were a people in lesser Asia, they cannot be the people here meant. Bochart ^{f654} observes, from Plutarch, that the Egyptians used to call the extreme parts of a country, and abrupt places and mountains adjoining to the sea, Nephthys, the same with Nephthuah; and therefore he is of opinion, that these Naphtuhim dwelt on the shores of the Mediterranean sea, near Egypt, in Marmorica; not far from whence was the temple of Aptuchus, mentioned by Ptolemy ^{f655}, and placed by him in Cyrene, which carries in it some trace of the name of Naphtuhim; and he suspects that Neptune had his name from hence; he being a Lybian god, as Herodotus ^{f656} says; for none ever used his name before the Lybians, who always honoured him as a god: and it may be observed, from Strabo ^{f657}, that many of the temples of Neptune were on the sea shore. Some

place these people about Memphis, the name of which was Noph, (^{<231B>}Isaiah 19:13) but perhaps it may be much better to place them in the country of Nepate, between Syene and Meroc, where Candace, queen of Ethiopia, had her royal palace in the times of Strabo ^{f658}.

Ver. 14. *And Pathrusim*, etc.] These are other descendants of Mizraim, the name of whose father very probably was Pathros, from whom the country of Pathros was called, and which is not only spoken of in Scripture along with Egypt, but as a part of it, (^{<231B>}Isaiah 11:11) (^{<241D>}Jeremiah 44:1 ^{<331B>}Ezekiel 29:14) and these Pathrusim were doubtless the inhabitants of it; which, as Bochart ^{f659} has shown, is no other than Thebais, or the upper Egypt. Hillerus ^{f660} takes the word to be compounded of *tap* and *myswr*, and renders it the corner of the Rosians, and makes it to be the same with the bay of Issus, where was a colony of Egypt, called Cilicians; but the former is more probable.

And Casluhim; these also were the posterity of Mizraim, by another son of his, from whence they had their name: according to Hillerus ^{f661}, they are

the Solymi, a people near the Lycians and Pisidians, that came out of Egypt, and settled in those parts; but it is much more likely that they were, as Junius ^{f662} observes, the inhabitants of Casiotis, a country mentioned by Ptolemy ^{f663} in lower Egypt, at the entrance of it, where stood Mount Casius: but Bochart ^{f664} is of opinion that they are the Colchi, the inhabitants of the country now called Mingrelia, and which, though at a distance from Egypt, the ancient inhabitants came from thence, as appears from several ancient authors of good credit, as the above learned writer shows.

Out of whom came Philistim, or the Philistines, a people often spoken of in Scripture: these sprung from the Casluhim, or were a branch of that people; according to Ben Melech they sprung both from them and from the Pathrusim; for Jarchi says they changed wives with one another, and so the Philistines sprung from them both; or these were a colony that departed from them, and settled elsewhere, as the Philistines did in the land of Canaan, from whence that part of it which they inhabited was called Palestine: and, if the Casluhim dwelt in Casiotis, at the entrance of Egypt, as before observed, they lay near the land of Canaan, and could easily pass into it. Some think this clause refers not to what goes before, but to what follows after,

and Caphtorim, and read the whole verse thus: “and Pathrusim, and Casluhim, and Caphtorim, out of whom came Philistim”; that is, they came out of the Caphtorim. What has led to such a transposition of the words in the text is (^{<1917>}Amos 9:7) “and the Philistines from Caphtor”: but though they are said to be brought from a place called Caphtor, yet did not spring from the Caphtorim: to me it rather seems, that the two latter were brothers, and both sprung from the Casluhim; since the words may be rendered without a parenthesis: “and Caluhim, out of whom came Philistim and Caphtorim”; though perhaps it may be best of all to consider the two last as the same, and the words may be read, “out of whom came Philistim, even”, or that is, “the Caphtorim”; for the Philistines, in the times of Jeremiah, are said to be the remnant of the country of Caphtor, (^{<2470>}Jeremiah 47:4) and as in Amos the Philistines are said to come out of Caphtor, in (^{<8123>}Deuteronomy 2:23) they are called Caphtorim, that came out of Caphtor, who destroyed the Avim, which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, or Gaza, afterwards a principal city of the Philistines: for then, and not before their settlement in the land of Canaan, were they so called; for the word Philistim signifies strangers, people of another country; and

the Septuagint version always so renders the word: their true original name seems to be Caphtorim. Bochart^{f665} indeed will have the Caphtorim to be the Cappadocians, that dwelt near Colchis, about Trapezunt, where he finds a place called Side, which in Greek signifies a pomegranate, as Caphtor does in Hebrew; and so Hillerus^{f666} takes it for a name of the Cappadocians, who inhabited **rwth tpk** “Cappath Hor”, or the side of Mount Hor, or **rwth Pk**, the side of Mount Taurus; and in this they both follow the Jewish Targumists, who everywhere render Caphtorim by Cappadocians, as the three Targums do here, and Caphtor by Cappadocia, and as Jonathan on (~~18123~~ Deuteronomy 2:23 ~~24704~~ Jeremiah 47:4 ~~3097~~ Amos 9:7) but then thereby they understood a people and place in Egypt, even Damietta, the same they suppose with Pelusium; for other Jewish writers say^{f667}, Caphutkia, or Cappadocia, is Caphtor, and in the Arabic language Damietta: so Benjamin of Tudela says^{f668}, in two days I came to Damietta, this is Caphtor; and it seems pretty plain that Caphtor must be some place in Egypt, as Coptus, or some other, and that the Caphtorim, or Philistines, were originally Egyptians, since they descended from Mizraim.

Ver. 15. *And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn*, etc.] Canaan is the fourth son of Ham; the posterity of Phut, his third son, are omitted: the firstborn of Canaan was Sidon, from whom the city of Sidon had its name, being either built by himself, who called it after his own name, or by some of his posterity, who called it so in memory of their ancestor: it was a very ancient city, more ancient than Tyre, for that was built by the Sidonians; Homer makes mention of it, but not of Tyre: it is now called Said, as it was in the times of Benjamin of Tudela^{f669}. Justin^{f670} says it had its name from the plenty of fish on its coasts; but, since Canaan had a son of this name, it was no doubt so called from him

And Heth; the father of the Hittites, who dwelt about Hebron, on the south of the land of Canaan; for when Sarah died, the sons of Heth were in possession of it, (~~02312~~ Genesis 23:2,3) of this race were the Anakim, or giants, drove out from hence by Caleb, (~~04132~~ Numbers 13:22 ~~06153~~ Joshua 15:13,14) and these Hittites became terrible to men in later times, as appears from (~~17006~~ 2 Kings 7:6) hence **htj** signifies to terrify, affright, and throw into a consternation.

Ver. 16. *And the Jebusite*, etc.] Who had their name from Jebus, a third son of Canaan, and from whom Jerusalem was called Jebus, (~~07900~~ Judges 19:10) and where his posterity continued to dwell when the land of Canaan

was possessed by the Israelites; for they were so strong and powerful, that the men of Judah could not drive them out from thence, and here they remained until the times of David, who dispossessed them of it, (~~656~~ Joshua 15:63 ~~1016~~ 2 Samuel 5:6-8). There is an island near Spain, formerly called Ebusus, now Ibissa, where was one of the colonies of the Phoenicians, in which, Bochart^{f671} observes, the name of the Jebusites is thought to remain.

And the Emorite; so called from Emor, the fourth son of Canaan, commonly called the Amorite, a people so strong and mighty, that they are compared to cedars for height, and to oaks for strength, (~~319~~ Amos 2:9) they dwelt both on this and the other side Jordan: Sihon, one of their kings, made war on the king of Moab, and took all his country from him unto Arnon, (~~025~~ Numbers 21:26) and in the times of Joshua there were several kings of the Amorites, which dwelt on the side of Jordan westward, (~~081~~ Joshua 5:1) hence it may be Amor, in the Arabic tongue signifying to command, and Emir, a commander.

And the Gergasite; the same with the Gergesene in (~~088~~ Matthew 8:28) who, in the times of Christ, lived about Gerasa, or Gadara: a Jewish writer^{f672} says, that when they left their country to Israel, being forced to it by Joshua, they went into a country which to this day is called Gurgestan.

Ver. 17. *And the Hivite*, etc.] These dwelt in Hermon, a part of Mount Lebanon from Mount Baal Hermon unto the entering in of Hamath, (~~013~~ Joshua 11:3 ~~088~~ Judges 3:3) to the east of the land of Canaan; hence they were sometimes called Kadmonites, or Easterlings, (~~059~~ Genesis 15:19) and are thought to have their name from dwelling in holes and caves like serpents; hence Cadmus the Phoenician, and his wife Hermonia, who seem to have their names from hence, are reported to be turned into serpents, they being Hivites, which this word signifies, as Bochart^{f673} observes.

And the Arkite; the same with the Aruceans, or Arcaeans, Josephus^{f674} speaks of in Phoenicia about Sidon, and from whom the city Arce had its name, which he places in Lebanon; and is mentioned by Menander^{f675} as revolting to the king of Assyria, with Sidon and old Tyre; and which is reckoned by Ptolemy^{f676} a city of Phoenicia, and placed by him near old Byblus; and hence Bothart^{f677} thinks Venus had the name of Venus Architis, said by Macrobius^{f678} to be worshipped by the Assyrians and Phoenicians.

And the Sinite: either the inhabitants of the wilderness of Sin, who dwell in the northern part of the desert of Arabia, or the Pelusiotae, as Bochart ^{f679} thinks, the inhabitants of Pelusium, which was called Sin, (^{<2305>}Ezekiel 30:15) the former being its Greek name, the latter its Chaldee or Syriac name, and both signify “clay”, it being a clayey place; but Canaan or Phoenicia seems not to have reached so far; Jerom speaks of a city not far from Arca called Sin, where rather these people may be thought to dwell.

Ver. 18. *And the Arvadite*, etc.] The inhabitants of Arvad, or Aradus, an island in the Phoenician sea; it is mentioned with Sidon, (^{<2378>}Ezekiel 27:8) so Josephus says ^{f680}, the Arudaeans possessed the island Aradus: it is about a league distant from the shore; Strabo ^{f681} says it is twenty furlongs from land, and about seven in circumference, and is said to be built by the Sidonians; it is now, as Mr. Maundrel ^{f682} says, by the Turks called Ru-ad, or, as Dr. Shaw says ^{f683}, Rou-wadde; (see Gill on “^{<2378>}Ezekiel 27:8”).

And the Zemarite; who perhaps built and inhabited Simyra, a place mentioned by Pliny ^{f684}, not far from Lebanon, and along with Marathos, and Antarados, which lay on the continent, right against the island Aradus, or Arvad, and near the country of the Aradians. Strabo ^{f685} makes mention of a place called Taxymira, which Casaubon observes should be Ximyra, or Simyra; and Mela ^{f686} speaks of the castle of Simyra as in Phoenicia. There was a city called Zemaraim in the tribe of Benjamin, (^{<1682>}Joshua 18:22) which Bishop Patrick suggests, and Ainsworth before him, that Zemar, the son of Canaan, might be the founder of; and there is also a mountain of the same name in Mount Ephraim, (^{<4130>}2 Chronicles 13:4).

And the Hamathite: who dwelt in Amathine, as Josephus ^{f687}, and was in his time called by the inhabitants Amathe; but the Macedonians called it, from one of their race, Epiphania, which seems to have been the country called Amathite, He removed from Jerusalem, and met them in the land of Amathis: for he gave them no respite to enter his country. (1 Maccabees 12:25)

there was another Hamath, called Antiochia, but cannot be meant, since Hamath was the northern border of the land of Israel, then called the entrance of Hamath, which border was pretty near to Epiphania, but not so far as Antioch; this is the Amathus of Syria, twice mentioned by Herodotus, as Hillerus ^{f688} observes: but both Reland ^{f689} and Vitringa ^{f690} are of opinion, that the Hamath so often mentioned in Scripture, which doubtless had its name from the Hamathite, is neither Antiochia nor

Epiphania, but the city Emesa, or Emissa, which lay below Epiphania, upon the Orontes, nearer Damascus and the land of Canaan; and Hamath is mentioned with Damascus and Arpad, or Arvad, (²³⁰⁹Isaiah 10:9) (²⁴⁰²Jeremiah 49:23) and, according to (^{2307/6}Ezekiel 47:16,17 48:1). Hamath must lie between Damascus and the Mediterranean sea.

And afterwards were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad; not only these eleven, but two more which are not mentioned, the Canaanites properly so called, and the Perizzites; these families at first dwelt in one place, or within narrow limits; but, as they increased, they spread themselves further every way, and in process of time possessed all the country from Idumea and Palestine to the mouth of the Orontes, and which they held about seven hundred years, when five of these families, with the two other above mentioned, were cast out of the land for their sins, and to make way for the people of Israel.

Ver. 19. *And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon*, etc.] This is to be understood, not of the Canaanites, properly so called, but of them in general; and is a description of the bounds of the land of Canaan, as possessed by the people of Israel: the northern or north west border of it was Sidon, (see ⁰¹⁰⁵Genesis 10:15) and is to be understood of the country which reached from that city towards the east almost as far as Jordan:

as thou comest from Gerar unto Gaza; two cities of the Philistines, well known in Scripture, the former for being the place where Abraham and Isaac sometimes sojourned, and the latter for Samson's exploits in it; these were the southern or south west border of the land of Canaan:

as thou goest unto Sodom and Gomorrah, and Admah and Zeboim; four cities destroyed by fire from heaven, as is after related in this book; these lay to the south or south east part of the land:

even unto Lashah; which, according to the Targum of Jonathan, is Callirrhoe, a place famous for hot waters, which run into the Dead sea, and who in this is followed by Jerom; but since it was not in the southern part of Judea, as Lashah was, Bochart proposes ^{f691}Lusa, as being more likely to be the place, a city of the Arabs, which Ptolemy ^{f692}puts in the midway between the Mediterranean and the Red sea; but this is objected to by Reland ^{f693}, since the southern borders of the land of Canaan were from the extremity of the Dead sea unto the Mediterranean sea, from which Lusa

was at a great distance: the Samaritan version of this verse is very different from the Hebrew, and is this,

“and the border of the Canaanites was from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates, and unto the hinder sea:”

i.e. the western or Mediterranean.

Ver. 20. *These are the sons of Ham*, etc.] His sons and grandsons, which some reckon to be thirty, others thirty one, if the Philistines are taken in:

after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, [and] in their nations: families of the same language joined together and dwelt in the same country, (see Gill on “⁴⁰⁰⁵Genesis 10:5”) all Africa and a considerable part of Asia were possessed by the four sons of Ham and their posterity; Mizraim had Egypt, and Phut all the rest of Africa; and Cush and Canaan had a large portion in Asia.

Ver. 21. *Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber*, etc.] And for the sake of those Shem is particularly said to be the father of, is this genealogy given, and indeed the whole book of Genesis wrote: Eber was the great-grandson of Shem, and is here spoken of by anticipation, and Shem is called not the father of either of his immediate sons, but of the posterity of this man; because the Hebrews sprung from him in his line, among whom the church of God and the true religion were preserved, and from whom the Messiah was to come, as he did: the word Eber, Jarchi interprets, “beyond the river, Euphrates” or “Tigris”, or both, as describing the seat of the posterity of Shem; but as this too much straitens them, since they inhabited on both sides, Dr. Hyde ^{f694} has shown that the word used may refer to both, to those beyond these rivers, and to those on this side; (see ⁴⁰²⁴Numbers 24:24)

the brother of Japheth the elder; he was the brother of Ham too, but he is not mentioned because of the behaviour towards his father, and because of the curse that was upon him and his; but Shem’s relation to Japheth is expressed to show that they were alike in their disposition; and it may be to signify, that in times to come their posterity would unite in spiritual things, which has been fulfilled already in part, and will be more fully by the coalition of the Jews, the posterity of Shem, and of the Gentiles, the posterity of Japheth, in the Christian church state: and from hence we learn that Japheth was the eldest of Noah’s sons, though some render the words, “the elder brother of Japheth” ^{f695}; and so make Shem to be the eldest; but

as this is contrary to the accents, so to the history: for Noah was five hundred years old when he began to beget sons, (^{<0052>}Genesis 5:32) he was six hundred when he went into the ark, (^{<0071>}Genesis 7:11) two years after the flood Shem begat Arphaxad, when he was one hundred years old, and Noah six hundred and two, (^{<0110>}Genesis 11:10) so that Shem must be born when Noah was five hundred and two years old; and since he begot children, there must be one two years older than Shem, which can be no other than Japheth, since Ham is called his younger son, (^{<0024>}Genesis 9:24).

even to him were [children] born, who are reckoned as follow.

Ver. 22. *The children of Shem*, etc.] Whose names are

Elam and Ashur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram; and who, as Josephus^{f696} says, inhabited Asia, from Euphrates to the Indian ocean: his first born, Elam, was the father of the Elymaeans, from whom sprung the Persians, as the same writer observes, and his posterity are called Elamites, (^{<4210>}Acts 2:10) their country Elam, and is sometimes mentioned with Media, when the Persians and Medes are intended, (^{<2910>}Isaiah 21:2) (^{<4225>}Jeremiah 25:25) see also (^{<2326>}Isaiah 22:6 ^{<3484>}Jeremiah 49:34), etc. in Daniel's time, Shushan, in the province of Elam, was the seat of the kings of Persia: the country of Elymais, so called from this man, is said by Pliny^{f697} to be divided from Susiane by the river Eulaeus, and to join with Persia; and the famous city of Elymais, the metropolis of the country, is placed by Josephus^{f698} in Persia. Ashur, the second son of Shem, gives name to Assyria, a country frequently mentioned in Scripture; and which, according to Ptolemy^{f699}, was bounded on the north by part of Armenia the great, and the mountain Niphates, on the west by Mesopotamia and the river Tigris, on the south by Susiane, and on the east by part of Media. Strabo says^{f700} they call Babylonia, and great part of the country about it, Assyria, in which was Ninus or Nineveh, the chief city of the Assyrian empire; and which was built by Ashur, as Josephus^{f701} affirms, and says he gave the name of Assyrians to his subjects: Arphaxad, the third son of Shem, from him that part of Assyria, which lay northward next to Armenia, was called Arphaxitis, as it is probable that was its original name, though corruptly called by Ptolemy^{f702} Arrapachitis: Josephus says^{f703}, he gave name to the Arphaxadaeans, whom he ruled over, now called Chaldeans; and indeed the name of the Chaldeans may as well be derived from the latter part of Arphaxad's name, **dçk**, "Chashad", as from Chesed, the son of Nahor, and brother of Abraham, as it more commonly is; since the Chaldeans were

called Chasdim before Chesed was born, and were a nation when Abraham came out of Ur, before Chesed could be old or considerable enough to build towns and found a nation; (see ^{<0113>}Genesis 11:31 15:7 22:22) though Bochart treats this as a mere dream, yet he is obliged to have recourse to the usual refuge, that Ur was called Ur of the Chaldees, by anticipation. The fourth son of Shem was Lud, from whom sprung the Lydians, a people of Asia minor, and whose country is called Lydia, including Mysia and Caria, which all lay by the river Maeander; and Lud, in the Phoenician language, signifies bending and crooked, as that river was, being full of windings and turnings: some think that the posterity of Lud are carried too far off from those of his brethren, but know not where else to fix them. From Aram, the last son of Shem, sprung the Aramaeans, called by the Greeks Syrians, as Josephus^{f704} observes; and by Homer^{f705} and Hesiod^{f706} **αριμοι**, and so says Strabo^{f707}; some by the Arimi understand the Syrians, now called Arami; and elsewhere^{f708} he observes, that they who are by us called Syrians, are by the Syrians themselves called Aramaeans, and this is the name they give to themselves to this day: the country inhabited by them included Mesopotamia and Syria, and particularly all those places that have the name of Aram added to them, as Padan Aram, and Aram Naharaim (which is Mesopotamia), Aram of Damascus, Aram Zobah, Aram Maacha, and Aram Beth Rehob, (^{<0132>}Genesis 28:2 24:10 ^{<0106>}2 Samuel 8:6 10:6 ^{<0306>}1 Chronicles 19:6) and the title of (^{<0101>}Psalms 60:1): the Septuagint version here adds, “and Cainan”, but without any authority.

Ver. 23. *And the children of Aram*, etc.] The four following persons are called the sons of Shem, (^{<0317>}1 Chronicles 1:17) being his grandsons, which is not unusual in Scripture,

Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Mash: the first of these sons of Aram, Uz, is generally thought to be the founder of Damascus; so Josephus^{f709} says. Usus founded Trachonitis and Damascus, which lies between Palestine and Coelesyria: there was a place called Uz in Idumea, (^{<0101>}Lamentations 4:21) and another in Arabia, where Job dwelt, (^{<0101>}Job 1:1) but neither of them seems to be the seat of this man and his posterity, who, in all probability, settled in Syria: his second son Hul, whom Josephus^{f710} calls Ulus, according to him, founded Armenia; which notion may be strengthened by observing that Cholobotene is reckoned a part of Armenia by Stephanus^{f711}; which is no other than Cholibeth, that is, the house or seat of Chol, the same with Hul; and there are several places in Armenia, as appears from Ptolemy^{f712}, which begin with Chol or Col, as Cholus, Cholua, Choluata,

Cholima, Colsa, Colana, Colchis: but perhaps it may be better to place him in Syria, in the deserts of Palmyrene, as Junius and Grotius; since among the cities of Palmyrene, there is one called Cholle, according to Ptolemy ^{f713}. Gether, the third son, is made by Josephus ^{f714} to be the father of the Bactrians; but these were too far off to come from this man, and were not in the lot of Shem: Bochart ^{f715} finds the river Getri, which the Greeks call Centrites, between Armenia and the Carduchi, whereabout, he conjectures, might be the seat of this man; but perhaps it may be more probable, with Grotius and Junius, to place him in Coelesyria, where are the city Gindarus of Ptolemy ^{f716}, and a people called Gindareni, by Pliny ^{f717}; though Bishop Patrick thinks it probable that Gadara, the chief city of Peraea, placed by Ptolemy ^{f718} in the Decapolis of Coelesyria, had its name from this man: Mr. Broughton derives Atergate and Derceto, names of a Syrian goddess, from him, which was worshipped at Hierapolis in Coelesyria, as Pliny says ^{f719}. The last of the sons of Aram, Mash, is called Meshech, in (~~<BIB>~~1 Chronicles 1:17) and here the Septuagint version calls him Masoch; his posterity are supposed to settle in Armenia, about the mountain Masius, thought to be the same with Ararat, and which the Armenians call Masis; perhaps the people named Moscheni, mentioned by Pliny ^{f720}, as dwelling near Armenia and Adiabene, might spring from this man.

Ver. 24. *And Arphaxad begat Salah*, etc.] Or Shelach which signifies “a sending forth”; that is, of waters: it is part of the name of Methuselah, given him by his father, as prophetic of the flood, (see ~~<BIB>~~Genesis 5:21) and Arphaxad, who was born two years after the flood, gives this name to his first born, as commemorative of it: according to some, from him are the Susians ^{f721}; and in Susiana is found a city called Sele, by Ptolemy ^{f722}; but this seems not to be a sufficient proof:

and Salah begat Eber; from whom, Josephus ^{f723} says, the Jews were called Hebrews from the beginning; and which, perhaps, is as good a derivation of their name as can be given, and seems to be confirmed by (~~<BIB>~~Numbers 24:24) though some derive it from Abraham’s passing over the rivers in his way from Chaldea into Syria; but be it so, why might not this name be given to Eber, as prophetic of that passage, or of the passage of his posterity over the Euphrates into Canaan, as well as Eber gave to his son Peleg his name, as a prediction of the division of the earth in his time? the Septuagint version of this text inserts a Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah, but is not to be found in any Hebrew copy, nor in the Samaritan, Syriac, and Arabic versions, nor in Josephus, (see ~~<BIB>~~Luke 3:36).

Ver. 25. *And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg,* etc.] Bochart^{f724} thinks, that either Peleg, or one of his posterity, in memory of him, gave the name of Phalga to a town situated on the Euphrates; though the reason of the name, as given by Arrianus, as he himself observes, was because it divided between the two Seleucias, as the reason of Peleg's name was;

for in his days was the earth divided; among the three sons of Noah, and their respective posterities; their language was divided, and that obliged them to divide and separate in bodies which understood one another; hence that age, in which was this event, was usually called by the Jews the age of division; whether this was done about the time of his birth, and so this name was given him to perpetuate the memory of it, or in some after part of his life, and so was given by a spirit of prophecy, is a question: Josephus, Jarchi, and the Jewish writers, generally go the latter way; if it was at the time of his birth, which is the sense of many, then this affair happened in the one hundred and first year after the flood, for in that year Peleg was born, as appears from (^{Gen}Genesis 11:11-16)

and his brother's name was Joktan, whom the Arabs call Cahtan, and claim him as their parent, at least, of their principal tribes; and say he was the first that reigned in Yaman, and put a diadem on his head^{f725}; and there is a city in the territory of Mecca, about seven furlongs or a mile to the south of it, and one station from the Red sea, called Baisath Jektan, the seat of Jektan^{f726}, which manifestly retains his name; and there are a people called Catanitae, placed by Ptolemy^{f727} in Arabia Felix.

Ver. 26. *And Joktan begat Almodad,* etc.] And twelve more mentioned later: the Arabic writers^{f728} say he had thirty one sons by one woman, but all, excepting two, left Arabia, and settled in India; the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“who measured the earth with ropes,”

as if he was the first inventor and practiser of geometry: from him are thought to spring the Allumaeotae, a people whom Ptolemy^{f729} places in Arabia Felix, called so by the Greeks, instead of Almodaei: Mr. Broughton^{f730} sets Eldimaei over against this man's name, as if they were a people that sprung from him; whereas this word is wrongly put in Ptolemy^{f731} for Elymaeans, as it is in the Greek text, a people joining to the Persians:

[and] *Sheleph and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah*: to the first of these, Sheleph, the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“who drew out the water of the rivers;”

his people are supposed by Bochart ^{f732}, to be the Alapeni of Ptolemy ^{f733}, which should be read Salapeni, who were, he says, more remote from the rest, almost as far as the neck of Arabia, and not far from the spring of the river Betius. The next son, Hazarmaveth, or Hasermoth, as in the Vulgate Latin, is thought to give name to a people in Arabia, called by Pliny ^{f734} Chatramotitae, and by Ptolemy Cathramonitae, whose country, Strabo says ^{f735}, produces myrrh; according to Ptolemy ^{f736} they reached from the mountain Climax to the Sabaeans, among whom were a people, called, by Pliny ^{f737}, Atramitae, who inhabited a place of the same name, and which Theophrastus calls Adramyta, which comes nearer the name of this man, and signifies the court or country of death: and in those parts might be places so called, partly from the unwholesomeness of the air, being thick and foggy, and partly from the frankincense which grew there, which was fatal to those that gathered it, and therefore only the king's slaves, and such as were condemned to die, were employed in it, as Bochart ^{f738} has observed from Arrianus; as also because of the multitude of serpents, with which those odoriferous countries abounded, as the same writer relates from Agatharcides and Pliny. The next son of Joktan is Jerah, which signifies the moon, as Hilal does in Arabic; and Alilat with the Arabians, according to Herodotus ^{f739}, is “Urania”, or the moon; hence Bochart ^{f740} thinks, that the Jeracheans, the posterity of Jerah, are the Alilaeans of Diodorus Siculus ^{f741}, and others, a people of the Arabs; and the Arabic geographer, as he observes, makes mention of a people near Mecca called Bene Hilal, or the children of Jerah; and he is of opinion that the island Hieracon, which the Greeks call the island of the Hawks placed by Ptolemy ^{f742}, in Arabia Felix, adjoining to the country which lies upon the Arabian Gulf, is no other than the island of the Jeracheans, the posterity of this man: the Arabs ^{f743} speak of a son of Joktan or Cahtan, they call Jareb, who succeeded his father, which perhaps may be a corruption of Jerah; and another, called by them Jorham.

Ver. 27. *And Hadoram, and Uzal, and Diklah.*] The posterity of Hadoram, from the likeness of the name and sound, might seem to be the Adramitae of Ptolemy ^{f744}, but Bochart ^{f745} thinks they are the Drimati of Pliny ^{f746}, who dwelt in the extreme corner of Arabia, to the east, near the Macae, who

were at the straits of the Persian Gulf; and he observes, that the extreme promontory of that country was called Corodamum, by transposition of the letters “D” and “R”: Uzal gave name to a city which is still so called; for R. Zacuth^{f747} says, the Jews which dwelt in Yaman, the kingdom of Sheba, call Samea, which is the capital of the kingdom of Yaman, Uzal; and who also relates, that there is a place called Hazarmaveth unto this day, of which (see ^{<0106>}Genesis 10:26) the kingdom in which Uzal is said by him to be was the south part of Arabia Felix, as Yaman signifies, from whence came the queen of the south, (^{<0122>}Matthew 12:42) and Uzal or Auzal, as the Arabs pronounce it, is the same the Greeks call Ausar, changing “L” into “R”; hence mention is made by Pliny^{f748} of myrrh of Ausar, in the kingdom of the Gebanites, a people of the Arabs, where was a port by him called Ocila^{f749}, by Ptolemy, Ocelis^{f750}, and by Artemidorus in Strabo, Acila^{f751}, and perhaps was the port of the city Uzal, to the name of which it bears some resemblance: Diklah signifies a palm tree, in the Chaldee or Syriac language, with which kind of trees Arabia abounded, especially the country of the Minaei, as Pliny^{f752} relates; wherefore Bochart^{f753} thinks the posterity of Diklah had their seat among them, rather than at Phaenicon or Diklah, so called from the abundance of palm trees that grew there, which was at the entrance into Arabia Felix at the Red sea, of which Diodorus Siculus^{f754} makes mention; and so Artemidorus in Strabo^{f755} speaks of a place called Posidium, opposite to the Troglodytes, and where the Arabian Gulf ends, where palm trees grew in a wonderful manner, on the fruit of which people lived, where was a Phaenicon, or continued grove of palm trees; and here is placed by Ptolemy^{f756} a village called Phaenicon, the same with Diklah.

Ver. 28. *And Obal, and Abimael, and Sheba.*] The first of these, Obal, or Aubal, as the Arabs pronounce, Bochart^{f757} is obliged to make his posterity pass over the straits of the Arabian Gulf out of Arabia Felix into Arabia Troglodytice; where he finds a bay, called by Pliny^{f758} the Abalite bay, which carries in it some trace of this man’s name, and by Ptolemy^{f759} the Avalite bay; and where was not only an emporium of this name, but a people called Avalites and also Adulites, which Bishop Patrick believes should be read “Abulites”, more agreeably to the name of this man, but Pliny^{f760} speaks of a town of the Adulites also: Abimael is supposed by Bochart^{f761} to be the father of Mali, or the Malitae, as his name may be thought to signify, Theophrastus^{f762} making mention of a place called Mali along with Saba, Adramyta, and Citibaena, in spicy Arabia, which is the

only foundation there is for this conjecture: Sheba gave name to the Sabaeans, a numerous people in Arabia; their country was famous for frankincense; the nations of them, according to Pliny^{f763}, reached both seas, that is, extended from the Arabian to the Persian Gulf; one part of them, as he says^{f764}, was called Atramitae, and the capital of their kingdom Sabota, on a high mountain, eight mansions from which was their frankincense country, called Saba; elsewhere he says^{f765}, their capital was called Sobotale, including sixty temples within its walls; but the royal seat was Mariabe; and so Eratosthenes in Strabo^{f766} says, the metropolis of the Sabaeans was Mariaba, or, as others call it, Merab, and which, it seems, is the same with Saba; for Diodorus Siculus^{f767} and Philostorgius^{f768} say, the metropolis of the Sabaeans is Saba; and which the former represents as built on a mountain, as the Sabota of Pliny is said to be,

Ver. 29. *And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab*, etc.] If several of the sons of Joktan went into India, as the Arabs say, one would be tempted to think that Ophir in India, whither Solomon sent his ships once in three years, had its name from the first of these; (see Gill on “~~Gen~~Genesis 10:26”) but as this would be carrying him too far from the rest of his brethren, who appear to have settled in Arabia, some place must be found for him there; and yet there is none in which there is any likeness of the name, unless Coper can be thought to be, a village in the country of the Cinaedocolpites, on the Arabian Gulf, as in Ptolemy^{f769}, or Ogyris, an island in the same sea, Pliny^{f770} makes mention of the same with the Organa of Ptolemy^{f771}, placed by him on the Sachalite bay; wherefore Bochart^{f772} looks out elsewhere for a seat for this Ophir, or “Oupheir”, as in the Septuagint version, and finding in a fragment of Eupolemus, preserved by Eusebius^{f773}, mention made of the island of Ourphe, which he thinks should be Ouphre, or Uphre, situated in the Red sea, seems willing to have it to be the seat of this man and his posterity, and that it had its name from him; or that their seat was among the Cassanites or Gassandae, the same perhaps with the tribe of Ghassan, Aupher and Chasan signifying much the same, even great abundance and treasure: Havilah, next mentioned, is different from Havilah, the son of Cush, (~~Gen~~Genesis 10:7) and so his country; but it is difficult where to fix him; one would rather think that the Avalite bay, emporium, and people, should take their name from him than from Obal, (~~Gen~~Genesis 10:28) but Bochart^{f774} chooses to place him and his posterity in Chaulan, a country in Arabia Felix, in the extreme part of Cassanitis, near the Sabaeans: and Jobab, the last of Joktan’s sons, was the father of the Jobabites, called by

Ptolemy^{f775} Jobarites, corruptly for Jobabites, as Salmasius and Bochart think; and who are placed by the above geographer near the Sachalites in Arabia Felix, whose country was full of deserts, as Jobab in Arabic signifies, so Bochart^{f776} observes, as the countries above the Sachalite bay were, by which these Jobabites are placed:

all these were the sons of Joktan; the thirteen before mentioned, all which had their dwelling in Arabia or near it, and which is further described in the following verse.

Ver. 30. *And their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Zephar, a mount of the east.*] Mesha, which is thought to be the Muza of Ptolemy and Pliny, was a famous port in the Red sea, frequented by the merchants of Egypt and Ethiopia, from which the Sappharites lay directly eastward; to whose country they used to go for myrrh and frankincense, and the like, of which Saphar was the metropolis, and which was at the foot of Climax, a range of mountains, which perhaps might be formerly called Saphar, from the city at the bottom of it, the same with Zephar here: by inspecting Ptolemy's tables^{f777}, the way from one to the other is easily discerned, where you first meet with Muza, a port in the Red sea, then Ocelis, then the mart Arabia, then Cane, and so on to Sapphar or Sapphara; and so Pliny says^{f778}, there is a third port which is called Muza, which the navigation to India does not put into, only the merchants of frankincense and Arabian odours: the towns in the inland are the royal seat Saphar; and another called Sabe; now the sons of Joktan had their habitations all from this part in the west unto Zephar or Saphar eastward, and those were reckoned the genuine Arabs: Hillerus^{f779} gives a different account of the situation of the children of Joktan, as he thinks, agreeably to these words of Moses; understanding by Kedem, rendered the east, the mountains of Kedem, or the Kedemites, which sprung from Kedem or Kedomah, the youngest son of Ishmael, (^{<02515}Genesis 25:15) and Zephar, the seat of the Sepharites, as between Mesha and Kedem; for, says he, Mesha is not Muza, a mart of the Red sea, but Moscha, a famous port of the Indian sea, of which Arrian and Ptolemy make mention; and from hence the dwelling of the Joktanites was extended, in the way you go through the Sepharites to the mountainous places of Kedem or Cadmus: perhaps nearer the truth may be the Arabic paraphrase of Saadiah^{f780}, which is

“from Mecca till you come to the city of the eastern mountain, or (as in a manuscript) to the eastern city,”

meaning perhaps Medina, situate to the east; so that the sense is, according to this paraphrase, that the sons of Joktan had their dwelling from Mecca to Medina; and so R. Zacuth^{f781} says, Mesha in the Arabic tongue is called Mecca; and it is a point agreed upon by the Arabs that Mesha was one of the most ancient names of Mecca; they believe that all the mountainous part of the region producing frankincense went in the earliest times by the name of Sephar; from whence Golius concludes this tract to be the Mount Zephar of Moses, a strong presumption of the truth of which is that Dhafar, the same with the modern Arabs as the ancient Saphar, is the name of a town in Shihr, the only province in Arabia bearing frankincense on the coast of the Indian ocean^{f782}.

Ver. 31. *These are the sons of Shem*, etc.] His sons, and grandsons, and great grandsons, in all twenty six, no doubt but there were many more, but these are only mentioned; for none of the sons of Elam, Ashur, and Lud, are named, and but one of Arphaxad's, and one of Salah's, and two of Eber's, and none of Peleg's; when it is not to be questioned but they had many, as is certain of Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, and Peleg, (^{<01113}Genesis 11:13-15,17,19)

after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations: from hence sprung various families at first, and these of different languages upon the confusion of Babel, which thenceforward formed different nations, dwelt in different lands; which have been pointed at as near as we can at this distance, and with the little helps and advantages we have: it seems from hence that Shem's posterity were of different languages as well as those of Ham and Japheth.

Ver. 32. *These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations*, etc.] This is the account of their families, from whom the several nations of the earth sprung:

and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood; not immediately, not till they were so increased as to form distinct nations; not till Peleg's time, when the division was made; not until the building of the city and tower of Babel, for unto that time these families were together, and then and not before were they dispersed abroad upon the face of the earth; and by degrees peopled all the known parts of the world, Asia, Africa, and Europe, and no doubt America, though the way of their passage thither is unknown to us; and to this partition of the earth by the three sons of Noah, Pindar^{f783} seems to have respect, when he says,

“according to the ancients, Jupiter and the immortal ones parted the earth;”

and he speaks of one man having three sons, who dwelt separate, the earth being divided into three parts.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 11

This chapter gives an account of the inhabitants of the earth before the confusion of tongues at Babel, of their speech and language, which was one and the same, and of the place where they dwelt, (^{<0110>}Genesis 11:1,2) and of their design to build a city and tower, to make them a name and keep them together, which they put in execution, (^{<0110>}Genesis 11:3,4) of the notice the Lord took of this affair, and of the method he took to put a stop to their designs, by confounding their speech, and dispersing them abroad upon the face of the earth, (^{<0110>}Genesis 11:5-9) then follows a genealogy of Shem's posterity down to Abraham, (^{<0110>}Genesis 11:10-26) and a particular relation is given of Terah, the father of Abraham, and his family, and of his going forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, in order to go into the land of Canaan, and of his death at Haran by the way, (^{<0112>}Genesis 11:27-32).

Ver. 1. *And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech,* etc.] Or had been ^{f784}, before the flood, and from that time to this, and still was, until the confusion took place; the account of which, and the occasion of it, are given in this chapter: by the whole earth is meant the inhabitants of it, (see ^{<2378>}Isaiah 37:18 ^{<1108>}1 Kings 10:24) and so the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases the words,

“and all the generations of the earth were of one language, and of one speech, and of one counsel, for they spoke in the holy tongue in which the world was created at the beginning;”

and to the same purpose the Targum of Jonathan: all the posterity of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, used the same language, though it does not appear that they were all in one counsel or consultation, or of one mind about building a city or tower, which the Targum seems to suggest; for it is not likely that Shem and his sons were in it: nor by “one lip” and “the same words or things” ^{f785}, as these phrases may be rendered, are we to understand the same simplicity of speech and business, and likeness of manners; for it appears there was a difference with respect to these in the immediate sons

of Noah, and it may be supposed to be much more in their remote offspring; nor as if they were all of the same religion, embraced the same doctrines, and spoke the same things; for as idolatry and superstition obtained in the race of Cain before the flood, so Ham and his posterity soon fell into the same, or the like, afterwards: and it may be observed that the same distinction was made of the children of God, and of the children of men, before the confusion and dispersion, as was before the flood, (~~Gen~~^{Gen} Genesis 11:5) from whence it appears they were not in the same sentiments and practice of religion: but this is to be understood of one and the same language, without any diversity of dialects, or without any hard and strange words, not easily understood; and perhaps it was pronounced by the lip and other instruments of speech in the same way; so that there was no difficulty in understanding one another, men, women, and children, all the people in common, princes and peasants, wise and unwise, all spoke the same language and used the same words; and this the Targumists take to be the holy or Hebrew language; and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra, and the Jewish writers in general, and most Christians; though some make a question of it, whether it might not be rather the Syriac, or Chaldee, or Arabic; but there is no need of such a question, since these with the Hebrew are all one and the same language; and no doubt it was the eastern language, without giving it any other name, which now subsists in the above dialects, though not in anyone alone, which was first spoken; though more purely and without the difference of dialects it now consists of, or without the various different inflexions now made in it; for nothing is more reasonable to suppose, than that the language Adam spoke was used by Noah, since Adam lived within one hundred years and a little more of the birth of Noah; and it is not to be questioned but Noah's sons spoke the same language as he did, and their posterity now, which was but little more than one hundred years after the flood: there are various testimonies of Heathens confirming this truth, that originally men spoke but one language; thus Sibylla in Josephus^{f786}, who says,

“when all men were **ομοφωνων**, of the same language, some began to build a most high tower, etc.”

so Abydenus^{f787} an Heathen historian, speaking of the building of the tower of Babel, says,

“at that time men were **ομογλωσσους**, of the same tongue;”

in like manner Hyginus^{f788}, speaking of Phoroneus, the first of mortals, that reigned, says,

“many ages before, men lived without towns and laws, “una lingua loquentes”, speaking one language, under the empire of Jove.”

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east*, etc.] That is, the inhabitants of the whole earth; not Ham and his posterity only, or Nimrod and his company; but as all the sons of Noah and his posterity for a while dwelt together, or at least very near each other, and finding the place where they were too scanty for them, as their several families increased, they set out in a body from the place where they were, to seek for a more convenient one: it seems a little difficult how to interpret this phrase, “from the east”, since if they came from Ararat in Armenia, where the ark rested, as that lay north of Shinar or Babylon, they might rather be said to come from the north than from the east, and rather came to it than from it: so some think the phrase should be rendered, “to the east”^{f789}, or eastward, as in (~~Gen 13:11~~) Genesis 13:11). Jarchi thinks this refers to (~~Gen 10:30~~) Genesis 10:30) “and their dwelling was”, etc. at “the mountain of the east”; from whence he supposes they journeyed, to find out a place that would hold them all, but could find none but Shinar; but then this restrains it to Joktan’s sons, and besides, their dwelling there was not until after the confusion and dispersion. But it is very probable the case was this, that when Noah and his sons came out of the ark, in a little time they betook themselves to their former habitation, from whence they had entered into the ark, namely, to the east of the garden of Eden, where was the appearance of the divine Presence, or Shechinah; and from hence it was that these now journeyed: and so it was as they were passing on,

that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; which the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the land of Babylon; and Hestiaeus^{f790}, a Phoenician historian, calls it Sennaar of Babylon; there are plain traces of this name in the Singara of Ptolemy^{f791} and Pliny^{f792}, the Hebrew letter [being sometimes pronounced as “G”, as in Gaza and Gomorrah; the first of these place a city of this name in Mesopotamia, near the Tigris, and that of the other is reckoned a capital of the Rhetavi, a tribe of the Arabs, near Mesopotamia. This plain was very large, fruitful, and delightful, and therefore judged a fit place for a settlement, where they might have room enough, and which promised them a sufficient sustenance:

and they dwelt there; and provided for their continuance, quickly beginning to build a city and tower, afterwards called Babylon: and that Babylon was built in a large plain is not only here asserted, but is confirmed by Herodotus^{f793}, who says of it, that it lay *εν πεδιω μεγαλω*, in a vast plain, and so Strabo^{f794}; which was no other than the plain of Shinar.

Ver. 3. *And they said one to another, go to*, etc.] Advising, exhorting, stirring up, and encouraging one another to the work proposed, of building a city and tower for their habitation and protection; saying,

let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly; they knew the nature of bricks, and how to make them before: according to Sanchoniatho^{f795}, the brothers of Vulcan, or Tubalcain, before the flood, were the first inventors of them; for he relates, that

“there are some that say that his brothers invented the way of making walls of bricks: he adds, that from the generation of Vulcan came two brothers, who invented the way of mixing straw or stubble with brick clay, and to dry them by the sun, and so found out tiling of houses.”

Now in the plain of Shinar, though it afforded no stones, yet they could dig clay enough to make bricks, and which they proposed to burn thoroughly, that they might be fit for their purpose. According to an eastern tradition^{f796}, they were three years employed in making and burning those bricks, each of which was thirteen cubits long, ten broad, and five thick, and were forty years in building:

and they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar: they could not get stone, which they would have chosen, as more durable; they got the best bricks they could make, and instead of mortar they used slime; or what the Septuagint version calls “asphaltos”, a bitumen, or kind of pitch, of which there was great plenty in that neighbourhood. Herodotus^{f797} speaking of the building of Babylon, uses language very much like the Scripture;

“digging a foss or ditch (says he), the earth which was cast up they formed into bricks, and drawing large ones, they burnt them in furnaces, using for lime or mortar hot asphaltos or bitumen.”

And he observes, that

“Eight days journey from Babylon was another city, called Is, where was a small river of the same name, which ran into the river Euphrates, and with its water were carried many lumps of bitumen, and from hence it was conveyed to the walls of Babylon.”

This city is now called Ait, of which a traveller^{f798} of the last century gives the following account;

“from the ruins of old Babylon we came to a town called Ait, inhabited only with Arabians, but very ruinous; near unto which town is a valley of pitch, very marvellous to behold, and a thing almost incredible wherein are many springs throwing out abundantly a kind of black substance, like unto tar and pitch, which serveth all the countries thereabout to make staunch their barks and boats; everyone of which springs makes a noise like a smith’s forge, which never ceaseth night nor day, and the noise is heard a mile off, swallowing up all weighty things that come upon it; the Moors call it “the mouth of hell.””

Curtius relates^{f799}, that Alexander, in his march to Babylon, came to a city called Mennis, where was a cavern, from whence a fountain threw out a vast quantity of bitumen or pitch; so that, says he, it is plain, that the huge walls of Babylon were daubed with the bitumen of this fountain; and he afterwards speaks of the walls, towers, and houses, being built of brick, and cemented with it; and so Diodorus Siculus says^{f800} from Ctesias, that the walls of Babylon were built of bricks, cemented with bitumen; and not only these, but all Heathen authors that write of Babylon, confirm this; and not only historians, but poets, of which Bochart^{f801} has made a large collection; as well as Josephus^{f802} speaks of it, and this sort of pitch still remains. Rauwolff says^{f803} near the bridge over the Euphrates, where Babylon stood, are several heaps of Babylonian pitch, which is in some places grown so hard, that you may walk over it; but in others, that which hath been lately brought over thither is so soft, that you may see every step you make in it.

Ver. 4. *And they said, go to, let us build us a city and a tower*, etc.] Some Jewish writers^{f804} say, these are the words of Nimrod to his people; but it is a question whether he was now born, or if he was, must be too young to be at the head of such a body of people; but they are spoken to one another, or by the principal men among them to the common people, advising and encouraging to such an undertaking. It is generally thought

what led them to it was to secure them from another flood, they might be in fear of; but this seems not likely, since they had the covenant and oath of God, that the earth should never be destroyed by water any more; and besides, had this been the thing in view, they would not have chosen a plain to build on, a plain that lay between two of the greatest rivers, Tigris, and Euphrates, but rather one of the highest mountains and hills they could have found: nor could a building of brick be a sufficient defence against such a force of water, as the waters of the flood were; and besides, but few at most could be preserved at the top of the tower, to which, in such a case, they would have betook themselves. The reason of this building is given in a following clause, as will be observed. Some think by “a city and tower” is meant, by the figure “hendiadis”, one and the same thing, a city with towers; and, according to Ctesias^{f805}, there were two hundred and fifty towers in Babylon: but no doubt the city and tower were two distinct things; or there was one particular tower proposed to be built besides the city, though it might stand in it, or near it, as an acropolis or citadel to it; as it is not unusual in cities to have such, to betake unto in case of danger:

whose top [may reach] unto heaven: not that they imagined such a thing could be literally and strictly done, but that it should be raised exceeding high, like the cities in Canaan, said to be walled up to heaven, (^{f808}Deuteronomy 1:28 9:1) hyperbolically speaking; and such was the tower of Babel, by all accounts, even of Heathens: the Sibyl in Josephus^{f806} calls it a most high tower; and so Abydenus^{f807} reports;

“there are (says he) that say, that the first men that rose out of the earth, proud of their strength and largeness (of their bodies), and thinking themselves greater than the gods, erected a tower of a vast height, near to heaven, where Babylon now is.”

And the temple of Belus, which some take to be the same with this tower, at least was that perfected, and put to such an use, was, according to Ctesias^{f808}, of an immense height, where the Chaldeans made their observations of the stars: however, the tower that was in the middle of it, and which seems plainly to be the same with this, was exceeding high: the account Herodotus^{f809} gives of it is,

“in the midst of the temple a solid tower is built, of a furlong in length, and of as much in breadth; and upon this tower another tower is placed, and another upon that, and so on to eight towers.”

μήκος, the word used by Herodotus, translated “length”, signifies also “height”, and so it is taken here by some; and if so, it looks as if every tower was a furlong high, which makes the whole a mile, which is too extravagant to suppose, though it may denote the height of them all, a furlong, which makes it a very high building. This agrees with Strabo’s account of it, who calls it a pyramid, and says it was a furlong high^{f810}: according to Rauwolff^{f811}, the tower of Babel is still in being; this, says he, we saw still (in 1574), and it is half a league in diameter; but it is so mightily ruined, and low, and so full of vermin, that hath bored holes through it, that one may not come near it for half a mile, but only in two months in the winter, when they come not out of their holes. Another traveller^{f812}, that was in those parts at the beginning of the last century, says,

“now at this day, that which remaineth is called the remnant of the tower of Babel; there standing as much as is a quarter of a mile in compass, and as high as the stone work of Paul’s steeple in London--the bricks are three quarters of a yard in length, and a quarter in thickness, and between every course of bricks there lieth a course of mats, made of canes and palm tree leaves, so fresh as if they had been laid within one year.”

Not to take notice of the extravagant account of the eastern writers, who say the tower was 5533 fathoms high^{f813}; and others, beyond all belief, make it 10,000 fathoms, or twelve miles high^{f814}; and they say the builders were forty years in building it: their design in it follows,

and let us make us a name; which some render “a sign”^{f815}, and suppose it to be a signal set upon the top of the tower, which served as a beacon, by the sight of which they might be preserved from straying in the open plains with their flocks, or return again when they had strayed. Others take it to be an idol proposed to be set upon the top of the tower; and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem intimate as if the tower was built for religious worship, paraphrasing the words,

“let us build in the midst of it a temple of worship on the top of it, and let us put a sword into his (the idol’s) hand.”

And it is the conjecture of Dr. Tennison, in his book of idolatry, that this tower was consecrated by the builders of it to the sun, as the cause of drying up the waters of the deluge: but the sense is, that they proposed by

erecting such an edifice to spread their fame, and perpetuate their name to the latest posterity, that hereby it might be known, that at such a time, and in such a place, were such a body of people, even all the inhabitants of the world; and all of them the sons of one man, as Ben Gersom observes; so that as long as this tower stood, they would be had in remembrance, it being called after their names; just as the Egyptian kings afterwards built their pyramids, perhaps for a like reason; and in which the end of neither have been answered, it not being known who were by name concerned therein, (see ^{<991>}Psalm 49:11) though a late learned writer ^{f816} thinks, that by making a name is meant choosing a chief or captain, which was proposed by them; and that the person they pitched upon was Nimrod, in which sense the word he supposes is used, (^{<1237>}2 Samuel 23:17-19) but what has been observed at the beginning of this note may be objected to it; though Berosus ^{f817} says, that Nimrod came with his people into the plain of Sannaar, where he marked out a city, and founded the largest tower, in the year of deliverance from the waters of the flood one hundred and thirty one, and reigned fifty six years; and carried the tower to the height and size of mountains, “for a sign” and “monument”, that the people of Babylon were the first in the world, and ought to be called the kingdom of kingdoms; which last clause agrees with the sense given:

lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth: which they seemed to have some notion of, and feared would be their case, liking better to be together than to separate, and therefore were careful to avoid a dispersion; it being some way or other signified to them, that it was the will of God they should divide into colonies, and settle in different parts, that so the whole earth might be inhabited; or Noah, or some others, had proposed a division of the earth among them, each to take his part, which they did not care to hearken to; and therefore, to prevent such a separation, proposed the above scheme, and pursued it.

Ver. 5. *And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower,* etc.] Not locally or visibly, being immense, omnipresent, and invisible; nor in order to see and take notice of what he otherwise could not see from heaven, for he is omniscient; but this is spoken after the manner of men, and is to be understood of some effects and displays of his power, which were manifest, and showed him to be present: the Targum is,

“and the Lord was revealed to take vengeance on them on account of the business of the city and tower the children of men built.”

This shows the patience and longsuffering of God, that he did not immediately proceed against them, and his wisdom and justice in taking cognizance of the affair, and inquiring into it; examining the truth and reality of things before he passed judgment and took measures to hinder them in the execution of their design; all which must be understood agreeably to the divine Majesty, and as accommodated to the capacities of men, and as an instruction to them in judging matters they have a concern in:

which the children of men builded; or were building, for they had not finished their building, at least not the city, as appears from (^{Gen 11:8}Genesis 11:8). These were either the whole body of the people, under the general appellation of “the children of men”: or else a part of them, distinguished by this character from the “sons of God”, who were truly religious; by which it seems that Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah, and others, were not concerned in this affair, who though they might come with the rest unto Shinar, yet when they understood their design, refused to join with them in it; so that it was only the carnal and irreligious part of them, who very probably were by far the majority, and therefore there was no overruling their debates, and stopping them in their works, that were the builders; and these might be the posterity of Ham in general, with others of Shem and Japheth mixed with them. Josephus^{f818} makes Nimrod to be the head of them, which is not likely, as before observed.

Ver. 6. *And the Lord said*, etc.] Not to the angels, as Aben Ezra, but rather to the Son and Spirit, or within himself:

behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; which some think is spoken ironically; but I see no reason why it may not be understood seriously, that the people who were concerned in this building were unanimous, not only in their religious principles, such as they were, as Aben Ezra, but in their counsel, purpose, and design in building; they went on with great concord, harmony, and vigour, and being of one language, they understood one another, and so could carry on their work with the greater expedition:

and this they begin to do; to build the city and the tower, and had made considerable progress in it:

and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do; they had prepared bricks, and slime or bitumen, a sufficient quantity

for their use, or could easily come at more if they wanted; and they were not to be prevailed upon to desist from their work, by any advice that the sons of God could give them; they were obstinate and self-willed, and not to be argued with and persuaded to leave off; and there was no power on earth superior to them, to oblige them to it; they could only be restrained from their enterprise, and hindered from executing it, by divine power; and which was judged necessary to exert, as appears by what follows: and the words may be rendered, “shall they not be restrained? etc.” they shall.

Ver. 7. *Go to, let us go down, [and] there confound their language,* etc.]

These words are not spoken to the angels, as the Targum and Aben Ezra; for, as Philo the Jew observes^{f819}, they are said to some as co-workers with God, which angels could not be in this work of confounding the language of men; it being above the power of creatures so to work upon the mind, and on the faculty of speech, as to make such an alteration as was at the confusion of tongues, when men were made to forget their former language, and had another put into their minds, and a faculty of speaking it given; or, however, the first language was so differently inflected and pronounced, that it seemed another, and various; all which could not be done but by him who is almighty, even that Jehovah, Father, Son, and Spirit, said (^{Gen 11:8}Genesis 11:8) to confound man’s language; and the first of these speaks to the other two, with whom he consulted about doing it, and with whom he did it. Not that every man had a new and distinct language given him, for then there could have been no society and converse in the world, but one was given to each family; or rather to as many families as constituted a nation or colony, designed for the same place of habitation; how many there were, cannot be said with any certainty. Euphorus, and many other historians^{f820}, say they were seventy five, according to the number of Jacob’s posterity that went down into Egypt; others say seventy two: the Jewish writers generally agree with the Targum of Jonathan in making them seventy, according to the number of the posterity of Noah’s sons, recorded in the preceding chapter; but several of them spoke the same language, as Ashur, Arphaxad, and Aram, spoke the Chaldee or Syriac language; the sons of Canaan one and the same language; and the thirteen sons of Joktan the Arabic language; Javari and Elisha the Greek language; so that, as Bochart^{f821} observes, scarce thirty of the seventy will remain distinct: and it is an observation of Dr. Lightfoot^{f822} not to be despised, that

“the fifteen named in (~~4116~~ Acts 2:5-11) were enough to confound the work (at Babel), and they may very well be supposed to have been the whole number.”

The end to be answered it was,

that they may not understand one another's speech; or “hear”^{f823}, that is, so as to understand; the words were so changed, and so differently pronounced from what they had used to hear, that though they heard the sound, they could not tell the meaning of them: hence, as Jarchi observes, when one asked for a brick, another brought him clay or slime, on which he rose up against him, and dashed his brains out.

Ver. 8. *So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence, upon the face of all the earth*, etc.] Hence that which they feared came upon them, and what they were so careful to guard against befell them, occasioned by those measures they took to secure themselves from it; for not being able to understand one another, they left off their design, and as many as spoke the same language joined together, and so parted in bodies; some went one way, and some another, and settled in different places, until at length, by degrees, the whole world was peopled by them, which was the will of God should be done, and was brought about in this way. The Heathen writers themselves ascribe this dispersion to a divine Being, as well as speaking different tongues. Eupolemus^{f824} says, that first the city of Babylon was built by those that were saved from the flood, who were giants; and then they built tower, so much spoken of in history, which falling by the power of God, the giants were “scattered throughout the whole earth”. One would think this writer, by his language, must have read this account of Moses: some of them say the fall of the tower was by storms and tempests raised by the gods. So the Sybil in Josephus^{f825} says,

“the gods sending winds overthrew the tower, and gave to every one his own speech, and hence the city came to be called Babylon.”

Agreeably to which Abydenus^{f826}, an Assyrian writer, relates, that

“the winds being raised by the gods overthrew the mechanism (the tower) upon them (the builders of it), and out of the ruins of it was the city called Babylon, when those who were of the same language, from the gods spoke a different one, and of various sounds.”

And so Hestiaeus^{f827}, a Phoenician writer, speaking of those who came to Sennaar or Shinar of Babylon, says, from thence they were scattered; and, because of the diversity of language, formed colonies everywhere, and everyone seized on that land which offered to him. These writers indeed seem to be mistaken as to the destruction of the tower, and that by tempestuous winds; otherwise they agree with Moses in the confusion of languages, and scattering of the people at the tower of Babel: in what year this was done is not certain; it was in the days of Peleg, who was born in the year one hundred and one after the flood; and if it was at the time of his birth, as many are of opinion, both Jews^{f828} and Christians, it must be in the above year; but the phrase used does not determine that: the eastern writers^{f829} say, that it was in the fortieth year of the life of Peleg, and then it must be in the year after the flood one hundred and forty one; but others, and which is the common opinion of the Jewish chronologers^{f830}, say it was at the end of Peleg's days; and whereas he lived two hundred and thirty nine years, this must happen in the year three hundred and forty after the flood, and so it was ten years, as they observe, before the death of Noah, and when Abraham was forty eight years of age. But of this see more in Buxtorf's dissertation concerning the confusion of the Hebrew language. It follows here,

and they left off to build the city; it seems they had finished the tower, but not the city, and therefore are only said to leave off building that; though the Samaritan and Septuagint versions add, "and the tower"; for not understanding one another, they were not able to go on with their work, for when they asked for one thing, as before observed out of Jarchi, they had another brought them; which so enraged them, that the Targum of Jonathan says they killed one another; and, say some Jewish writers^{f831}, they fought one with another upon this occasion, until half the world fell by the sword.

Ver. 9. *Therefore is the name of it called Babel*, etc.] The name of the city mentioned, and the tower also, which signifies "confusion", as the Septuagint version renders it; and so Josephus^{f832} says the Hebrews call confusion "Babel": perhaps this name was given it by the sons of Eber, or it might be a common name preserved in all languages, as some are; and though the first builders desisted from going on with building it, yet it seems that afterwards Nimrod went on with it, and completed it, and made it the beginning of his kingdom, or his capital city; and perhaps he and his

family might continue after the confusion and dispersion somewhere near unto it, (see ^{CH10}Genesis 10:10). The reason of its name is given,

because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth; and therefore it is false what is said by some, that the above city had its name from Babylon, the son of Belus:

and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and that it might be taken notice of and observed as a very wonderful and important event. These Babel builders were an emblem of self-righteous persons, who, as those were, are the greater part of the world, and, under different forms of religion, are all upon the same foot of a covenant of works; they all speak the same language; and indeed all men naturally do, declaring and seeking for justification by their own works; and journey from the east, depart from Christ, one of whose names is the east, or rising sun; they turn their backs on him and his righteousness; build on a plain, not on a rock or mountain, but on the sandy bottom of their own works, in a land of Shinar, or shaking, on a tottering foundation; their view is to get themselves a name, to be seen of men, and be applauded for their work sake, and that they might reach heaven, and get to it this way; but the issue of all is confusion and scattering abroad; for upon the foot of their own righteousness they can never enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Ver. 10. *These are the generations of Shem,* etc.] Or a genealogy of the posterity of Shem; not of all of them, only of those of the line which led to Abraham, by which might appear the true line in which the Messiah from Adam through Abraham sprung:

Shem was one hundred years old, and begat Arphexad two years after the flood; by which it is pretty plain that he was younger than Japheth; (see Gill on “^{CH21}Genesis 10:21”) of Arphaxad his son, (see Gill on “^{CH22}Genesis 10:22”).

Ver. 11. *And Shem lived, after he begat Arphaxad, five hundred years,* etc.] So that his whole age was six hundred years, and therefore must live to the times of Abraham, and even throughout the life of that patriarch, or near the end of it; and if he was the same with Melchizedek, as is the general opinion of the Jews, and is embraced by many Christians, they had an interview with each other:

and begat sons and daughters; of whom we have no account, because the Messiah did not spring from them; the design of this genealogy being to carry down his direct line from Shem to Abraham: it is to be observed, that in the account of the patriarchs, and their children after the flood, it is not added as before the flood, “and he died”, their lives being long, that remark is made; but the lives of these being shorter, and gradually decreasing, it is omitted. An Arabic writer^{f833} says, that Shem died in the month Elul, on a Friday, at the close of the year of the world 2758. A Jewish writer^{f834} says, he died in the fifteenth year of Jacob, and that he saw twelve generations; according to Bishop Usher, he died A. M. 2158.

Ver. 12. *And Arphaxad lived thirty five years, and begat Salah.*]

Arphaxad is the first on record that had a son born to him so early; of Salah, (see Gill on “~~Q102~~Genesis 10:24”).

Ver. 13. *And Arphaxad lived, after he begat Salah, four hundred and three years*, etc.] In all four hundred and thirty eight; the Vulgate Latin wrongly reads, three hundred and three:

and begat sons and daughters; not mentioned by name: he died, as the above Arabic writer^{f835} says, in the month Nisan, A. M. 2696; and a Jewish writer^{f836} says he died in the forty eighth year of Isaac, and who also says^{f837}, that in his days they began to build the city of Babel.

Ver. 14. *And Salah lived thirty years, and begat Eber.*] He had a son born to him five years sooner than his father had; of Eber, (see Gill on “~~Q102~~Genesis 10:25”).

Ver. 15. *And Salah lived, after he begat Eber, four hundred and three years*, etc.] In all four hundred and thirty three:

and begat sons and daughters; of whom also there is no other account: the same Arabic writer^{f838} says, he died in the month, Adar, which is called Barhamath, at the close of A. M. 2950; and the Jewish chronologer^{f839} says, he died in the fourteenth year of Jacob.

Ver. 16. *And Eber lived thirty four years, and begat Peleg.*] Of Peleg, (see Gill on “~~Q102~~Genesis 10:25”).

Ver. 17. *And Eber lived, after he begat Peleg, four hundred and thirty years*, etc.] All the years of his life were four hundred and sixty four:

and he begat sons and daughters; one of which is elsewhere mentioned, whose name is Joktan, (^{<CHES>}Genesis 10:25) according to the above Jewish writer ^{f840}, he died in the seventy ninth year of Jacob.

Ver. 18. *And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu.*] Or Ragau, as he is called in the Septuagint version, the letter [being pronounced as a “G”, as in Gaza and Gomorrah: he is supposed to give name to a large plain called Ragau, near Assyria, about Tigris and Euphrates,

“Even in those days king Nabuchodonosor made war with king Arphaxad in the great plain, which is the plain in the borders of Ragau.” (Judith 1:5)

and to Ragis in Media,

“In that day Tobit remembered the money which he had committed to Gabael in Rages of Media,” (Tobit 4:1)

where Strabo ^{f841} makes mention of a city of the same name.

Ver. 19. *And Peleg lived, after he begat Reu, two hundred and nine years,* etc.] In all two hundred and thirty nine, little more than half the age of his father:

and begat sons and daughters; but not named the Arabic writers ^{f842} say he begat Melchizedek the priest, and that he died in the month Elul, A. M. 3126; and a Jewish writer ^{f843} says he died in the forty eighth year of Abraham.

Ver. 20. *And Reu lived thirty two years, and begat Serug.*] He is thought to give name to a city called Sarug, which, according to the Arabic geographer ^{f844}, was near Charrae, or Haran, in Chaldea; and another Arabic writer ^{f845} speaks of a city called to this day <Arabic> “Sarug”, which he places in Mesopotamia.

Ver. 21. *And Reu lived, after he begat Sarug, two hundred and seven years,* etc.] So that the whole of his life was two hundred and thirty nine years, the exact age of his father: in his days various kingdoms arose; according to the Arabic writer ^{f846}, in the one hundred and thirtieth year of his life began Nimrod to reign at Babylon, the first king that reigned on earth: and according to the Jewish writers ^{f847}, in his days began the kingdom of Egypt, which continued to the times of Octavian; and the kingdom of the Bohemians, the metropolis of which was Prague, and the

kingdom of the Amazons, which continued to the times of Alexander: in his time also, the Arabic writers ^{f848} say, idolatry prevailed, the worship of the sun, moon, and stars, and other things; and images of men and women were made by the Babylonians and Egyptians, and worshipped by them:

and he begat sons and daughters of whom no account is given; according to a Jewish writer ^{f849}, he died in the seventy fifth year of Abraham.

Ver. 22. *And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor.*] The grandfather of Abraham, one of the same name was Abraham's brother, (^{Gen}Genesis 11:26).

Ver. 23. *And Serug lived, after he begat Nahor, two hundred years,* etc.]. The years of his life were two hundred and thirty:

and he begat sons and daughters; nowhere else mentioned: he died, according to the above Jewish writer ^{f850}, in the one hundredth year of Abraham, and in his days, according to the eastern writers ^{f851}, idolatry began, and the kingdom of Damascus was set up ^{f852}; and Samirus, king of the Chaldeans, invented weights and measures, weaving silk, and the art of dying ^{f853}.

Ver. 24. *And Nahor lived twenty nine years, and begat Terah.*] The father of Abraham, and the first of the patriarchs of this line of Shem that fell off from the true religion to idolatry.

Ver. 25. *And Nahor lived, after he begat Terah, one hundred and nineteen years,* etc.] In all one hundred and forty eight years; so sensibly did the lives of the patriarchs decrease: in the days of Nahor, the Arabic writers ^{f854} say, was a great earthquake, which had never been observed before; idolaters increasing and offering their children to demons, God raised a tempest like a deluge, which broke their images and destroyed their temples in Arabia, and covered them in heaps of sand, which remained to the days of those writers, as they affirm: in his days it is also said Spain, Portugal, and Arragon were founded ^{f855}:

and begat sons and daughters; of whom no other account is given: he died, as a Jewish chronologer says ^{f856}, in the one hundred and tenth year of Abraham.

Ver. 26. *And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.*] Abram, though named first, does not appear to be the eldest, but

rather Haran; nay, it seems pretty plain that Abram was not born until the one hundred and thirtieth year of his father's life, for Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died, (^{<0113>}Genesis 11:32) and Abram was but seventy five years of age when he went out of Haran to Canaan, (^{<0124>}Genesis 12:4) and that was as soon as his father died there; and so that if seventy five are taken out two hundred and five, there will remain one hundred and thirty, in which year and not before Abram must be born: the wife of Terah, of whom Abram was born, according to the Jewish writers ^{f857}, her name was Chamtelaah, the daughter of Carnebo, or as others ^{f858} call her, Amthalai; but by the Arabic writers ^{f859} she is called Juna: the Jews say ^{f860} Terah was the first that found out the way of coining money, and that in his days men began to worship images, and that he was the chief of their priests, but afterwards repented; and that he was an idolater appears from (^{<0242>}Joshua 24:2).

Ver. 27. *Now these are the generations of Terah*, etc.] Or the genealogy of his posterity, which is a very short one; for it only gives an account of his three sons as before,

Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran: and of three grand children, Lot, Milcah, and Iscah, the children of Haran; and chiefly for the sake of Abram it is given, and indeed the above genealogy of Shem, which ends with him; and of whom and whose posterity the remaining part of this book of Genesis treats:

and Haran begat Lot: of whom we have some further account in (^{<0133>}Genesis 13:1-14:24 19:1-38).

Ver. 28. *And Haran died before his father Terah*, etc.] In his father's presence, before his face, in his life time, as Jarchi; he seeing him, as Aben Ezra: it does not so much respect the time of his death, that it was before his father, though that is true, as the place where he died, his father being present there at the time this was;

in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees; Ur, which Ben Melech renders a valley, was the place of his birth, as it was of Abram's; it was in Mesopotamia, that part of it next to Assyria being called the land of the Chaldeans; hence these are spoken of as the same by Stephen, (^{<0402>}Acts 7:2,4) mention is made by Pliny ^{f861}, of a place in those parts called Ura, which seems to be the same with this: Eupolemus ^{f862} says,

“that Abram was born at Camarine, a city of Babylon, some call Urie, and is interpreted a city of the Chaldeans;”

now Camarine is from **rmk**, “Camar”, to heat or burn, and Ur signifies fire, so that both words are of the same signification: Josephus ^{f863} says, that Haran died among the Chaldeans, in a city called Ur of the Chaldees, where, he adds, his grave is shown to this day: the Jews ^{f864} have a fable concerning the death of Haran; they say that Terah was not only an idolater, but a maker and seller of images; and that one day going abroad, he left his son Abraham in the shop to sell them, who, during his father’s absence, broke them all to pieces, except one; upon which, when Terah returned and found what was done, he had him before Nimrod, who ordered him to be cast into a burning furnace, and he should see whether the God he worshipped would come and save him; and while he was in it, they asked his brother Haran in whom he believed? he answered, if Abraham overcomes, he would believe in his God, but if not, in Nimrod; wherefore they cast him into the furnace, and he was burnt; and with respect to this it is said, “and Haran died before the face of Terah his father”; but Abraham came out safe before the eyes of them all.

Ver. 29. *And Abram and Nahor took them wives*, etc.] Very probably after the death of their elder brother Haran, whose daughters they married, at least one of them did, and some think both;

the name of Abraham’s wife was Sarai: it is not said whose daughter she was, unless she is the same with Iscah, the daughter of Haran, and so had two names, Iscah her name before marriage, Sarai after it, Abram calling her “my mistress”, as “Sarai” signifies, as she called him my lord: so the Targum of Jonathan, Iscah, this is Sarai; in like manner Jarchi, Baal Hatturim, and other Jewish writers ^{f865}, take them to be the same; but according to (⁻⁰⁰¹²Genesis 20:12) Sarai should be the daughter of Terah, the father of Abraham, by another woman; and so the Arabic writers ^{f866} say,

“the mother of Abraham died, whose name was Juna; and Terah married another wife, whose name was Lahazib; she bore him Sarah, whom Abraham afterwards married:”

[and] the name of Nahor’s wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah: so that Nahor married his brother’s daughter, which sort of marriage was then allowed of, as formerly that of own brothers and sisters, but afterwards was strictly forbidden in the

Levitical law: this account is given of Nahor's wife, as Aben Ezra observes, to show the pedigree of Rebekah, Rachel, and Leah: some think, as before observed, that Abram married the other daughter of his brother Haran, Iscah, and that she is the same with Sarai; and indeed, without supposing that, it is difficult to conceive for what reason this should be observed, that Haran, the father of Milcah, was also the father of Iscah; and if Sarai is not Iscah, no account is given by Moses of her descent, which may seem strange; and it can hardly be thought he would omit it, when it must be so agreeable to his people to know from whom they descended, both by the father's and mother's side.

Ver. 30. *But Sarai was barren; she had no child.*] Aben Ezra observes, there are some that say that Abraham was impotent, and not Sarai barren; the very reverse of the Scriptures; but as he rightly adds, his son Ishmael and his sons by Keturah show the contrary, (see ^{<0140>}Genesis 15:2 16:1).

Ver. 31. *And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife,* etc.] Many words are made use of in describing Lot and Sarai, and yet still we are left pretty much in the dark who Sarai was; for, as Aben Ezra observes, if she was the sister of Abram and daughter of Terah, the Scripture would have said, Terah took Abram his son and Sarai his daughter, and wife of Abram; and if she was the sister of Lot, it would have said, and Sarai the daughter of his son, as it does of Lot:

and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; that is, as Jarchi interprets it, Terah and Abram went forth with Lot and Sarai, or "with them" may mean with Nahor and Milcah: for Josephus ^{f867} says, that all went into Charan of Mesopotamia, the whole family of Terah; and the Arabic historian ^{f868} is express for it,

"Terah went out from Chorasán, and with him Abram, Nahor, Lot, his children, and their wives, and he went to Charan, where he dwelt:"

and it is certain, if Nahor and his wife did not set out with them, they followed them afterwards, for Haran was the city of Nahor, where his family in later times dwelt, (see ^{<0140>}Genesis 14:10,15 27:43 29:4,5) what moved Terah to depart from Ur of the Chaldees seems to be the call of God to Abram, which, though after related, was previous to this; and he acquainting his father Terah with it, he listened to it, being now convinced

of his idolatry and converted from it, and readily obeyed the divine will; and being the father of Abram, is represented as the head of the family, as he was, and their leader in this transaction; who encouraged their departure from the idolatrous country in which they were, and set out with them to seek another, where they might more freely and safely worship the true God. Though Josephus^{f869} represents it in this light, that Terah hating the country of Chaldea, because of the mourning of Haran, he and all his went out from thence:

and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there; which Josephus^{f870} calls Charan of Mesopotamia, and yet Stephen speaks of Abraham being in Mesopotamia before he dwelt in Charan; but then Mesopotamia is to be taken both in a more general and a more limited sense; in general, it took in Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and in the eastern part of it was Ur of the Chaldees, and when Abram came from thence to Haran, he came into Mesopotamia, strictly so called. Stephen calls it Charran it is by Herodian^{f871} called *καρραι*, by Ptolemy^{f872} Carrae, by Pliny^{f873} Carra, a city famous in Lucan^{f874} for the slaughter of Crassus, by whom it is called an Assyrian city. Benjamin of Tudela^{f875} speaks of it as in being in his time, and as two days journey from the entrance into the land of Shinar or Mesopotamia; and says, that in that place where was the house of Abraham, there is no building on it, but the Ishmaelites (the Mahometans) honour the place, and come thither to pray. Rauwolff, who was in this town A. D. 1575, calls it Orpha; his account of it is this^{f876}, that it is a costly city, with a castle situated on the hill very pleasantly; that the town is very pleasant, pretty big, with fortifications well provided; and that some say it was anciently called Haran and Charras: a later traveller^{f877} says, who also calls it Orpha,

“the air of this city is very healthful, and the country fruitful; that it is built four square, the west part standing on the side of a rocky mountain, and the east part tendeth into a spacious valley, replenished with vineyards, orchards, and gardens: the walls are very strong, furnished with great store of artillery, and contain in circuit three English miles, and, for the gallantness of its sight, it was once reckoned the metropolitical seat of Mesopotamia.”

What detained Terah and his family here, when they intended to go further, is not said. Aben Ezra suggests, that the agreeableness of the place to Terah caused him to continue there; but it is very probable he was seized with a disease which obliged them to stay here, and of which he died.

Ver. 32. *And the days of Terah were two hundred years*, etc.] His days are summed up as none of the rest are in this genealogy, that it might be observed; his death being the time of Abram's leaving Chaldea and coming into the land of Canaan, given to him and his seed for an inheritance; (see ~~<400>~~ Acts 7:4,5)

and Terah died in Haran: the Arabic historian ^{f878} says, he died in Haran in the month Elul, in the year of his age two hundred and sixty five; but he gives him sixty years too many: a Jewish chronologer ^{f879} says he died in the thirty fifth year of Isaac. Perhaps he gave the name to this place, where he dwelt a while, in memory of his son Haran, which before might be called by another name, Padanaram, as it seems to be called even after this; (see ~~<1240>~~ Genesis 24:10 25:20 28:2,5,10 29:4,5).

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 12

In this chapter an account is given of the call of Abram to depart from his own country, with a promise of a divine blessing, (^{<0123>}Genesis 12:1-3) of his obedience to it, (^{<0124>}Genesis 12:4,5) of his journey through the land of Canaan, and of the Lord's appearance to him in it, and his promise of it to his seed, and of Abram's building altars in it, and calling on the name of the Lord, (^{<0125>}Genesis 12:6-9) and of a famine there, which occasioned him to go into Egypt, (^{<0126>}Genesis 12:10) where, through fear of being slain, he desired his wife to call herself his sister, (^{<0127>}Genesis 12:11-13) and she being greatly admired by the Egyptians for her beauty, it went well with Abram for her sake, (^{<0128>}Genesis 12:14-16) but the Egyptians were plagued because of her, who, when they understood she was Abram's wife, sent them both away, and all that belonged to them, (^{<0129>}Genesis 12:17-20).

Ver. 1. *Now the Lord had said unto Abram*, etc.] In Ur of the Chaldees, before he came and dwelt in Charran, as seems from (^{<0130>}Acts 7:2) and so Aben Ezra interprets it; but Jarchi and others think, that what follows was said to him in Haran, and so the words may be more literally rendered ^{f880}, “and the Lord said unto Abram”; after the death of Terah, who died in Haran; and indeed it is highly probable there were two appearances of God to Abram, and that the same words, or very near the same, were spoken to him at two several times, first in Ur of the Chaldees, and then in Haran:

get thee out of thy country; the land of Chaldea, and the city of Ur, which was in it, or out of Mesopotamia, in which, when taken in a large sense, were both Ur and Haran; and this country was now become idolatrous, for though it was first inhabited and peopled by the posterity of Shem in the time of Arphaxad, yet these, in process of time, degenerated from the true religion, and fell into idolatry. The same Maimonides ^{f881} calls Zabaeans, in whose faith and religion, he says, Abram was brought up, and who asserted there was no other God but the sun, moon, and stars; and these Zabaeans, as he relates from their books and annals, say of Abram themselves, that he was educated in Cuthia, and dissented from the common people; and asserted, that besides the sun, there was another Creator; to whom they

objected, and so disputes arose among them on this subject: now Abram being convinced of idolatry, is called out from those people, and to have no fellowship with them; it is literally in the Hebrew text ¹⁸⁸², “go to thee out of thy country”; for thy profit and good, as Jarchi interprets it; as it must be to quit all society with such an idolatrous and superstitious people:

and from thy kindred; as Nahor his brother, and his family, who are not mentioned, and seem to be left behind when Terah, Abram, Lot, and Sarai, came out of Ur of the Chaldees; though it looks as if afterwards Nahor did follow them to Haran or Padanaram, which are the same, and where he continued, and therefore is called his city; (see ¹²⁴⁰Genesis 24:10) (¹²⁵⁰Genesis 25:20 28:2,5,10 29:4,5) so with great propriety Abram might be called a second time to leave his kindred as well as his country; and certain it is, Haran, or Padanaram, as well as Ur of the Chaldees, is called by himself his country, and Nahor and his family his kindred, (¹²⁴⁶Genesis 24:4)

and from thy father’s house; or household, his family, which better agrees with the second call at Haran, than with the first at Ur; for, upon the first call, Terah and his family came along with Abram, and therefore this phrase is omitted by Stephen, who speaks of that call, (⁴⁰⁸Acts 7:3) but Terah dying at Haran, his house or family went no further, but continued there with Nahor; only Abram and Lot, upon this second call, went from thence, as the following history makes it appear; and so Abram left, as he was bid, his father’s house and family to go, as it follows:

unto a land that I will show thee; meaning the land of Canaan, though not mentioned, and seems to be omitted for the trial of Abram’s faith; hence the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, (⁸¹⁰⁸Hebrews 11:8) observes, that “he obeyed and went out, not knowing whither he went”; and yet it is said, that, when he and Terah came out of Ur of the Chaldees, “they went forth to go into the land of Canaan”, (¹¹³¹Genesis 11:31) and, when he and Lot went first from Haran, the same is said of them, (¹¹³⁵Genesis 12:5) it is probable the case was this; there was no mention made at first what land he was to go to, and when he prepared for his journey he knew not where he was to go, but afterwards it was revealed to him that Canaan was the land, and therefore set out in order to go thither; and still, though he might know the place by name where he was to go, he might neither know the way to it, nor what sort of country it was for quality or quantity; and therefore God promises to show him the way, and direct his course right unto it, and

give him a view of it, that he might see what sort of a country, and how large it was, that he would give to his posterity. This call of Abram is an emblem of the call of men by the grace of God out of the world, and from among the men of it, and to renounce the things of it, and not be conformed unto it, and to forget their own people and their father's house, and to cleave to the Lord, and follow him whithersoever he directs them.

Ver. 2. *And I will make of thee a great nation*, etc.] In a literal sense, as the people of the Jews were that descended from him, and in a spiritual sense believers in all ages and of all nations, that walk in the steps of the faith of Abram, who are his children, and are blessed with him:

and I will bless thee; not only with temporal blessings, but principally with spiritual ones, since Abram in person had no share of the land of Canaan; even with the adoption of children and friendship with God; with justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, which blessedness came upon him when uncircumcised; with a large measure of faith, and every other grace; with the sanctification of the Spirit, and an increase of it until brought to perfection; and with eternal glory and happiness, a right, title, and meetness for it, and the full possession of it:

and make thy name great; as it was among the Jews his descendants, who boasted of having Abram for their father; and among the several nations of the world; his name is famous in profane history, and is in high esteem with the Mahometans to this day; and especially his name is great and famous, and the memory of him precious among all those who have obtained like precious faith with him, in every age and in every nation:

and thou shalt be a blessing; to all that knew him and conversed with him, they receiving spiritual light and knowledge by means of his instruction, and to all that should hear and read of his faith and piety, being encouraged by his example: or, “shall be blessing”; blessing itself, that is, most blessed, exceedingly blessed; as a very wicked man may be called wickedness itself; as “scelus” for “scelestus” with the Latins; so a good man may be called blessing itself, extremely happy.

Ver. 3. *And I will bless them that bless thee*, etc.] Not the priests only that should bless his children, the children of Israel, as the Targum of Jonathan, but all men of all nations, and of every age, that speak well of him, commend him for his faith and holiness, and tread in his steps, these are blessed with faithful Abraham, (~~ROM~~ Galatians 3:7,9).

And curse him that curseth thee; here is a change of numbers, before the plural, here the singular, denoting, it may be, that many would bless him, and but few curse him, and that every individual person that did curse him should be cursed himself: the Targum of Jonathan wrongly restrains this to Balaam's cursing Abraham's children, and was cursed by God; Maimonides¹⁸⁸³ thinks, there is no doubt to be made of it, that the Zabaeans, the idolatrous people Abram was brought up with, when he contradicted them, loaded him with curses and reproaches; and, because he bore them all patiently for the glory of God, as became him, therefore these words are said; but they, without question, respect future as well as present times, and regard all such, in every age and of every nation, that disapproves of, or rejects and reproaches Abram's God, his faith, his religion, and his people.

And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed; that is, in his seed, as in (⁰²²⁸Genesis 22:18) and which is interpreted of Christ, (⁴⁰²⁵Acts 3:25 ⁴⁰⁰⁸Galatians 3:8,16) meaning not every individual of all the families or nations of the earth; but that as many as believe in Christ, of all nations, are blessed in him; and that whoever of them are blessed, they are blessed and only blessed in him, and that they are blessed for his sake with all spiritual blessings; (see ⁴⁰⁰⁸Ephesians 1:3) such as redemption, justification, remission of sins, sanctification, adoption, and eternal life.

Ver. 4. *So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him*, etc.] Or, "when the Lord had spoken to him", as Cocceius renders the words; when he had called him a second time, even when in Haran, immediately after the death of his father Terah; as soon as ever the words were spoken to him before recorded, he immediately prepared and got all things ready for his journey, and departed from Haran, as he had done before from Ur of the Chaldees:

and Lot went with him; of his own accord, and he only, besides his wife Sarai and his servants, for Terah was dead, and Nahor and his family stayed behind.

And Abram was seventy five years old when he departed out of Haran; by which it appears, as has been observed, that he was not Terah's eldest son, born when he was seventy years of age, (⁰¹¹²⁵Genesis 11:26) for then he must have been at this time, one hundred and thirty five years old, since his father, who was just now dead, lived to be two hundred and five years old, (⁰¹¹³²Genesis 11:32) so that Abram must be born in the one hundred and

thirtieth year of Terah: how many years before this time he was converted from idolatry cannot be said with any certainty; various are the accounts given by the Jewish writers; some say that at three years of age he knew his Creator; others at eight; others thirteen; others more probably when forty; others fifty one; others fifty two; and others say he was sixty years old when he began publicly to assert the unity of God in heaven^{f884}: however, all agree it was before the age here mentioned, as it may well be concluded.

Ver. 5. *And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son,* etc.]

The son of Haran his brother, not against their wills, but with their full consent: Sarai went readily with him, not only as being his wife, and so obliged by the law of marriage and tie of relation, but on the score of religion; and Lot as being a good man, and so willing to go with him, as his near relation too, for the sake of religion.

And all their substance that they had gathered; either in Ur of the Chaldees, or in Haran, and indeed in both; which, as it was their own property, they had a right to take with them, and it was their wisdom so to do, both for the support of their families, and for the service of religion; and it appears from hence that they were not slothful, but industrious persons, and by the blessing of God were succeeded in their employments:

and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; the more excellent part of man being put for the whole; and the meaning is, either that were procreated^{f885}, as some render it, or begotten by them; for, though Abram had no children, Lot had, and possibly some that might be begotten while there; and their servants might have children by their fellow servants, and to which Abram and Lot had a right, and therefore took them with them; or rather it means servants which they had bought with their money there, and so had gotten or obtained them as their own property: some understand it of the proselytes made during their stay there; and no doubt they were as industrious in spreading and propagating the true religion, as in acquiring substance and servants; and to this sense are the several Chaldee paraphrases; that of Onkelos is,

“and the souls which they made subject to the law in Haran;”

the Targums of Jerusalem and Jonathan are,

“and the souls of the proselytes, or which they proselyted in Haran;”

and with this agrees the note of Jarchi,

“which they brought under the wings of the Shechinah; Abram proselyted the men, and Sarai the women;”

though in the literal sense he takes it to be the acquiring of servants and handmaids; there might be of both sorts, both proselytes and servants bought with money, which made up the number of three hundred and eighteen trained servants, (^{<0144>}Genesis 14:14) how long Abram stayed in Haran is not certain, it must be some time, to gather more substance, increase servants, and make proselytes; the Jews ^{f886} generally say he was there five years.

And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came: which last clause is very fitly added, since, when they came out of Ur, they went forth to go into the land of Canaan, (^{<0113>}Genesis 11:31) but they did not then come into it, but stopped by the way at Haran; but now, when they went out from thence, they proceeded on in their journey, and made no stay any where of any length, until they came into the land of Canaan; which is reckoned to be three hundred miles from the one to the other, and by some four hundred to Sichem, and a troublesome way through the deserts of Palmyrene, and over the mountains of Lebanon and Hermon ^{f887}: of Ura, Pliny says ^{f888}, which seems to be the same with Ur, it is a place where, turning to the east, we leave the Palmyrene deserts of Syria, which belong to the city Petra, and the country called Arabia Felix; and, as it was at the northern part of Canaan they entered, they must come over Lebanon, which was the northern border of it.

Ver. 6. *And Abram passed through the land,* etc.] Entering the northern part of it, as appears by his going southward, (^{<0119>}Genesis 12:9) he went on

unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh; the place afterwards called Shechem, from a prince of that name in the times of Jacob; and so it was called when Moses wrote, and therefore, by way of anticipation, calls it so here; it was about the middle of the land of Canaan, and the same with Sychar, a city of Samaria, in the times of Christ, (^{<0145>}John 4:5). Moreh was the name of a man, from whence the plain took its name, which was near Sichem; some render it the oak of Moreh ^{f889}, perhaps the same with that in (^{<0134>}Genesis 35:4) or a grove of oaks of that name; the Syriac and Arabic versions render it the oak of Mamre wrongly.

And the Canaanite [was] then in the land; in that part of the land where they were in Jacob's time, (see ^{f889}Genesis 34:30) this land belonged to the posterity of Shem, but Canaan's offspring seized upon it and held it, as they did in the times of Moses, but were then quickly to be removed from it; but now they were settled in it in Abram's time, which was a trial of his faith, in the promise of it to his seed, as well as it was troublesome and dangerous to be in a country where such wicked and irreligious persons lived.

Ver. 7. *And the Lord appeared unto Abram,* etc.] Perhaps in an human form, and so it was the Son of God; for whenever there was any visible appearance of a divine Person, under the former dispensation, it seems to be always of the essential Word, that was to be incarnate, and who spake with an articulate voice:

and said, unto thy seed will I give this land; the whole of it inhabited by Canaanites and others; and it was for this end chiefly that Abram was called out of Chaldea into Canaan, to be shown the land, and have the grant of it for his posterity:

and there builded an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him: by way of gratitude and thankfulness for his kind and gracious appearance, and for the gift of the land of Canaan to his offspring; for on this altar he no doubt offered sacrifice in a way of thanksgiving, as Noah did when he came out of the ark.

Ver. 8. *And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel,* etc.] As it was afterwards called by Jacob, which before and at this time had the name of Luz, (^{f889}Genesis 28:19) now to the east of this place was a mountain, whither Abram removed his tent from Sichem, which was about twenty miles from it, as Sir Walter Raleigh ^{f890} observes, some say twenty eight ^{f891}:

and pitched his tent; that is, upon the mountain, as before upon the plain, fitly representing the state of the people of God, as sojourners in this world, living like Abram in tents and tabernacles, having no abiding place:

having Bethel on the west, or "on the sea" ^{f892}, the Mediterranean sea, which Aben Ezra calls the Spanish sea, and lay to the west of the land of Canaan:

and Hai on the east; the same which is called “Ai”, and said to be on the east side of Bethel, (^{<0070>}Joshua 7:2) hard by this place, Rauwolff^{f893} says, you shall still find some old ruins of old stones, where first Abraham the patriarch did build a tent, as you read in (^{<0128>}Genesis 12:8) and he says that Bethel is still called to this day Bethisella, and is situated half a league further towards the west, at the foot of the hill, in a very fruitful country:

and there he builded an altar unto the Lord: as he had done at Sichem; for wherever he went he worshipped God, and offered sacrifice unto him:

and called upon the name of the Lord: prayed unto him for fresh mercies, as well as gave thanks for past ones; or, “he called in the name of the Lord”^{f894}, he called upon Jehovah the Father, in the name of his Son, the glorious Mediator, who had appeared unto him, and whose day he saw and was glad.

Ver. 9. *And Abram journeyed*, etc.] He did not stay long in the mountain between Bethel and Hai, but moved from thence, and kept on journeying in the land of Canaan:

going on still toward the south; the southern part of the land of Canaan, which lay nearest Egypt, into which he is said to go next, the occasion of which follows.

Ver. 10. *And there was a famine in the land*, etc.] The land of Canaan, which was a very fruitful country, abounding with all kind of provisions usually; but now there was a scarcity of all; and which was both for the sins of the inhabitants of the land, and for the trial of Abram’s faith, who was brought out of his own country, where was bread enough and to spare, into one in which there was a famine; and this might be a temptation to Abram to return from whence he came, and to slight and despise the country that was given him:

and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; not to dwell there, only till the famine was over; and rightly is he said to go down to Egypt, since that lay lower than the land of Canaan; and his going thither only to sojourn, and with an intention to return again to Canaan, shows the strength of his faith in the promise; and so far was he from going back to his own country, from whence he came, that he went directly the contrary, for Chaldee lay north east of Canaan, and Egypt south west: this country is in the Hebrew text called Mizraim, from the second son of Ham, (see ^{<0106>}Genesis 10:6) it had its name Egypt not from Aegyptus, one of its

kings, as some ^{f895} say, but from the blackish colour of its soil, and also of its river Nile, and of its inhabitants; which colour is by the Greeks called “aegyptios”, from “aegypt”, a vulture, a bird of that colour: it is bounded on the south by the kingdom of Sennar, tributary to the king of Ethiopia, and the cataracts of the Nile; on the north by the Mediterranean sea; on the east by the Arabian Gulf, or Red sea, and the isthmus of Suez; and on the west by a region of Lybia, called Marmorica ^{f896}.

For the famine was grievous in the land; in the land of Canaan, and perhaps nowhere else; God ordering it so in his wise providence, that there should be plenty of food in one land, when there is a scarcity in another, that countries may be helpful to one another: of this famine, and of Abram’s going down to Egypt on account of it, mention is made by Heathen writers; Nicolaus of Damascus says ^{f897}, that Abram came out of Chaldee into Canaan, now called Judea, and a grievous famine being there, and understanding there was plenty in Egypt, he readily went thither, partly to partake of their plenty, and partly to hear what the priests would say of the gods; and Alexander Polyhistor relates, from Eupolemus ^{f898}, that Abram removed from the place of his nativity, Camarine, called by some Urie, and settled in Phoenicia, where being a famine, he went with all his family into Egypt, and dwelt there.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt*, etc.] Just entering into it, having travelled from the mountain between Bethel and Hai, two hundred and forty miles ^{f899}; or when he “caused to come near” ^{f900}, either his camp, as Aben Ezra supplies it, or his tent, or his family, as others:

that he said unto Sarai his wife, behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon; though sixty five years of age, being ten years younger than her husband, (see ^{<0177>}Genesis 17:17) who was now seventy five years old, (^{<0124>}Genesis 12:4) yet might still be a fair woman, having a good complexion and comely features, and having never bore children, and especially she would be reckoned so among the Egyptians, whose women were of a blackish, sallow, swarthy complexion.

Ver. 12. *Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee*, etc.] Who were a lustful people, and whose eyes would soon be fastened upon, and be taken with the beauty of Sarai:

that they shall say, this is his wife; this beautiful woman is such a man's wife:

and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive; so great a regard had they in those times, and even in Heathen countries, to the laws of marriage, that they chose rather to be guilty of murder than of adultery, though a lustful people; and therefore would, as Abram feared, take away his life, that it might be free and lawful for them to marry Sarai.

Ver. 13. *Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister*, etc.] Which though it was not putting a direct lie into her mouth, she being his sister in some sense, as appears from (^{f902}Genesis 20:12) yet it was done to conceal truth, and to deceive the Egyptians, and tended to endanger his wife's chastity, as well as showed great timorousness in him, and distrust of the divine care and protection of him; and upon the whole it must be criminal in him, and shows that the best of men are liable to sin, and the strongest believer to fall, and that a saint may fail in the exercise of that grace for which he is most eminent, as Abram was for his faith, and yet fell into unbelief, and through that into other sins; this he said to his wife, and desired her to say on occasion, when she found it necessary:

that it may be well with me for thy sake; his life spared, as follows:

and my soul shall live because of thee; his life be safe and secure for her sake, being reckoned her brother, whereas he feared it would be in the utmost danger should it be known she was his wife.

Ver. 14. *And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt*, etc.] To the city of Heliopolis; for there it was that Abram had his abode, as Eupolemus^{f901} says, when upon the famine he went into Egypt, and where he conversed with the Egyptian priests, and taught them astrology, and other things belonging to it; and of this descent of Abram into Egypt, and teaching astrology, Artapanus^{f902}, another Heathen writer, speaks; Abram, he says, having learned the science of astrology, went first into Phoenicia and taught it the Phoenicians, and afterwards went into Egypt, and taught it there.

[The] Egyptians beheld the woman, that she was very fair; Abram knew that Sarai was a fair woman; but in the eyes of the Egyptians she was very fair, exceeding fair, they not being used to see very beautiful women.

Ver. 15. *The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh*, etc.] The king of Egypt; so it seems by this, that Abram and Sarai were at the place where the court was kept, which the Arabic writers ^{f903} say was Mesr (or Memphis), the capital of the kingdom. And these princes were the king's courtiers, who taking notice of Sarai, and admiring her beauty, praised her for it to the king, and recommended her to be taken into the number of his wives or concubines, they understanding that she was a single woman and the sister of Abram: and this they did to gratify their king, and gain his favour:

and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house; or palace, as the Jerusalem Targum; his royal palace, as the Targum of Jonathan; very probably into that part of his palace where his women were kept, or to some apartment where she might be purified and prepared for him; and this requiring time, was the means of preserving her from the danger she was exposed unto, (see ^{<778>}Esther 2:8-12). The kingdom of Egypt, according to the Jewish and Arabic writers ^{f904}, was set up in the times of Reu, about three hundred years before Abram was here; its first king was Mizraim, a son of Ham, the same with the Menes of Herodotus; by whom also mention is made of a king of Egypt, whose name was Pheron ^{f905}, which seems to bear some likeness to the name of this king, who by Artapanus ^{f906} is called Pharethone, and whom, he says, Abram taught astrology. It is generally thought that Pharaoh was a common name to the kings of Egypt, and continued to be so to the times of Ezekiel, as Ptolemy was some time after, and as Caesar with the Romans: whether this king was the first of the name is not certain, but probable; according to some ^{f907}, he was one of the Hycsi, or shepherd kings. Mr. Bedford ^{f908} calls him Janias, their fifth king, and this was about A. M. 2084, and before Christ 1920. A Jewish chronologer ^{f909} asserts, he was the first Pharaoh, who was in the times of Abram, and that his name was Totis, or Tutis, as the Arabic writers ^{f910}, one of which ^{f911} says, that in the times of Serug lived Apiphanus king of Egypt (the same with Apophis; who according to Bishop Usher ^{f912} was this Pharaoh); after him was Pharaoh, the son of Sancs, from whom they (the kings of Egypt) were called Pharaohs. The name of Pharaoh is derived by some ^{f913} from [rp, which signifies both to be free, and to revenge; and so kings were called, because free from laws themselves, and were revengers of them that do evil: but it rather seems to come from the Arabic word ^{f914}, which signifies to be above others, and rule over them; and so may be thought to be not the proper name of a man, but an appellative, or

the name of an office; or in other words, a king, (see ^{<0444>}Genesis 41:44) and so it may be always rendered, where it is used, as here, the king's courtiers saw her, and commended her to the king, and she was taken into the king's house; though to this may be objected, that Pharaoh is sometimes called Pharaoh king of Egypt, and then there would be a tautology; wherefore it may be better perhaps to take it in the former sense.

Ver. 16. *And he entreated Abram well for her sake*, etc.] Pharaoh was very complaisant to him, showed him great respect, and bestowed many favours on him on account of Sarai, whom he took to be his sister, and which were done, that he would consent that she might be his wife:

and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels; which were, some at least, if not all, the gifts of Pharaoh to him, or otherwise there seems to be no reason why they should be made mention of here. The Jews say ^{f915}, that Pharaoh, because of the love he had to Sarai, gave to her by writing all his substance, whether silver or gold, or servants or farms, and also the land of Goshen for an inheritance; and therefore the children of Israel dwelt in the land of Goshen, because it was Sarai our mother's, say they.

Ver. 17. *And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues*, etc.] Perhaps with the same sort that Abimelech and his servants were smote with on a like account, (^{<0207>}Genesis 20:17,18). The Jews ^{f916} say they were smitten with ulcers; not only Pharaoh was plagued, but those of his household also, his courtiers and servants, who were accessory to the bringing of Sarai into his house; for all this was

because of Sarai, Abram's wife; or "upon the word of Sarai", ^{f917}, as it may be literally rendered: hence the Jews have a notion, that an angel stood by Sarai with a scourge in his hand, and when Sarai bid him smite Pharaoh, he smote him ^{f918}; but **rbd** signifies not a word only, but thing, matter and business: and so Onkelos renders it here: and the sense is, that Pharaoh and his courtiers were smitten, because of the affair and business of Sarai; because she was taken by them, and detained in Pharaoh's house, and designed to be made his wife or concubine; and thus for evil intentions was this punishment inflicted; so that evil designs, not brought into execution, are punishable; though the word of Sarai may mean what she was bid to say, and did.

Ver. 18. *And Pharaoh called Abram, and said,* etc.] Understanding how it was, that Sarai was his wife, which he came at the knowledge of, either by consulting his priests and diviners, as some say, on account of the plagues inflicted; or rather suspecting they were on the account of Sarai, from the nature of them, sent for her, and questioned her about this affair, who confessed the whole matter to him; unless it can be thought that he was warned of God in a dream, as Abimelech was on a like occasion; however he sent for Abram on what intelligence he had, and justly, though gently, reproved him:

what is this that thou hast done unto me? to impose upon me, and deceive me after this manner, by giving out that Sarai was thy sister, when she is thy wife; by which means I have been led to prepare to take her for my wife, and have brought plagues upon myself and family? and thus he resented it as an injury done him, as he well might:

why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? when he first took her into his house, and no doubt Abram was present then, and very often afterwards was in company with Pharaoh, and conversed with him, having respect for him for the sake of Sarai, he took to be his sister, and yet would never tell him she was his wife.

Ver. 19. *Why saidst thou, she is my sister?* etc.] He could not imagine what could be the reason of it, what could induce him to give out such a story as this; for he knew not the fears that Abram was possessed with, which led him to it, and which might be in a good measure groundless, or else Pharaoh might have guessed at the reason; or this he said as being willing to be satisfied of the true one;

so I might have taken her to me to wife; ignorantly, and without any scruple, supposing her to have been free; and so should have been guilty of taking another man's wife, and of depriving him of her; which with him were crimes he did not choose to commit, though polygamy was not accounted any by him, for no doubt he had a wife or wives when about to take Sarai for one:

now therefore, behold thy wife, take [her], and go thy way; Sarai it seems was present at this interview, who was delivered to her husband untouched, as his own property, and is ordered to depart the country, that so neither the king, nor any of his courtiers or subjects, might be under any temptation to do him an injury, by violating the chastity of his wife. The

whole of this affair is related by Eupolemus^{f919}, an Heathen historian, in a few words, in great agreement with this account; only he represents Sarai as married to the king of Egypt; he says, that Abram, on account of a famine, went to Egypt, with all his family, and there dwelt, and that the king of the Egyptians married his wife, he saying she was his sister: he goes on to relate more at large, says Alexander Polyhistor that quotes him, that the king could not enjoy her, and that his people and family were infected with a plague, upon which he called his diviners or prophets together, who told him that the woman was not a widow; and when the king of the Egyptians so understood it, that she was the wife of Abram, he restored her to her husband.

Ver. 20. *And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him*, etc.] His courtiers and servants, not to do him any hurt or injury in his person or substance; who he might suppose would be enraged at hearing how the king and they had been imposed upon and deceived; he ordered a guard about him while he was there, and to conduct him, and all that belonged to him, safely out of his dominions, as appears by what follows: but Dr. Lightfoot^{f920} is of opinion, that he gave charge to the Egyptians, making it as it were a law for the time to come, that they should not converse with Hebrews, nor with foreign shepherds, in any so near familiarity, as to eat or drink with them, which the Egyptians observed strictly ever after, (~~CHAP~~Genesis 43:32 46:34)

and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had; they did not drive him out by force, or in any disgraceful manner, but being committed to a guard of men, appointed by the king, he had safe conduct out of the land, with his family, and all that he had; all that he brought with him, and all the increase he had made there, and all the gifts he had received of the king. The Jews^{f921} interpret it of the writings and gifts he had given to Sarai; and they^{f922} observe a great likeness between Abram's descent into Egypt, his being there, and departure out of it, and that of his posterity in later times; as that they both went thither on account of a famine; that they both went down to sojourn there; and that they both went out with great substance; with other particulars observed by them.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 13

This chapter gives an account of the return of Abram from Egypt to the land of Canaan, and to the same place in it he had been before, (^{<0130>}Genesis 13:1-4) and of a strife between the herdsmen of Abram and Lot, and the occasion of it, (^{<0135>}Genesis 13:5-7) which was composed by the prudent proposal of Abram, (^{<0138>}Genesis 13:8,9) upon which they parted; Abram continued in Canaan, and Lot chose the plain of Jordan, and dwelt near Sodom, a place infamous for wickedness, (^{<0130>}Genesis 13:10-13) after which the Lord renewed to Abram the grant of the land of Canaan to him, and to his seed, (^{<0134>}Genesis 13:14-17) and then he removed to the plain of Mamre in Hebron, and there set up the worship of God, (^{<0138>}Genesis 13:18).

Ver. 1. *And Abram went up out of Egypt*, etc.] That country lying low, and so more easy to be watered by the river Nile, as it was, and Canaan being higher; whither he went, but not till the famine in Canaan ceased: he went out of Egypt, as the Jewish ^{f923}chronologers say, after he had been there three months; but Artapanus ^{f924}an Heathen writer, says, he stayed there twenty years:

he and his wife, and all that he had; servants and cattle:

and Lot with him: from whence it is clear that he went down with him into Egypt, and it is highly probable had great respect and favour shown him on account of his relation to Abram and Sarai; for it appears by what follows, that he was become very rich: and they all went up

into the south; into the southern part of the land of Canaan, for otherwise they came to the north; for as Egypt lay south with respect to Canaan, Canaan was north from Egypt; but they journeyed to that part of that land which was commonly called the south, either Negeb, as here, or Daroma; (see Gill on "^{<300>}Zechariah 7:7").

Ver. 2. *And Abram was very rich*, etc.] He was rich in spiritual things, in faith, and in all other graces, and was an heir of the kingdom of heaven;

and in temporal things, as it sometimes is the lot of good men to be, though but rarely, at least to be exceeding rich, as Abram was; or “very heavy”, ^{f925}, as the word signifies, he was loaded with wealth and riches, and sometimes an abundance of riches are a burden to a man, and, instead of making him more easy, create him more trouble; and, as we may observe presently, were the occasion of much trouble to Abram and Lot. Abram’s riches lay

in cattle, in silver, and in gold; cattle are mentioned first, as being the principal part of the riches of men in those days, such as sheep and oxen, he and she asses and camels, (see ^{o126}Genesis 12:16) and besides these he had great quantities of silver and gold: the Jews say ^{f926} he coined money in his own name, and that his coin had on one side an old man and an old woman, and on the other side a young man and a young woman. His riches no doubt were greatly increased by the gifts and presents he received from the king of Egypt during his stay there.

Ver. 3. *And he went on in his journeys from the south*, etc.] He took the same tour, went the same road, stopping at the same resting places, as when he went down to Egypt; having learned, as Jarchi observes, the way of the earth, that a man should not change his host. Though some, as Ben Gersom, understand it of his taking his journeys as were suitable for his cattle, as they were able to bear them, and not overdrive them, lest he should kill them, but made short stages, and frequently stopped and rested. And thus he went on through the southern part of the land, until he came

even to Bethel; as it was afterwards called, though now Luz, (^{o128}Genesis 28:19)

unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning; when he first came into the land of Canaan, to a mountain

between Bethel and Hai; afterwards called Mount Ephraim, and was four miles from Jerusalem on the north ^{f927}; (see ^{o128}Genesis 12:8).

Ver. 4. *Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first*, etc.] When he first came to that place, and before he went down to Egypt: it is not said he came to the altar, but “to the place”, where it had stood, for it seems now to have been demolished, either having fallen of itself, being made of earth, or had been destroyed by the Canaanites, since Abram left it; or perhaps it might be pulled down by Abram himself before he went from thence, that it might not be used and polluted by the idolatrous Canaanites.

And there Abram called on the name of the Lord; prayed unto him, and gave him thanks for the preservation of him and his wife in Egypt; for the support of himself and his family there during the famine in Canaan; for the increase of his worldly substance, and for the protection of him, and all that belonged to him, in his journey from Egypt thither; and for all the instances of his grace, and the rich experiences of his goodness he had favoured him with; (see Gill on “^{Q1178}Genesis 12:8”) where the same form of expression is used.

Ver. 5. *And Lot also, which went with Abram*, etc.] into Egypt, and was now come back with him;

had flocks, and herds, and tents; flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, of oxen, asses and camels, and tents for himself and his servants to dwell in, and put his substance in.

Ver. 6. *And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together*, etc.] That part of the country where Abram and Lot were could not afford them room enough for their several tents; or however could not furnish them with sufficient pasturage for their flocks and herds, they were so numerous; at least could not do it so as to be contiguous to each other, that there was a necessity of one of them going further off:

for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together; we have before an account of the substance of each of them, how great it was; and here now is noted an inconvenience which arises from a large increase of riches, that relations and friends are obliged to part, and cannot dwell together; what one would think would make them more comfortable together, is the cause and occasion of their separation.

Ver. 7. *And there was a strife between the herdmen of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle*, etc.] Not between the two masters, but between their servants, their upper servants, that had the care of their herds to feed them, and water them; and it is very probable their strife was about pasturage and watering places, the one endeavouring to get them from the other, or to get the best; which is much more likely than what Jarchi suggests, that the herdmen of Lot were wicked men, and fed their cattle in the fields of others, and the herdmen of Abram reproved them for their robbery; but they said, the land is given of Abram, and he hath no heir, but Lot is his heir, and what robbery is this? and to this sense are the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem:

and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt then in the land; which observation is made by Moses to point to a reason why they could not both of them have a sufficiency for their large flocks and herds, because the country was in the possession of others; and though there was to spare, yet not enough for them both. The Canaanite, though it was a general name for the people of the whole land, yet was given to a particular family in it, and was derived from their first founder Canaan, the son of Ham; the Perizzite was another family or tribe of the same nation, who had their name from *zwrp*, “a village”; these being Pagans or villagers, living in huts, or houses, or tents scattered up and down in the fields, and were a rough, inhuman, and unsociable sort of people, and therefore it could not be expected that they would oblige them with much pasturage and water for their flocks: and besides, this may be remarked, partly to show the danger that Abram and Lot were in through the dissension of their herdmen, since those people that were so nigh might take the advantage of their quarrels among themselves, and fall upon them both, and destroy them, and therefore a reconciliation was necessary; and partly to observe the reproach that was like to come upon them, and upon the true religion, for their sakes, should they differ among themselves, which such sort of men would gladly catch at, and improve against them.

Ver. 8. *And Abram said unto Lot,* etc.] Being either an ear witness himself of the contentions of their servants, or having it reported to him by credible persons, he applied himself to Lot, in order to make peace, being a wise and good man; and though he was senior in years, and superior in substance, and higher in the class of relation, and upon all accounts the greatest man, yet he makes the proposal first, and lays a scheme before Lot for their future friendship, and to prevent quarrels, and the mischievous consequences of them:

let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee; there had been none yet, but it was very likely there would, if the dissension should go on between their servants; they could not well avoid interesting themselves in it, when it related to their respective properties; and there must be a right and wrong in such cases to be looked into and adjusted, which might occasion a difference between them; and this Abram was desirous of preventing, and therefore bespeaks his kinsman in this loving, affectionate, and condescending language:

and [or] between my herdmen and thy herdmen; as he understood there was, and which, if not timely put an end to, might be of bad consequence to them both, especially as to their peace and comfort, giving this excellent reason to enforce his request:

for we [be] brethren; or “men brethren we [be]”^{f928}; we are men, let us act like such, the rational and humane part; they were brethren being men, so by nature all are brethren; by natural relation, Lot being the son of his brother Haran; brethren in religion, of the same faith in the one true and living God, and worshippers of him; and therefore on all accounts, by the ties of nature, relation, and religion, they were obliged to seek and cultivate peace and love.

Ver. 9. *[Is] not the whole land before thee?* etc.] Signifying, that though there were not room and convenience for them both in that part of the country in which they were, yet there were in other parts; and though the land was given to Abram, he did not desire Lot to depart out of it; nay, he sets it all before him to choose what part he would dwell in, which was great condescension in him:

separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; not that he was weary of his company and fellowship with him, but, as things were circumstanced, a separation was necessary for the subsistence of their herds and flocks, and for the peace and comfort of their respective families; nor did he desire him to go out of the land, or be so far from him, that he could be of no advantage to him; but though separate, yet so near him as to give him help and assistance, as there might be occasion for it, and as there was some time after, which appears from the history of the following chapter.

If [thou wilt take] the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if [thou depart] to the right hand, then I will go to the left; or as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are,

“if thou wilt go to the north, I will go to the south, or if thou wilt go to the south, I will go to the north:”

for when a man stands with his face to the east, the principal part, the north is on his left hand, and the south on his right; and this was an usual way of speaking in the eastern countries; but they were not, as Grotius observes, Aristotelians, who make the east the right hand, and the west the left. This was an instance of the peaceable disposition of Abram, and of his humility and condescension to give his nephew leave, who was in all respects

inferior to him, to make his choice, to go which way he would, and take what part of the country he pleased.

Ver. 10. *And Lot lifted up his eyes*, etc.] He immediately fell in with Abram's proposal, but had not the ingenuity to return back the choice to Abram which he gave him, but took the advantage of it; nor did he show any uneasiness or unwillingness to part from Abram, though so near a relation, and so wise and good a man, and by whose means greatly he had obtained his riches; but without giving himself any concern about this, he at once cast about in his mind where to make his choice; he considered within himself which was the best part of the country, and most convenient for his flocks and herds, and where he was most likely to increase his substance; for this phrase chiefly has respect to the eyes of the understanding, he made use of, consulted with himself with his rational powers what was fittest to be done; unless we can suppose him situated on some considerable eminence, from whence he could have a view of the whole country he made choice of, as follows:

and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it [was] well watered every where; a large plain, full of rich pasturage, which had its name from the river Jordan, which by various windings and turnings ran through it, and which at harvest time overflowed its banks, and greatly contributed to the richness of the soil:

before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: as he afterwards did by fire from heaven, and then that part of the plain on which those cities stood was turned into a sulphurous lake:

[even] as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt; as any most excellent garden that is full of plants and trees, well watered, and well cultivated, and taken care of; as things most excellent are sometimes expressed by having the name of God, or the Lord, added to them, as the "cedars of God", etc. or as the garden of Eden, which was planted by the Lord, abounding with all kind of trees, and was well watered by a river running through it: and some think that the plain of Jordan, and the parts thereabout, were the real garden of Eden; wherefore one learned^{f929} man takes the "as" here not to be a note of similitude, but of reality, and not merely comparative but causal, giving a reason why it was so watered, being the garden God; so that the plain was not like unto, but really was the garden of Eden: and another observes^{f930}, that the words should be rendered, "so was the garden of the Lord, as the land of Egypt", and that

the repetition of the similitude only makes one comparison, and not two; not that the plain of Jordan is first compared with the garden of the Lord, and then with the land of Egypt; but the plain of Jordan, or garden of the Lord, is only compared with the land of Egypt; and with that undoubtedly it is compared, it being once a year overflowed by the river Jordan, as the land of Egypt was with the Nile, and was a most delightful and fruitful spot like that:

as thou comest unto Zoar; which is not to be connected with the land of Egypt, for Zoar was at a great distance from Egypt, but with the plain of Jordan, well watered everywhere till you come to Zoar, at the skirts of it, and which is by an anticipation called Zoar; for at this time, when Abram and Lot parted, it was called Bela, and afterwards, on another account, had the name of Zoar; (see ⁴¹⁴²Genesis 14:2 19:20,22).

Ver. 11. *Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan*, etc.] Because of its good pasturage, and because of the plenty of water there; the want of both which was the inconvenience he had laboured under, and had occasioned the strife between his and Abram's servants:

and Lot journeyed east, or "eastward"; for the plain of Jordan, and that part of the land on which Sodom and Gomorrah stood, were to the east of Bethel: the phrase is by some rendered "from the east"^{f931}, and the particle used most commonly so signifies; and Jarchi observes, that he journeyed from east to west; and Aben Ezra says, that Sodom was at the west of Bethel, in which he is most certainly wrong, for it was most clearly in the eastern part of the land; wherefore others, that follow this version, interpret it, that he went from the east of Bethel, or he went into that country situated at the east with respect to the land of Canaan; but it is best to render it as we do, east or eastward, to or towards the east^{f932}:

and they separated themselves the one from the other; that is, Abram and Lot, they parted good friends by consent; and the one went with his family, flocks, and herds, to one place, and settled there; and the other in another place, and so further animosities and contentions were prevented.

Ver. 12. *Abram dwelt in the land of Canaan*, etc.] In that part of the land strictly so called, where the family of the Canaanites had their abode; for otherwise taking Canaan in a more general sense, the plain of Jordan, and cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, were in the land of Canaan.

And Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain; in the neighbourhood of them, or near those cities, which were built on the plain of Jordan, for he could not dwell in more than one, if in one; for it looks as if at his first settlement he did not dwell in any, but near them all, especially Sodom: since it follows,

and pitched [his] tent toward Sodom, or “even unto Sodom”^{f933}; and it may be rendered, as it is by some, “he pitched his tents”^{f934}, for himself, his family, and his servants, his shepherds and his herdsmen, which reached unto Sodom, and where he afterwards dwelt, at least at the gate of it.

Ver. 13. *But the men of Sodom [were] wicked*, etc.] Which either he knew not, and so ignorantly made this bad choice, to take up his abode among such very wicked men, which occasioned a great deal of grief, trouble, and vexation to him; or if he knew it, the pleasing prospect of convenience for his cattle, and of enriching himself, was a temptation to him, and prevailed upon him to take such a step; and so Jarchi interprets it, “although” they were so, Lot was not restrained from dwelling among them:

and sinners before the Lord exceedingly; exceeding great sinners, guilty of the most notorious crimes, and addicted to the most scandalous and unnatural lusts that can be thought of; and these they committed openly and publicly in the sight of God, in the most daring and impudent manner, and in defiance of him, without any fear or shame. The Targum of Jonathan reckons up many of their sins, as defrauding of one another in their substance, sinning in their bodies, incest, unclean copulation, shedding of innocent blood, worshipping of idols, and rebelling against the name of the Lord; (see ^{<2189>}Isaiah 3:9 ^{<2669>}Ezekiel 16:49).

Ver. 14. *And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him*, etc.] The Lord appeared unto him as he had before, and with an articulate voice spoke unto him, to comfort him upon the separation of his kinsman from him, and to renew the grant of the land of Canaan to him and his seed, and to assure him, that though Lot had chosen the most delightful and fruitful part of the country, yet it should not be an inheritance to him and his posterity, but the whole land should be Abraham’s and his seed’s.

Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art; being upon Mount Ephraim, between Bethel and Hai, (see ^{<0128>}Genesis 12:8 13:3); from whence his view of the land might be extended very far:

northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; the north of the land of Canaan was Mount Lebanon, the south of it Edom or Idumea, the

east the plain and river of Jordan, the west the Mediterranean sea; and the word for “westward” here is “to the sea”¹⁹³⁵; northward of it was Babylon, southward Egypt, eastward Arabia, and westward the Mediterranean sea.

Ver. 15. *For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it*, etc.] Not only so much of it as his eye could reach, but all of it, as far as it went, which way soever he looked; and this he gave him to sojourn in now where he pleased, and for his posterity to dwell in hereafter; he gave him the title to it now, and to them the possession of it for future times:

and to thy seed for ever; the meaning is, that he gave it to his posterity to be enjoyed by them until the Messiah came, when a new world would begin; and which Abram in person shall enjoy, with all his spiritual seed, after the resurrection, when that part of the earth will be renewed, as the rest; and where particularly Christ will make his personal appearance and residence, the principal seed of Abram, and will reign a thousand years; *see Gill* “⁴²²*Matthew 22:32*”; besides, this may be typical of the heavenly Canaan given to Abram, and all his spiritual seed, and which shall be enjoyed by them for evermore.

Ver. 16. *And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth*, etc.] An hyperbolical expression denoting the great multitude of Abram’s posterity, as they were in the days of Solomon, and as they will be in the latter day; and especially as this may respect all the spiritual seed of Abram, Jews and Gentiles, and as they will be in the spiritual reign of Christ, (see ²⁸¹⁰Hosea 1:10,11);

so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, [then] shall thy seed be numbered; but as it is impossible to do the one, so the other is not practicable, (see ⁴²³⁰Numbers 23:10).

Ver. 17. *Arise, walk through the land*, etc.] And take a survey of it, and see what a land it is, how good and how large, and take possession of it for himself and his, though he was only to be a sojourner in it; and so the Targum of Jonathan adds, and making in it a possession, which in civil law was done by walking:

in the length of it, and in the breadth of it; the extent of it is variously settled by geographers; some giving it no more than about one hundred and seventy or eighty miles in length, from north to south, and about one hundred and forty in breadth from east to west, where broadest, as it is towards the south, and but about seventy where narrowest, as it is towards

the north: but it is observed ^{f936} from the latest and most accurate maps, that it appears to extend near two hundred miles in length, and about eighty in breadth about the middle, and ten or fifteen more or less where it widens or shrinks:

for I will give it unto thee; that is, to his seed, the whole of it, in its utmost extent, as to length and breadth; which if he pleased for his own satisfaction he might take a tour through, whereby he would be a judge what was bestowed on him and his

Ver. 18. *Then Abram removed [his] tent*, etc.] From the mountain between Bethel and Hai, (^{<0133>}Genesis 13:3);

and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, or “in the oaks of Mamre” ^{f937}; in a grove of oaks there, as being shady and pleasant to dwell among or under, and not through any superstitious regard to such trees and places where they grew; which has obtained since among the Heathens, and particularly among the Druids, who have their name from thence. Indeed such superstitions might take their rise from hence, being improved and abused to such purposes; and both Jerom ^{f938} and Sozomen ^{f939} speak of the oak of Abram being there in the times of Constantine, and greatly resorted to, and had in great veneration; and they and others make mention of a turpentine tree, which it is pretended sprung from a walking stick of one of the angels that appeared to Abram at this place, greatly regarded in a superstitious way by all sorts of persons: this plain or grove of oaks, here spoken of, was called after a man whose name was Mamre, an Amorite, a friend and confederate of Abram:

which [is] in Hebron; or near it, an ancient city built seven years before Zoan or Tanis in Egypt, (^{<0132>}Numbers 13:22); it was first called Kirjath Arbab, but, in the times of Moses, Hebron, (^{<0127>}Genesis 23:2). The place they call the Turpentine, from the tree that grows there, according to Sozomen ^{f940}, was fifteen furlongs distant from Hebron to the south; but Josephus ^{f941} says it was but six furlongs, or three quarters of a mile; who speaking of Hebron says,

“the inhabitants of it say, that it is not only more ancient than the cities of that country, but than Memphis in Egypt, and is reckoned to be of 2300 years standing: they report, that it was the habitation of Abram, the ancestor of the Jews, after he came out of Mesopotamia, and that from hence his children descended into

Egypt, whose monuments are now shown in this little city, made of beautiful marble, and elegantly wrought; and there is shown, six furlongs from it, a large turpentine tree, which they say remained from the creation to that time.”

A certain traveller^{f942} tells us, that the valley of Mamre was about half a mile from old Hebron; from Bethel, whence Abram removed to Mamre, according to Sir Walter Raleigh^{f943}, was about twenty four miles; but Bunting^{f944} makes it thirty two:

and built there an altar unto the Lord; and gave thanks for the prevention of strife between Lot and him, and for the renewal of the grant of the land of Canaan to him and his seed; and performed all acts of religious worship, which the building of an altar is expressive of.

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 14

This chapter gives an account of a war that was waged, and a battle fought between four kings on one side, and five on the other, and of the occasion and issue of it, who were the first kings, and this the first battle the Scriptures speak of, (^{<0141>}Genesis 14:1-11); Lot and his goods being taken and carried off, with those of Sodom, by the conquerors, Abram hearing of it armed his men, and pursued after them, and overtook and overcame them, and rescued Lot and his goods, with others, and returned, (^{<0142>}Genesis 14:12-16); when he was met by the kings of Sodom and Salem, who congratulated him on his victory, (^{<0147>}Genesis 14:17-19); and what passed between him, and those great personages, is related, (^{<0143>}Genesis 14:20-24).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, etc.]* Or Babylon, as Onkelos, where Nimrod began his kingdom, (^{<0108>}Genesis 10:8-10). This was Nimrod himself, as the Jewish writers generally says; ^{f945} though more likely Ninyas the son of Ninus and Semiramis, and grandson of Nimrod; or rather some petty prince or deputy governor of Shinar, under the king of Babylon; since, though named first, he was not the principal in this war, but fought under the king of Elam, and as an ally and auxiliary of his; and it may be the kingdom of Babylon was not as yet of any great extent and power, and that all those stories told of Ninus, Semiramis, and Ninyas, are mere fables; and indeed we hear nothing in Scripture of this kingdom, and the kings of it, from this time, until the times of Merodach Baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon, in the reign of Hezekiah king of Judah; nor of the Assyrian kingdom, and the kings of it, until Pul king of Assyria, in the times of Menahem king of Israel; wherefore it is greatly to be questioned, whether those kingdoms rose to any considerable height until these times: though some think that Shinar here does not intend Shinar in Chaldea or Babylon, which was too far distant from Abram, but Shinar in Mesopotamia, a large city at the foot of a mountain, three days distant from Mansil, which is now, in Arabic, called Singjar, and by Ptolemy, Singara ^{f946}

Arioch king of Ellasar; or Telassar, according to the Targum of Jonathan, a place in Mesopotamia, inhabited by the children of Eden, (²³⁷¹²Isaiah 37:12); and Stephanus ^{f947} makes mention of a city in Coelesyria, upon the borders of Arabia, called Ellas, of which this prince may be thought to be the governor; or rather he was king of a people called Elesari, whose country is placed by Ptolemy ^{f948} in Arabia; and could Ninyas be thought to be Amraphel, this king would bid fair to be Ariaeus a king of Arabia, or a son of his of the same name, that was a confederate of Ninus, as Diodorus Siculus ^{f949} relates out of Ctesias. Next follows,

Chedorlaomer king of Elam; or the Elamites, as the Vulgate Latin version, the Persians, (see ⁴⁰⁰⁹Acts 1:9). This led Diodorus ^{f950} to say, that the war Moses speaks of is what the Persians waged against the Sodomites. This seems to have been the most powerful prince at this time, to whom the five kings of Sodom, etc. had been subject for twelve years, but now had rebelled, and to subdue them again he came forth, with three other kings his allies, (see ⁴¹⁰⁴Genesis 14:4,5); but if Elam is the same with Persia, as it often signifies, or with Elymais, a part of Persia, that kingdom could not be at this time so large and potent as it has been since; or Chedorlaomer would not have stood in need of the assistance of other princes against such petty kings as those of Sodom, etc. Nor does it seem credible that he should come out of Persia, and pass through so great a part of the world as the countries of Assyria, Chaldea, Mesopotamia, Syria, and part of Arabia and of Canaan, to bring five such small towns or cities into subjection to him, as he must, as Sir Walter Raleigh ^{f951} observes; nor could the trifle of goods, as they may be comparatively called, he carried off, be an equivalent to the expense he must be at in so long a march. It is more probable, therefore, that this was the name of some place near to the land of Canaan, built by some of the posterity of Elam, the son of Shem, and called after the name of their ancestor; or it may be a colony of the Elamites in those parts, of which this prince was their head and chief:

and Tidal king of nations; that is, either of other nations distinct from those before mentioned, so Aben Ezra; or else, as he also observes, the name of a province; or as Jarchi and Ben Melech, the name of a place called Goim, because there were gathered together many out of various nations and places, and they set a man to reign over them, whose name was Tidal; just as one of the Galilees in later times was called Galilee of the nations, for a like reason. Sir Walter Raleigh ^{f952} conjectures, that as there were many petty kingdoms joining to Phoenicia and Palestine, as

Palmyrene, Batanea, Laodicene, Apamene, Chalcidice, Cassiotis and Celibonitis, these might be gathered together under this man. According to Eupolemus^{f953}, an Heathen writer, these several princes were Armenians that fought with the Phoenicians, and overcame them, by whom Lot was carried captive. Josephus^{f954} indeed, accommodating himself to the Greek historians, and in favour of them, says that the Assyrians at this time were masters of Asia, and led out an army under four generals, and made the kings of Sodom, etc. tributary to them; and they rebelling against them, made another expedition upon them under these four kings as their generals, and conquered them: but it seems not likely that the Assyrian monarchy was so large at this time; or if it was, these live petty kings of the plain of Jordan, who had not so much ground as our Middlesex, as Sir Walter Raleigh^{f955} observes, and perhaps not a quarter of the people in it, would never have dared to have engaged with so powerful an adversary.

Ver. 2. [*That these* made war with *Bera king of Sodom*, etc.] A city in the plain of Jordan, which with the four following made the Pentapolis, or five cities of the plain. Strabo^{f956} says, in this place formerly were thirteen cities, the metropolis of which was Sodom, and which yet had remaining a compass of sixty furlongs; according to Dr. Lightfoot^{f957}, it should be placed in the southern extremity of the lake Asphaltites, whereas it is usually set in the maps in the northern bounds of it:

and with Birsha king of Gomorrah; another city in the plain of Jordan, called by Solinus^{f958} Gomorrum:

Shinab king of Admah; a third city situated in the same plain:

and Shemeber king of Zeboiim; a fourth city of the plain, which seems to have its name from the pleasantness of its situation:

and the king of Bela, which is Zoar; so it was afterwards called by Lot, being a little city, (^{<0130>}Genesis 19:20,22); but before, Bela; the name of its king is not mentioned, being a person of no great note and importance, and his city small.

Ver. 3. *All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim*, etc.] Or “of fields”, or “ploughed lands”^{f959}, a fruitful vale abounding with corn; or of gardens or paradises, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, being full of gardens and orchards, and was as the garden of the Lord, even as Eden, (see ^{<0130>}Genesis 13:10); though Aben Ezra thinks it had its name from the slime or bitumen, of which there was great plenty in it, (see ^{<0140>}Genesis

14:10). Now the above five kings, as they all dwelt in the plain, they entered into a confederacy, met together, and joined their forces in this vale, to oppose the four kings that were come to make war with them, as being an advantageous place, as they judged, perhaps on more accounts than one; and here they stayed to receive the enemy, and give him battle, (see ^{<0148>}Genesis 14:8);

which is the salt sea; afterwards so called, not at this time, for then it would not have been fit for armies to be drawn up in battle array in it; but it was so called in the times of Moses, and after this fine vale was turned into a bituminous lake, and had its name from the saltiness of the waters of the lake, or from the city Melach, or city of salt, which was near it, (^{<0150>}Joshua 15:62).

Ver. 4. *Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer*, etc.] King of Elam, who was of the race of Shem, and so the prophecy of Noah began to be fulfilled, that Canaan should be servant to Shem, (^{<0026>}Genesis 9:26); for the kings of Sodom, etc. and their subjects, were of the race of Ham in the line of Canaan, who had by violence seized on that part of the earth which was allotted to the sons of Shem, and therefore Chedorlaomer being a descendant of his claimed his right, and made them tributary to him, which they were for the space of twelve years:

and in the thirteenth year they rebelled; refused homage to Chedorlaomer and to pay tribute to him.

Ver. 5. *And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer*, etc.] Not in the fourteenth year of their rebellion against him, as Jarchi, but from their becoming vassals to him:

and the kings that [were] with him; those kings before mentioned:

and smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim; which were in their way to Sodom, etc. and very probably were confederates with the five kings; the Targum, and so the Septuagint, render the word “giants”, as it is in (^{<0011>}Deuteronomy 2:11); but they were one of the nations or tribes of the Canaanites, (^{<0150>}Genesis 15:20); and had their name either from the Hebrew word *ap̄r*, which signifies to be healthful and robust, as those people might be, or from Rephas, the Remphan of Stephen, (^{<0026>}Acts 7:43); called Chiun, (^{<0150>}Amos 5:26); and with Cronus or Ham the father of Canaan, as Bishop Cumberland ^{f960} observes; and these dwelt in Ashteroth

Karnaim, which was a place in Bashan, (~~(R006)~~ Deuteronomy 1:4); it is about six miles, as Eusebius ^{f961} says, from Adraa or Edrei, and in the Apocrypha:

“Then Maccabeus marched forth to Carnion, and to the temple of Atargatis, and there he slew five and twenty thousand persons.” (2 Maccabees 12:26)

mention is made of a place called Carnion, where was a temple of Atergates, a Phoenician deity, as Ashteroth or Astarte, was; and this city here had its first name from Astarte the wife of Cronus or Ham, and whose name may be preserved in Carnaim, as Bishop Cumberland thinks; though as Astarte is said by Sanchoniatho ^{f962} to put on her head the mark of her sovereignty, a bull’s head, that is, with its horns, this might be another of her names retained in this city; and it is certain that she was a Phoenician goddess, called the goddess of the Zidonians, (~~(R006)~~ 1 Kings 11:5); and Sanchoniatho relates ^{f963}, that the Phoenicians say, that Astarte is she, who among the Greeks is called Aphrodite or Venus; and Astarte is called by Lucian ^{f964} the Phoenician Venus, and by Cicero ^{f965} the Syrian Venus; and if she was the same with Diana or the moon, as some think, she might have the name of Carnaim from its two horns, as the word signifies: our English poet ^{f966} seems to have this in his thoughts, when he speaks of Astoreth as the goddess of the Phoenicians: however the inhabitants of this place who belonged to the Canaanites were first attacked by the four kings and routed, though not utterly destroyed, because we hear of them afterwards, as well as they that follow:

and the Zuzims in Ham; or Hemtha, as Onkelos and Jonathan render it, a place so called from Ham the father of Canaan, and was somewhere in the land of Canaan or near it, and near the former place; for it can hardly be thought the land of Egypt, sometimes called the land of Ham, is meant; these Zuzim are supposed by Jarchi to the same with the Zamzummim in (~~(R020)~~ Deuteronomy 2:20); the word is by Onkelos and Jonathan rendered strong and mighty ones, as also by the Septuagint, mighty nations:

and the Enims in Shaveh Kiriathaim: a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakim, and were accounted giants as they, and who in later times were by the Moabites called Emim, (~~(R020)~~ Deuteronomy 2:10,11); and therefore Moses gives them the same name here, which they had from the dread and terror they injected into men, and so the word in all the three Targums is rendered terrible ones; and these dwelt in Kiriathaim, a city in

the tribe of Reuben, taken from Sihon, king of the Amorites, and which seems to be situated in a plain, (see ^{<0639>}Joshua 13:19).

Ver. 6. *And the Horites in their Mount Seir*, etc.] Or the Horim who dwelt in Mount Seir, so called from Seir the Horite, who continued here till they were drove out by the sons of Esau or Edom, from whom their country was afterwards called Edom or Idumea, (see ^{<0630>}Genesis 36:20-30) (^{<0622>}Deuteronomy 2:12,22);

unto Elparan, which [is] by the wilderness; so far these Horites inhabited, and the four kings smote all they met with unto this place, which was either the plain or oak of Paran, near a wilderness of the same name; the wilderness of Arabia, through which the Israelites travelled forty years, in their way to Canaan.

Ver. 7. *And they returned, and came to Enmishpat, which is Kadesh*, etc.] Pursuing their victories as far as Elparan by the wilderness, they had passed by the country of the Amalekites; wherefore they “returned”, or came back to fall upon them, and they came to a place called Enmishpat, or the “fountain of judgment”; which was not its future name, as Jarchi thinks, because there Moses and Aaron were to be judged concerning the business of that fountain, even the waters of Meribah, with which agrees the Targum of Jonathan;

“and they returned and came to the place where the judgment of Moses the prophet was determined by the fountain of the waters of contention:”

but it seems to have been the ancient name of the place, and by which it was called at this time, as Kadesh was the name of it at the time of Moses writing this; and therefore he adds,

which [is] Kadesh; that is, which is now called Kadesh, because there the Lord was sanctified, when the rock at that place was smitten, and waters gushed out: it was a city on the uttermost border of the land of Edom, (^{<0620>}Numbers 20:1,12,13,16), and seems formerly to have been a place where causes were heard and judgment passed; and so Onkelos paraphrases it,

“to the plain of the division or decision of judgment;”

which, as Jarchi himself interprets it,

“is a place where the men of the province gathered together for all judgment;”

or for hearing all causes and determining them:

and smote all the country of the Amalekites; which, according to Josephus ^{f967}, reached from Pelusium in Egypt to the Red sea; they inhabited Arabia Petraea, for he ^{f968} says, the inhabitants of Gobolitis and Petra are called Amalekites; which name is generally supposed to have been given them here by way of anticipation, since the commonly received opinion is, that they were the descendants of Amalek, a grandson of Esau, who was not born when this war was waged, (see ^{<0362>}Genesis 36:12); but the Mahometan writers derive the pedigree of Amalek, from whom these people had their name, from Noah in the line of Ham, and make him to be some generations older than Abram, which with them stands thus, Noah, Ham, Aram, Uz, Ad, Amalek ^{f969}; and they speak of the Amalekites as dwelling in the country about Mecca, from whence they were driven by the Jorhamites ^{f970}: and indeed it seems more probable that the Amalekites were of the posterity of Ham, since Chedorlaomer, a descendant of Shem, falls upon them, and smites them; and they being confederates with the Canaanites, and are with the Amorites, Philistines, and other Canaanitish nations, always mentioned, seem to be a more ancient nation than what could proceed from Amalek the son of Eliphaz, since Amalek is said to be the first of the nations, (^{<0201>}Numbers 24:20); nor does there ever appear to be any harmony and friendship between them and the Edomites, as it might be thought there would, if they were a branch of Esau’s family; nor did they give them any assistance, when destroyed by Saul, so that they seem rather to be a tribe of the Canaanitish nations; and they are, by Philo ^{f971} the Jew, expressly called Phoenicians:

and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazezontamar; the same with the Emorites, (see ^{<0006>}Genesis 10:16); another tribe or nation of the Canaanites descended from Amor or Emor, a son of Canaan: the place of their habitation has its name of Hazezontamar from the multitude of palm trees which grew there: for Tamar signifies a palm tree, and Hazezon is from 𐤌𐤓 “to cut”; and this part of the name seems to be taken from the cutting of the top, crown, or head of the palm tree, for the sake of a liquor which has a more luscious sweetness than honey; and is of the consistence of a thin syrup, as Dr. Shaw ^{f972} relates; the head of the palm tree being cut off, the top of the trunk is scooped into the shape of a basin, as he says, where the

sap in ascending lodges itself at the rate of three or four quarts a day during the first week or fortnight, after which the quantity daily diminishes; and at the end of six weeks or two months the juices are entirely consumed, and the tree becomes dry, and serves only for timber or, firewood. This place is the same with Engedi, (^{<401P>}2 Chronicles 20:2); and so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan here translate it, “in Engedi”; and which place Pliny^{f973} says was famous for groves of palm trees; it was a city near the Dead sea, (see ^{<367B>}Ezekiel 47:8-10); and Josephus says^{f974} it was situated by the lake Asphaltites, that is, the place where Sodom and Gomorrah stood; and he adds, that it was three hundred furlongs distant from Jerusalem, where were the best palm trees and balsam: so that now the four kings had got pretty near Sodom; wherefore it follows,

Ver. 8. *And there went out the king of Sodom*, etc.] With his armed men to meet the four kings, and give them battle, being so near him, and in so much danger from them, that if they could not stand their ground, they might flee to the mountains, and not perish in the city:

and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the King of Zeboiim; whose names are before given, (^{<014P>}Genesis 14:2):

and the king of Bela, the same [is] Zoar: as in (^{<014P>}Genesis 14:2):

and they joined battle with them in the vale of Siddim; where the five Canaanitish kings met, of which (see ^{<014B>}Genesis 14:3); and fought the four kings that were come forth against them, and whose names are repeated, and are as follow:

Ver. 9. *With Chedorlaomer king of Elam*, etc.] Who is here mentioned first, being the principal in the war, and against whom the kings of Sodom, etc. had rebelled:

and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; who were his allies, confederates, and auxiliaries:

four kings with five; those four last mentioned, with the other five before spoken of, that is, they fought with them; or rather four kings against five, as the Vulgate Latin and Tigurine versions, and some others.

Ver. 10. *And the vale of Siddim [was full of] slimepits*, etc.] Or “wells” or “fountains of slime” or bitumen^{f975}; a liquid of a pitchy nature, cast out of fountains, and which was used for a cement in buildings; such fountains

were near Babylon, (see Gill on “~~GEN~~Genesis 11:3”); so that this place was naturally prepared for what it was designed to be, a bituminous lake; and hence, when turned into one, it was called the lake Asphaltites, from this slime or bitumen, called by the Greeks “asphaltos”. Brocardus ^{f976} says, these pits or wells of bitumen are at this day on the shore of the lake, each of them having pyramids erect, which he saw with his own eyes; and such pits casting out bitumen, as fountains do water, have been found in other countries, as in Greece ^{f977}. Now this vale being full of such pits, the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah chose it to fight in, and here drew up in a line of battle, hoping that the enemy, being ignorant of them, would fall into them and perish, and their ranks be broke and fall into confusion; but as it often is, that the pit men dig and contrive for others they fall into themselves, so it was in this case:

and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled: the battle going hard against them, and they not able to stand before their enemies:

and fell there, or “into them” ^{f978}; the slimepits, or fountains of bitumen, into which they precipitately fell, and many perished; or of their own accord they threw themselves into them for their own safety, as some think; though the sense may be this, that there was a great slaughter of them made there, as the word is frequently used, (see ~~1SAM~~1 Samuel 4:10); this is to be understood not of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah; for it is certain that they were preserved alive, at least the king of Sodom, for we hear of him afterwards, (~~GEN~~Genesis 14:17,21); but of their soldiers:

and they that remained fled to the mountain: or mountains hard by, where Lot after went when Sodom was destroyed, (~~GEN~~Genesis 19:30); hither such fled that escaped the sword of the enemy, or perished not in the slimepits, judging it more safe to be there, than to be in their cities, which would fall into the hands of their enemies, and be plundered by them, and where they would be in danger of losing their lives.

Ver. 11. *And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah*, etc.] They entered these cities and pillaged them, and carried off everything valuable in them, that was portable or could be driven, as their cattle, etc. they did not burn these cities, nor take possession of them, and leave garrisons in them, which shows them to be petty princes that came for plunder, and to get an equivalent for nonpayment of tribute to one of them:

and all their victuals, and went away; all the meat and drink they could light of, with which they refreshed their troops, and then departed.

Ver. 12. *And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son*, etc.] The son of Haran, his elder brother, who was now, as the Jews say^{f979}, fifty years of age:

who dwelt in Sodom, or near it, in the country adjacent to it, (see ^{<0132>}Genesis 13:12); and so being a neighbour of the men of Sodom, and a sojourner among them, he partakes of their punishment; and this was a just correction of him for choosing to dwell among such a people: and they took

his goods, and departed; as him and his family, so all his substance, his cattle, wealth, and riches of every sort, and went off with it: Eupolemus^{f980}, an Heathen writer, makes mention of this circumstance in his relation of this war, and says, that the Armenians, as he calls the four kings, baring conquered the Phoenicians, carried away captive the brother's son of Abram.

Ver. 13. *And there came one that escaped*, etc.] Both the sword of the enemy and the slimepits; either one of the inhabitants of Sodom, who had an acquaintance with Lot and a friendship for him, and knew his relation to Abram; or one of Lot's family, that might escape being taken and carried captive: for not Michael the prince, so called, because when the angels fell they would have drawn him with them, but God delivered him, and therefore his name was called **j y l p**, or "one that escaped", as the Jews^{f981} say; nor Og, that escaped the waters of the flood, as they also say^{f982}, and now from this war, and was the only one left of the Rephaim, or giants, whom Amraphel slew, which they gather from (^{<0081>}Deuteronomy 3:11); who they suppose came with the following message to Abram with an ill design, that he might go out to war with the kings, and be slain, and then he thought to marry his wife; but these are idle fancies, what is first suggested is right.

And told Abram the Hebrew; that there had been a battle of four kings with five, that the latter were beaten, among whom were the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah; and that Lot, his kinsman, who dwelt in or near Sodom, was carried captive, with all his goods. Abram is called the Hebrew, either from his passing over or coming beyond the river Euphrates, from Chaldea into Canaan; with which the Septuagint version agrees, rendering it the

“passer over”; and so Jarchi says he is called, because he came beyond the river: or rather from his having lived beyond it, as such as dwelt there were called; for it can hardly be thought that he should peculiarly have this name from that single action of his passing the river, which multitudes did besides him: but rather, why should he not be called Ibri, the word here used, from the place of his birth? For, according to the Talmudists^{f983}, Ur of the Chaldees was called *ary[z arby]*, “little Ibra”; though it is more generally thought he had this name from his being a descendant of Eber, and who was not only of his sons’ sons, and spoke the same language, but professed the same religion, and which was continued in his posterity, who to the latest ages were called Hebrews, and sometimes Eber, (^{<0024>}Numbers 24:24); and which is the opinion of many Jewish writers^{f984}, and seems most probable:

for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite; (see ^{<0138>}Genesis 13:18); it was about forty miles from Sodom, but from it to Dan, whither he pursued the four kings, and where he overtook, fought, and smote them, is by some computed one hundred and twenty four miles^{f985}: this Mamre, from whom the plain or grove of oaks were called, was the

brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner; who are particularly mentioned, because of their concern in the following expedition:

and these [were] confederate with Abram; or “[were] masters” or “authors of a covenant”^{f986} with him; they had entered into a league to defend one another, their persons and properties, from the insults of invaders and tyrants, or thieves and robbers: and it may be lawful to form such leagues with irreligious persons on such accounts, where there is no prohibition from God, as there was none as yet, though there afterwards was one; and the Israelites, were forbid to make covenants with the Canaanites, but that was after they were drove out of the land for their sins, (^{<0007>}Deuteronomy 7:1,2); besides, it is not improbable that these men were religious men, and worshipped the same God with Abram, for such there were among the Canaanitish princes, of which Melchizedek, after spoken of, is an instance; and as yet the sin of the Amorites was not full, of which tribe or nation these men were.

Ver. 14. *And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive*, etc.] That is, his brother’s son Lot, as in (^{<0142>}Genesis 14:12); which was contrary to the law of nations; since Lot was only a sojourner, and not an

inhabitant n Sodom, and therefore had no concern in the quarrel between the kings, and this justified Abram's taking up arms on his behalf:

he armed his trained [servants]; such as were trained up by him in religious exercises, (see ^{<0189>}Genesis 18:19); in the affairs and business of civil life, in the care of flocks and herds, and particularly in the art of war; which was both lawful and necessary, for the preservation of his family and substance from oppressors:

born in his own house; of his servants, and so were his property, and at his disposal and command; their number was

three hundred and eighteen, a large number for servants, and which showed how great a man Abram was, what possessions he must have to employ so many, and yet but a small number for an army, to go forth with against four kings who had conquered five; though how many his confederates brought with them is not certain:

and pursued [them] unto Dan; the Jerusalem Targum is, to Dan of Caesarea, meaning Caesarea of Philippi, as in the times of Christ and his apostles it was called; which at first had the name of Leshem, or Lais, and was not called Dan until the times of the judges, (^{<0189>}Judges 18:29); wherefore, if the same place is intended here, it is so called not only by anticipation, but by a spirit of prophecy; since it had not the name of Dan even in the times of Moses, the writer of this history, unless it may be thought to be inserted by Samuel or some other inspired writer, after Moses; though there is no need to suppose either of these, seeing there might be a town or city of this name in those parts at this time, or however one of the springs of Jordan might be so called, from whence the river had its name as early, (^{<0189>}Genesis 13:11); and so Josephus ^{f987} expressly says, speaking of this expedition, that Abram fell upon them at Dan, for so, adds he, the other fountain of Jordan is called.

Ver. 15. *And he divided himself against them, he and his servants by night,* etc.] Together with his confederates; and very probably their whole three was divided into four parts, under their four leaders; and this might be done in order to attack the four kings and their soldiers, who might be in four separate bodies; or to fall upon their camp in the four quarters of it, and to make a show of a greater army, thereby to intimidate the enemy: Abram seems to have understood the art of war, and the use of stratagems in it; and, as it might be night before he could come up to them, he took

the advantage of that, and fell upon them unawares, when some were asleep in their beds, and others drunk, as Josephus^{f988} relates; and who also says, it was on the fifth night after Abram had knowledge of what had happened at Sodom:

and smote them, and pursued them unto Hoba, which [is] on the left hand of Damascus; a famous city in Syria; it was in later times the metropolis of that country, (^{<2078>}Isaiah 7:8); and was most delightfully situated in a vale, (see Gill on "^{<2492>}Jeremiah 49:25"); according to Josephus^{f989} it was built by Uz, the son of Aram and grandson of Shem, and some say^{f990} by Shem himself, and that it is to this day called Sem in the Saracene language, and lay between Palestine and Coelesyria; on the left hand of this city, or on the north of it, as all the Targums paraphrase it, lay a place called Hoba, and is completed to be eighty miles from Dan, from whence he pursued them hither, after he had discomfited them there.

Ver. 16. *And he brought back all the goods*, etc.] Taken from Sodom and Gomorrah, (^{<0141>}Genesis 14:11);

and also brought again his brother Lot; his brother's son, (^{<0142>}Genesis 14:12), for whose sake chiefly he engaged in this enterprise: and his goods; money, cattle, etc.

and the women also, and the people; not only that belonged to Lot, but to Sodom and Gomorrah, who had been taken and carried captive; these were all rescued and brought back by Abram, (see ^{<0142>}Genesis 14:21);

Ver. 17. *And the king of Sodom went out to meet him*, etc.] While Abram was in pursuit of the four kings, the king of Sodom came down from the mountain whither he and those that escaped with him fled, and came to Sodom: and from hence he went out, not alone, but accompanied with his retinue, to meet Abram:

after his return from the slaughter of Chedorlaomer, and of the kings that [were] with him; to congratulate him upon the victory he had obtained over them; and this meeting was

at the valley of Shaveh; a most plain and even valley, as the word signifies, clear of trees and everything that obstructs sight or passage, as Jarchi observes, and so a proper place to have an interview in:

which [is] the king's dale; some say King Melchizedek's, but one should rather think it was the king of Sodom's; the Targum of Jonathan calls it the place of the king's exercise, where he had his diversions in riding, walking, etc. it can hardly be that in (~~Q38~~ 2 Samuel 18:18); though some are of this opinion, being near to Jerusalem, which they suppose to be the same with Salem in (~~Q48~~ Genesis 14:18).

Ver. 18. *And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine*, etc.] Both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem say, this is Shem the son of Noah, and which is the sense of the Jewish writers in general, and of many Christian ones; but, though it is highly probable he was living at this time, yet it is not easy to account for it why his name should be changed, or that he should reign in a country in the possession of his brother's son; or that he should meet Abram, and congratulate him on the slaughter of one of his own descendants, as Chedorlaomer was; and especially it cannot be said of him that he was without father or mother, or that those were not known, since Shem's parentage and pedigree are famous enough; some have thought him to be more than a mere man, even the Son of God himself, but he is manifestly distinguished from him in (~~Q38~~ Hebrews 7:3); he seems to be what Josephus^{f991} says he was, a Canaanitish prince, a pious and religious man, eminently raised up by God, and whose genealogy was kept a secret, that he might be in this as in other things a type of Christ; but that he should be Canaan himself, as Dr. Clayton^{f992} thinks, a brother of Metsir, or Mizraim, the second son of Ham, being by Sanchoniatho called Sedec, is not likely, since he was cursed by Noah. Salem, of which he was king, is by the above Targums said to be Jerusalem, and which is the opinion of many writers, Jewish and Christian, and of which opinion I myself was formerly, (see Gill on "~~Q38~~ Hebrews 7:1"); Jerusalem being plainly called Salem, (~~Q38~~ Psalm 76:2), but it seems clear from hence that it must be near to Sodom, and lay in the way between Damascus and Sodom; whereas Jerusalem was in a contrary situation, and lay nearly forty miles from Sodom; for Josephus says^{f993}, the lake Asphaltites, where Sodom once stood, was three hundred furlongs from Jerusalem, which is about thirty eight miles; and Jerom relates^{f994}, that Salem was a town near Scythopolis, which was so called in his times, and where was showed the palace of Melchizedek, which, by the largeness of the ruins, appeared to have been very magnificent, and takes it to be the same place with Shalem in (~~Q38~~ Genesis 33:18); and Salim, near to which John was baptizing, (~~Q38~~ John 3:23): this great man "brought forth bread and wine"; not as a

priest for an offering, but as a munificent king, to refresh Abram and his weary troops, and which the king of Sodom could not do, because the victuals of that place were carried off by the four kings, (^{<0141>}Genesis 14:11); and as Abram had the land of Canaan by promise, and now had made conquest in it over the invaders of it, Melchizedek, sensible of his right unto it, brings forth the best fruits of it, and, as Dr. Lightfoot observes ^{f995}, tenders them to him as “livery and seisin” of it: in this Melchizedek was a type of Christ, who comforts and refreshes his hungry and weary people with himself, the bread of life, and with the wine of his love, as well as his name and title agree with him, who is a righteous King and Prince of Peace, (^{<0216>}Jeremiah 23:5 ^{<0306>}Isaiah 9:6):

and he [was] the priest of the most high God; a priest as well as a king, as in many countries princes were both ^{f996}; and in this he was a type of Christ in his kingly and priestly offices, who is a priest upon the throne, both king and priest, (^{<0313>}Zechariah 6:13). Melchizedek was a priest not of any of the Phoenician deities, but of the true and living God, who is above all gods, dwells in the highest heaven, and is the most High over all the earth; by him was he called to this office and invested with it, and he ministered to him in it.

Ver. 19. *And he blessed him*, etc.] Melchizedek blessed Abram, which was one part of his office as a priest, to wish and pray for a blessing on others, (see ^{<0423>}Numbers 6:23), etc. and herein typified Christ, who really blesses or confers blessings on all his people, even spiritual blessings, such as redemption, remission of sins, and justifying righteousness, adoption, and eternal life:

and said, blessed [be] Abram of the most high God; that is, may he be blessed by him who is the most high God, with all kind of blessings, both temporal and spiritual; or he declares him to be blessed of him, as he undoubtedly was, or foretells that he would be, as was certainly his case: and another epithet of God is added, which abundantly shows he was able to bless him, since he is the

possessor of heaven and earth; is the Maker of both, and has a right to dispose of all things in them, both heavenly and earthly.

Ver. 20. *And blessed be the most high God*, etc.] Let his name be praised, and thanks be given to him for all mercies temporal and spiritual, since all flow from him, and particularly for the mercies Abram and others through

him were now made partakers of; for whoever were the instruments, God was the efficient cause, and to him all the glory was to be given:

which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand; the four kings, who are called Abram's enemies, because the enemies of God and of true religion, and because they had been injurious to a relation of his; and especially they may be so called, if their intention was, as, say the Jewish writers^{f997} to slay him, beginning first with Lot: and those four kings, according to them, signify the four monarchies, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman^{f998} who in their turns distressed his posterity, but in the latter day shall fall into their hands, as those did into Abram's, and fall by them:

and he gave him tithes of all; not Melchizedek to Abram, but Abram to Melchizedek, as appears from (^{<8004>} Hebrews 7:4); and these tithes were given not out of the goods that were recovered, for they were restored to the proprietors of them, but out of the spoils that were taken from the enemy, as is evident from the same place referred to; and these were given both as a return for the respect shown him by Melchizedek, and by way of thankfulness to God for the victory, whose priest he was; otherwise, as a king, he stood in no need of such a present; nor was it for his maintenance as a priest, or what Abram was obliged unto, but was a voluntary action, and not out of his own substance, but out of the spoils of the enemy, and to testify his gratitude to God: this was imitated by the Heathens in later times; so the Tarentines, having got a victory over the Peucetians, sent the tenth (of the spoil) to Delphos^{f999}: the Jews^{f1000} say Abraham was the first in the world that began to offer tithes; but they are mistaken, when they say in the same place, that he took all the tithes of Sodom and Gomorrah, and of Lot his brother's son, and gave them to Shem the son of Noah. Eupolemus^{f1001} makes mention of this interview between Abram and Melchizedek by name; he says, Abram was hospitably entertained in the holy city Argarizin, which is by interpretation the mountain of the most High (but seems to be the Mount Gerizzim) and that he received gifts from Melchizedek, the priest of God, who reigned there.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Sodom said unto Abram*, etc.] After the conversation between him and Melchizedek was over:

give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself; meaning by "persons" or "souls", as in the original, his own subjects that had been taken and carried away by the four kings, and were now brought back by Abram; and

by “the goods”, those of his own and his subjects, which their conquerors had spoiled them of, but were now recovered, and which he was very willing Abram should have as his right, according to the laws of war, and as a reward of his labours; and very modestly asks for the other, which he did not deny but he might claim as the fruits of his victory: and this also shows, that the king of Sodom, though a Heathen prince, and perhaps a wicked man, yet had more regard to the persons of his subjects than to his own or their goods: the word for “goods” includes all the substance and possession of a man, gold, silver, cattle, and all movables ^{f1002}.

Ver. 22. *And Abram said to the king of Sodom*, etc.] In reply to his request:

I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord; which was both a gesture of praying and of swearing, and both may be intended here; when he set out on his expedition, it is very probable he prayed to God for success, and swore that if he prospered him, that he would receive no profit or advantage from it to himself; or now in the presence of Melchizedek he lift up his hands and swore that he would take none of the goods he had recovered to his own line; and in this form of praying or swearing, he makes use of the same epithets of God Melchizedek had just used:

the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth: having his heart struck with those just and glorious representations of God, and awed with a sense of such a glorious Being, and being forward to learn and retain everything that tended to make for the glory of God.

Ver. 23. *That I will not [take] from a thread even to a shoelatchet*, etc.] That is, from a thread used in sewing garments to, a shoelatchet, or the string which fastens the shoes to the foot, the least belonging to that; or from the hair lace of the head, to the shoelatchet of the foot; that is, he would take nothing of his from head to foot: the meaning is, that he would not take that which was of the least value and importance that could be conceived of, and which is more clearly expressed by what follows:

and that I will not take anything that [is] thine; the least thing that belonged to him, or to any of his subjects, for this reason:

lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich; lest he should upbraid him with it afterwards, and say, that all his riches were owing to him; whereas God had promised to bless him, and make him rich and great, as he had begun to do, and still would more and more; and in whom his

trusted, and to whom he was desirous all the glory of his greatness and riches should be ascribed.

Ver. 24. *Save only that which the young men have eaten*, etc.] His three hundred and eighteen trained servants, and those of his confederates, who having recovered the victuals taken away from the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, had eaten of it for their refreshment, as it was but just and right they should:

and the portion of the men which went with me; the part in the spoil which belonged unto them by the laws of war; wherefore, though he abridged himself of rights and privileges that belonged unto him, which he might do, and thereby showed his great generosity, and that it was not covetousness but kindness that moved him to do what he did; yet he did not take upon him to abridge the rights and privileges of others, which would have been injurious to them: the men he means were Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; his confederates, who went with him in the pursuit of the enemy, and were assisting to him in recovering the men and goods they had carried away: and as it was but justice they should have their share in the spoils, therefore he says,

let them take their portion; in the goods recovered, and in the spoils taken. Eupolemus^{f1003}, the Heathen writer above quoted, relates this affair thus, that

“Abram being assisted by his servants became master of those who had captivated others, and carried captive the wives and children of the soldiers; and when ambassadors came to him to ransom them with money, he would not suffer the conquered to be insulted, but taking food for the young men, returned the captives freely.”

CHAPTER 15

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 15

This chapter informs us of a gracious appearance of God to Abram, and of a kind promise made unto him, (^{<0150>}Genesis 15:1); of Abram's request for an heir, (^{<0152>}Genesis 15:2,3); of an answer to it, that he should have one, and even a numberless seed, (^{<0154>}Genesis 15:4,5); which he gave credit to, (^{<0156>}Genesis 15:6); upon which he has a fresh promise of the land of Canaan, (^{<0157>}Genesis 15:7); of his inheriting of which he desires a sign, and this was given him, (^{<0158>}Genesis 15:8-12); and at the same time it was predicted to him how long his posterity should be afflicted in a land not theirs, and afterwards come out with great substance, (^{<0153>}Genesis 15:13-16); and the grant of the land of Canaan to his seed is renewed, (^{<0157>}Genesis 15:17-21).

Ver. 1. *After these things*, etc.] The battle of the kings, the captivity of Lot, the rescue of him and his goods, and of those of Sodom and Gomorrah by Abram, and the conversation that passed between him, and the kings of Sodom and Salem:

the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision; Christ, the essential Word, appeared to Abram in an human form, visible to him, and with an articulate voice spoke unto him:

saying, as follows,

fear not, Abram; calling him by his name, the more to encourage him, and to dissipate his fears to which he was subject; which might be, lest the nations that belonged to the four kings he had conquered and slain should recruit their armies, and come against him with greater force; and the brethren and relations of those he had slain should avenge themselves on him, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem suggest; and therefore the Lord bids him not give way to those fears, for, adds he,

I [am] thy shield; to protect him against all his enemies, be they ever so strong and numerous; as Christ is the shield of his people against all their

spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, which being held up in the hand of faith, called therefore the shield of faith, is a security against them:

[and] thy exceeding great reward; though he had generously refused taking any reward for the service he had done in pursuing the kings, and slaughtering them, and bringing back the persons and goods they had took away; yet he should be no loser by it, the Lord would reward him in a way of grace with greater and better things; nay, he himself would be his reward, and which must be a great one, an exceeding great one; as Christ is to his people in his person, offices, and grace, all being theirs, and he all in all to them; all the blessings of grace and glory coming along with him, and he being their portion here and hereafter, to all eternity; for since he is theirs, all are theirs, all things appertaining to life and godliness, and eternal life itself.

Ver. 2. *And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless*, etc.] As if he should say, what signifies what thou givest me of temporal blessings, if thou withholdest from me the blessing of a child; from whom it might be hoped and believed would spring the promised Messiah, in whom all nations of the earth shall be blessed. All my wealth and riches, victories and honours, are of no avail to me, while I am deprived of this favour; and since I am advanced in years, and going the way of all the earth; or out of the world, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, and which is the sense of the word in many places, (see ¹⁰²³⁴Joshua 23:14 ¹⁰²²²Luke 22:22). Should I depart from hence childless, as I am like to do, what pleasure can I take in them, and comfort from them, when I have none to inherit them?

and the steward of my house [is] this Eliezer of Damascus; who was his head servant, perhaps the same with him in (¹⁰²⁴²Genesis 24:2) called the eldest servant of his house, who had the care of it, of providing food for it, and supplying with it, and giving to everyone their portion in due season. Some render it, “the son of leaving my house” ^{f1004}; to whom he left the care of his house, and should leave the administration of all things in it after his death, making him heir should he die childless; and so it may be supplied, “he Eliezer of Damascus is” or “shall be my heir”. Strange and various are the fancies of the Jewish writers concerning this Eliezer; the Targum of Jonathan on (¹⁰¹⁴⁴Genesis 14:14) calls him the son of Nimrod; others say he was the grandson of Nimrod, and others, a servant of his, who gave him to Abram for a servant; and when Isaac married Rebekah he

was made free, and through Abram's influence became a king, and was Og king of Bashan^{f1005}; and others say he was Canaan the son of Ham^{f1006}; and others again, that he was Lot, who was very desirous of being Abram's heir^{f1007}: but with neither of these wilt this description of him agree, who is said to be of Damascus; either he was born there, or his parents, one or other, were from thence, who very probably were Abram's servants; and this Eliezer was born in his house, as seems from (⁻⁰¹⁵⁸Genesis 15:3): or the words may be rendered Damascus Eliezer^{f1008}, that is, Damascus the son of Eliezer; so that Eliezer was his father's name, and Damascus the proper name of this servant: and some say Damascus was built by him, and had its name from him, which is not likely, since we read of it before, and it is ascribed to another builder, (see Gill on "⁻⁰¹⁴⁵Genesis 14:15"). Indeed Justin^{f1009} says it had its name from a king of it, so called; but who, according to him, was much more ancient than Abram, whom he also makes to be a king of Damascus: after King Damascus, he says, was Azelus, then Adores, and Abram and Israel were kings in that place. And Nicolas of Damascus^{f1010} relates, that Abram reigned at Damascus, when with an army he came out of the land of Chaldea, beyond Babylon; and that the name of Abram was still famous in the region of Damascus, and a certain village was shown, called Abram's habitation: and the Jewish writers say^{f1011}, that the servants of Abram built Damascus, and he reigned over it: that Abram lived there some time seems reasonable from this Eliezer, who was born in his house, being called Eliezer of Damascus; for which no other reason can well be assigned than his being born there, which must be therefore when Abram dwelt there, since he was born in his house; and this might be the foundation of the above traditions.

Ver. 3. *And Abram said, behold, to me thou hast given no seed*, etc.] He had bestowed many temporal blessings on him, as well as spiritual ones, having given himself in covenant, and all things in it, but he had not given him a child:

and lo, one born in my house is mine heir; meaning either Eliezer or his son, whom he had made his heir, or intended to make him, since he had no child; or of course he would have been to, Lot his nephew having no sons; and this Eliezer descending from Aram, the youngest son of Shem, was like to be next heir, if Abram should have no child of his own, as Dr. Lightfoot observes^{f1012}.

Ver. 4. *And behold, the word of the Lord [came] unto him*, etc.] Either having disappeared, and then came a second time, or he again spoke unto him:

saying, this shall not be thine heir; this Eliezer, this servant of thine, as thou hast made him, or hast intended to make him, giving up all hopes of having issue by Sarai:

but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir; that is, one shall inherit all thou hast, that shall be begotten by thee; an own son of Abram's, and not a servant born in his house; one that should spring out of his own loins: the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "out of thy womb", that is, out of his wife's, which was his; the phrase designs a genuine and legitimate son of his, who would be legally his heir.

Ver. 5. *And he brought him forth abroad*, etc.] Out of his tent into the open air, which was done through his call, and at his direction; or by an impulse upon his mind; or this might not be real and local, only vision:

and said, look now towards heaven; either with his bodily eyes, or with the eyes of his mind:

and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; this looks as if it were in a vision that this was said to him, and what follows done in the day, since it was in the daytime, before the sun was set, (^{<0152>}Genesis 15:12), when the stars could not be seen; and therefore were represented to his mind, and he was directed to consider them in it, whether they could be numbered by him or not: but this might be in the preceding night, or early in the morning, before the sun arose, that Abram was directed to go out of his tent, and view the heavens, and the multitude of stars in them, and try if he could number them; and he might be employed all the day following till sunset, in preparing the creatures for the sacrifice, in cutting them asunder, laying their pieces in order, and watching them, and driving the fowls from them. The multitude of his seed is before signified by the dust of the earth, which cannot be numbered, (^{<0136>}Genesis 13:16), and here by the stars of the sky innumerable; as they are to man, though not to God: some have pretended to number them, as Aratus, Eudoxus, and Hipparchus, among the ancients, and also modern astronomers; but then they are such only that are visible to the eye, and in one hemisphere, and their accounts are very various; whereas there are multitudes to be discerned by glasses, and some not to be distinguished, as in the galaxy, or milky way, and others in the

other hemisphere. Now Abram here is bid to try what he could do, and this was in his own way; for he is said by many Heathen writers^{f1013} to be famous for arithmetic and astrology, or astronomy; but as great a master as he was in these sciences, he was not able to number the stars, which is here plainly intimated, since it follows:

and he said, so shall thy seed be: as innumerable as the stars, as they were, even his natural seed, (^{<8112>}Hebrews 11:12); and especially his spiritual seed, who have the same kind of faith he had, and as they will be in the latter day particularly, (^{<8110>}Hosea 1:10,11).

Ver. 6. *And he believed in the Lord*, etc.] The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan are,

“in the Word of the Lord;”

in the essential Word of the Lord, in Christ the Lord his righteousness; he believed in the promise of God, that he should have a seed, and a very numerous one; he believed that the Messiah would spring from his seed; he believed in him as his Saviour and Redeemer; he believed in him for righteousness, and he believed in his righteousness as justifying him before God:

and he counted it to him for righteousness; not the act of his faith, but the object of it; and not the promise he believed, but what was promised, and his faith received, even Christ and his righteousness this was imputed to him without works, and while he was an uncircumcised person, for the proof of which the apostle produces this passage, (^{<8113>}Romans 4:3,10,23,24); wherefore this is not to be understood of any action of his being esteemed and accounted a righteous one, and he pronounced and acknowledged a righteous person on account of it; for Abram was not justified before God by his own works, but by the righteousness of faith, as all that believe are, that is, by the righteousness of Christ revealed to faith, and received by it: what is imputed is without a man, and the imputation of it depends upon the will of another; such the righteousness of Christ without works imputed by God the Father. This is the first time we read of believing, and as early do we hear of imputed righteousness.

Ver. 7. *And he said unto him*, etc.] After he had expressed his faith in him, and in his word, and the blessedness of a justifying righteousness came openly upon him, and he was declared a justified person:

I [am] the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees; not only called him, but brought him out of it; not out of a furnace there, as the Jews fable; but out of a place so called, an idolatrous one, where fire was worshipped, and from whence it might have its name; God had brought him out of this wicked place, and separated him from the men of it, and directed him to the land of Canaan for the following end and purpose:

to give thee this land to inherit it; to be an inheritance to his posterity for ages to come; he gave him the promise of it, and in some sense the possession of it, he being now in it; and he mentions his having brought him out of Chaldea into it, to confirm his faith in the promise of it; that that God who had called him, and brought him from thence, and had protected him, and given him victory over his enemies, was able to make good, and would make good the promise and grant of this land for an inheritance to him, that is, to his posterity.

Ver. 8. *And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?*] Not as questioning or doubting whether he should or not; but this he asked for the further confirmation of his faith in the promise, and for the sake of his posterity, that they might more easily and strongly believe that they should inherit the land given and promised to them; nor is it culpable to ask a sign of God with such a view; good men have done it, as Gideon, (^{<0065>}Judges 6:36-40), and Hezekiah, (^{<1208>}2 Kings 20:8-11), without being blamed for it; yea, Ahaz is blamed for not asking one, (^{<2370>}Isaiah 7:10-13).

Ver. 9. *And he said unto him, take me an heifer of three years old*, etc.] This, with what follows, is the sign by which Abram might know that he, that is, his seed, should inherit the land of Canaan; for the whole of this is an emblem of the state and condition of his posterity, until they should enter into that land: wherefore he is ordered to “take” out of his herds and flocks this and the following creatures, which were used in sacrifice before the ceremonial law was given, as well as under it; and the distinction of creatures for sacrifice, though not for food, was known as early, as appears from (^{<0081>}Genesis 8:20); hence Onkelos renders the phrase, “offer before me”; and the Targum of Jonathan is,

“take unto me oblations, and offer before me.”

Though this difference is to be observed, that the Levitical law required creatures of a year old only to be offered; whereas these were three years old, because they are then at their full growth, and in their full strength and

greatest perfection; and such were used among the Heathens for sacrifice; so Lucian ^{f1014} represents Ganymedes as proposing to Jupiter, that if he would let her go she would offer a ram of three years old: but it should be remarked, that these creatures here were not taken merely for sacrifice, nor is there any mention made of their being offered; though it is probable they might be offered after they had answered the principal end, which was to be a sign, whereby Abram might know that his seed should inherit the land; but the intention of God was, that as by them Abram's seed might be taught what sort of creatures they were to offer for their sins, so chiefly to show that they themselves would fall a sacrifice to the rage and fury of their enemies, in a land not theirs, and be used as these creatures were: and the number three may denote the three complete centuries in which they would be afflicted, and in the fourth come out safe and whole like the undivided birds, the turtle, dove, and pigeon, to which they were comparable. Ramban ^{f1015} thinks, that this number represents the three sorts of sacrifices, the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the peace offering; and that of these three kinds of animals, only one individual of them was taken, and is called "treble", because each individual were joined together. Onkelos renders it three heifers, and so three goats and three rams afterwards; in which he is followed by Jarchi and Ben Melech; the former thinks the three heifers refer to the heifer of the day of atonement, that for uncertain murder, and the red heifer; and in like manner he interprets the three goats and rams; but the Targum of Jonathan, and Aben Ezra, interpret them as we do of creatures of three years old: it follows,

and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove and a young pigeon. Some Jewish writers ^{f1016} have a notion that these creatures represent the four monarchies; the "heifer", the Babylonian monarchy, which had three kings, Nebuchadnezzar, Evilmerodach, and Belshazzar; but others make this to be the fourth monarchy, they call Idumaeen or Roman, which is like an heifer at grass, (~~2KIN~~ Jeremiah 50:11), which passage better suits with Babylon; the "goat", Media (or Persia), which had three kings, Cyrus, Darius, and Ahasuerus; and the "ram", Grecia; but others say the goat signifies the Grecian monarchy, and the ram the Medo-Persian monarchy, which latter agrees with (~~2KIN~~ Daniel 8:3,5,20,21); and by the "turtle", the word for which, in the Syriac language, signifies an ox, they understand, some the children of Ishmael, or the Turkish empire, and others Edom, or the Roman: but it is much better to interpret them of Abram's posterity, comparable to these

creatures, both for their good and bad qualities; to an “heifer” for laboriousness in service, and patience in sufferings; and for their backslidings, (^{<2846>}Hosea 4:16); to a “goat” for their vicious qualities, their lusts and lasciviousness; and to a “ram”, for their strength and fortitude; and to a “turtle”, and a young pigeon, for their simplicity, innocence, and harmlessness, when they were in their purest state, (see ^{<1949>}Psalms 74:19); and it may be observed, that these were the only fowl used in sacrifice.

Ver. 10. *And he took unto him all these*, etc.] The heifer, goat, ram, turtle, and young pigeon, not to himself, but to the Lord, as he was bid, and offered them before him, as the above Targums paraphrase it; or however he took them for his use, and set them before him, and did with them as he directed him:

and divided them in the midst; that is, the three animals, the heifer, goat, and ram; he did not take off their several limbs, and cut them up in small parts, but cut them in halves;

and laid each piece one against another; one half against the other, the left side against the right, shoulder against shoulder, and leg against leg, so that they might seem to join, or might be easily joined together again, or however answer one another; though it is generally thought there was such a distance of the one from the other, as that there might be a passage between them; it being usual in making covenants for the covenanters to pass between the parts of a creature slain, signifying, that should they break the covenant made, they deserved to be cut asunder as that creature was, (see Gill on ^{<2845>}Jeremiah 34:18”). So a burning lamp, or lamp of fire, an emblem of the divine Being, is said, (^{<0157>}Genesis 15:17), to pass between those pieces: all this was expressive of the afflictions of the posterity of Abram, of their being distressed in the land of Egypt, cut as it were in twain there, and of their various dispersions in other countries; and yet, like the bones in Ezekiel’s vision, were gathered together, and united again: and it may be this may have respect to the division of the people of Israel into two kingdoms, in the times of Rehoboam, and their after reunion, and especially in the latter day, (^{<2506>}Ezekiel 37:7,16-22):

but the birds divided he not; but laid them one against another, as the pieces were laid; so the birds used in sacrifice under the law were not to be divided, (^{<0817>}Leviticus 1:17); which may signify, that when the people of the Jews, in the latter day, are converted, and brought together into their

own land, when they will better answer the character of turtles and doves than they ever did, will be no more divided and separated from each other.

Ver. 11. *And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses*, etc.] Upon the birds, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech interpret it, whose carcasses were whole; or rather upon the divided carcasses of the animals, and indeed on both: this is to be understood of birds of prey, as eagles, vultures, kites, crows, etc. and are an emblem of the Egyptians chiefly, and other enemies of Israel, who came upon them to devour them; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and the idolatrous nations descended, who were like to an unclean fowl, to spoil the goods of the Israelites;”

and likewise the Targum of Jerusalem,

“this unclean fowl are the idolatrous kingdoms of the earth:”

Abram drove them away: that they might not settle upon the carcasses, and devour them: the Septuagint version is, “Abram sat with them”; he sat by the carcasses and watched them, that no hurt came to them, and to take notice of them, and consider and learn what they were an emblem of. The Jews^{f1017} also observe, that

“Abram sat and waved over them with his napkin or handkerchief, that the birds might not have power over them until the evening.”

This may respect not the merit of Abram, as the above Targums, by which his posterity were protected, and the designs of their enemies frustrated; but the effectual fervent prayer of Abram, his prayer of faith for them, in answer to which they were delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians, and other enemies, whom Abram foresaw they would be distressed with.

Ver. 12. *And when the sun was going down*, etc.] Just setting, descending below the hemisphere; or “about to enter”^{f1018} into his chamber, as Piscator observes, from whence he went forth in the morning, as a strong man to run his race; which at sunset is finished according to human appearance, and the common apprehensions of men, who have thought it goes under the earth, or drops into the ocean, (see ~~<1915>~~ Psalm 19:5):

a deep sleep fell upon Abram: through the great fatigue he had had the preceding day, in doing what is before related; or rather through a more than ordinary influence of God upon him, which bound up his senses, and

cast him into an ecstasy or trance, when he had the following prophecy and vision, which more fully explained to him the emblem he had been conversant with; this was such a sleep as fell on Adam, (~~Q121~~Genesis 2:21):

and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him; or such darkness as was horrible and terrible, so it was represented to his mind in vision; which signified the great afflictions after expressed by darkness, that should come upon his children in Egypt and elsewhere: and so Jarchi says it refers to the distresses and darkness of their captivities in Egypt, and in other places. The Targumists observe, that Abram in this vision saw the four monarchies that should bring his children into bondage.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto Abram*, etc.] While he was in a deep sleep; this he said to him in a vision of prophecy:

know of a surety, or “in knowing thou shall or mayest know”^{f1019}; and be assured of it, being now told it by the Lord himself, who foreknows all things that ever come to pass; many of which he acquaints his people with beforehand, nor would he hide from Abram his friend what should befall his posterity, as follows:

that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land [that is] not theirs; this prophecy could not take place at this time, since Abram had then no seed; but at the birth of Isaac, in whom his seed was called, who sojourned, or was a stranger in Gerar, a part of the land of Canaan, as Jacob also in the same land, (~~Q122~~Genesis 36:3 37:1); as well as he and his posterity sojourned or lived as strangers in the land of Ham, in Egypt, (~~Q123~~Psalm 105:23); and neither of these countries were theirs; for though there was a grant of Canaan to Abram and his seed, yet it was not in possession; though a land of promise, it was a strange land, a land of their pilgrimage, and where all the patriarchs lived in it as such, (see ~~Q124~~Exodus 6:4 ~~Q125~~Hebrews 11:9):

and shall serve them; the inhabitants of the land not theirs, that is, the Canaanites and the Egyptians, especially the latter; and these they served after the death of Joseph, by whom their lives were made bitter with hard bondage:

and they shall afflict them four hundred years; this term “four hundred years” is not to be joined either with the word “afflict” or “serve”; for their hard servitude and severe affliction did not last long, but a few years at most; but with the phrase, “a stranger in a land not theirs”; and the rest is

to be included in a parenthesis thus, and “thy seed shall be a stranger in the land not theirs ([and] shall serve them, and they shall afflict them) four hundred years”; so long they should be strangers and sojourners, as they were partly in the land of Canaan, and partly in the land of Egypt, neither of which were in their own land, however not in possession; within which space of time they would be in a state of subjection and servitude, and be greatly afflicted and oppressed, as they were particularly by the Egyptians before their deliverance from them, (see ~~<0011>~~ Exodus 1:11-22 5:6-14). These four hundred years, as before observed, are to be reckoned from the birth of Isaac to the Israelites going out of Egypt, and are counted by Jarchi thus; Isaac was sixty years of age when Jacob was born, and Jacob when he went down into Egypt was one hundred and thirty, which make one hundred and ninety; and the Israelites were in Egypt two hundred and ten years, which complete the sum of four hundred: according to Eusebius, there were four hundred and five years from the birth of Isaac to the Exodus of Israel; but the round number is only given, as is very usual; and though the sojourning of the Israelites is said to be four hundred and thirty years, (~~<0124>~~ Exodus 12:40), this takes in the sojourning of Abram in that land, who entered into it sixty five years before the birth of Isaac, which added to four hundred and five, the sum total is four hundred and thirty; for Abram was seventy five years of age when he left Haran and went to Canaan, and Isaac was born when he was an hundred years old, (see ~~<0124>~~ Genesis 12:4 21:5).

Ver. 14. *And also that nation whom they shall serve will I judge*, etc.] It is not said “the land” in which they were strangers, though God did judge, condemn, and punish the inhabitants of the land of Canaan, and drove them out of it, to make way for Israel; but the “nation” they should “serve”, meaning the Egyptians, to whom they became servants, and were very hardly and severely used by them; those the Lord threatens to enter into judgment with, and take vengeance upon them, as he did by inflicting the ten plagues on them, which brought them at last to be willing to let Israel go:

and afterward shall they come out with great substance; as they did after the four hundred years were ended, and after the Egyptian nation was judged and punished; then they came out of Egypt, with much gold, silver, jewels, and raiment, which they borrowed of the Egyptians, who were spoiled by them, though very justly; this being but a payment of them for

the hard and long service with which they had served them; see the exact fulfilment of prophecy, (^{<1211>}Exodus 11:2,3 12:35,36 ^{<1945>}Psalm 105:37).

Ver. 15. *And thou shall go to thy fathers in peace*, etc.] Or die, which is a going the way of all flesh, to a man's long home, out of this world to another, to the world of spirits, to those that are gone before them; which is no inconsiderable proof of the immortality of the soul. Jarchi infers from hence, that Terah, Abram's father, was a penitent, and died a good man, and went to heaven, the place and state of the blessed, whither Abram should go at death; but the phrase of going to the fathers is used both of good and bad men: it is moreover said of Abram, that he should go in peace; being freed from all the fatigues of his journeying from place to place in his state of pilgrimage, and not living to see the afflictions of his posterity, and to have any share in them; and dying in spiritual peace, in tranquillity of mind, knowing in whom he had believed, and where his salvation was safe and secure, and whither he was going; for a good man dies with peace of conscience, having his sins freely forgiven, and he justified from them by the righteousness of the living Redeemer, and enters into eternal peace, (see ^{<1873>}Psalm 37:37):

thou shall be buried in a good old age; this signifies that he should live long, see many days and good ones, enjoy much health and prosperity, continue in the ways of truth and righteousness to the end, and come to his grave like a shock of corn fully ripe, and fit for an other world; and that he should have a decent interment in the land of Canaan, where he purchased a burial place, and which was a pledge and earnest of the future possession of it by his seed, the thing here promised.

Ver. 16. *And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again*, etc.] The seed of Abram were in the land of Canaan before their descent into Egypt; and it is here predicted and promised, that they should come thither again, as they did, in the fourth generation of those that descended thither; for Moses and Aaron were the fourth from Levi, or Eleazar from Kohath, and Caleb from Judah; or rather this was in the fourth age or century from the birth of Isaac, when the four hundred were up before mentioned, men living at that time about an hundred years: Grotius interprets this of the fourth generation of the Amorites, because of what follows:

for the iniquity of the Amorites [is] not yet full; and therefore as yet would not be turned out of the land, and the seed of Abram could not till then inherit it: wicked people have a measure of iniquity to fill up, which is

known of God; some are longer, some are quicker in filling it up, during which time God waits patiently and bears with them; but, when it is completed, he stays no longer, but takes vengeance on them, (^{<113>}Matthew 23:32). The Amorites were only one of the nations of the Canaanites, but were a very strong and powerful one, and are put for them all, and are the rather mentioned, because Abram at this time dwelt among them; and it seems as if there were some good men among them, such as the confederates of Abram might be, and they were not arrived to that depth of wickedness they afterwards would and did, and which brought on their ruin, and so made way for the posterity of Abram to inherit their land. Ben Melech interprets it of the punishment of the sin of the Amorites, the time for that was not come to dispossess them of their land.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when the sun went down*, etc.] It was going down when the deep sleep fell on Abram, and now it was quite gone or set:

and it was dark; which is not always the case as soon as the sun is set, there is a twilight for a while, and if a clear night the stars appear; but, as Aben Ezra observes, this was a dark and cloudy night; so it was a dark night, a time of great affliction and distress to the posterity of Abram, when their sun was set, or after the death of Joseph:

behold a smoking furnace; or the likeness of one, as Aben Ezra notes; for all this was represented in a visionary way to Abram, and was an emblem of the great troubles and afflictions of the children of Israel in Egypt, called the iron furnace, (^{<100>}Deuteronomy 4:20), and may have respect to the furnaces in which they burnt the bricks they made, (see ^{<100>}Exodus 9:8); the Jewish paraphrases make this to be a representation of hell, which is prepared for the wicked in the world to come, as a furnace surrounded with sparks and flames of fire; and Jarchi says, it intimated to Abram, that the kingdoms would fall into hell:

and a burning lamp, that passed between those pieces; or a lamp of fire ^{f1020}; an emblem of the Shechinah, or majesty of God, who afterwards appeared in a pillar of fire before the Israelites in the wilderness, after their deliverance out of Egypt, and when their salvation went forth as a lamp that burneth, of which this was a token: this burning lamp passed between the pieces of the heifer, goat, and ram, that Abram had divided in the midst, as was usually done when covenants were made, (see ^{<100>}Jeremiah 34:18); and here God made a covenant with Abram, as appears from (^{<100>}Genesis 15:18); and, as a confirmation of it, passed between the pieces

in a lamp of fire, showing that he was and would be the light and salvation of his people, Abram's seed, and an avenger of their enemies; only God passed between the pieces, not Abram, this covenant being as others God makes with men, only on one side; God, in covenanting with men, promises and gives something unto them, but men give nothing to him, but receive from him, as was the case between God and Abram: however, it is very probable, that this lamp of fire consumed the pieces, in like manner as fire from heaven used to fall upon and consume the sacrifices, in token of God's acceptance of them.

Ver. 18. *In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram*, etc.] Which he confirmed by passing between the pieces and accepting his sacrifice:

saying, unto thy seed have I given this land; he had given it in his purpose, and he had given the promise of it, and here he renews the grant, and ratifies and confirms it, even the land of Canaan, where Abram now was, though only a sojourner in it; and which is described by its boundaries and present occupants, in this and the following verses, as is usually done in grants of lands and deeds of conveyance:

from the river of Egypt, unto the great river, the river of Euphrates; the river of Egypt is the Nile, which overflowed it annually and made it fruitful; so the Targum of Jonathan calls it the river of Egypt; it may be rendered, "from the river Mizraim or Egypt", for the name of Egypt was given to the river Nile as well as to the country, and so it is called by Homer^{f1021}; and Diodorus Siculus^{f1022} says, the Nile was first called Egypt; some^{f1023} think the Nile is not here meant, but a little river of Egypt that ran through the desert that lay between Palestine and Egypt; but it seems to be a branch of the river Nile, which was lesser about Palestine or Damiata, at the entrance of Egypt, than at other places. Brocardus^{f1024} says,

"from Delta to Heliopolis were three miles, where another river was separated from the Nile, and carried to the city of Pelusium; and, adds he, this river is properly called in Scripture the river of Egypt, and at it is bounded the lot of the tribe of Judah."

This river of Egypt, or the Nile, was the southern boundary of the land of Canaan, and from hence to the river Euphrates, the eastern boundary, was the utmost extent of it in which it was ever possessed, as it was in the times of David and Solomon, (~~108~~2 Samuel 8:3 ~~102~~1 Kings 4:21).

Ver. 19. *The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites.*] In this and the following verses ten nations are reckoned as occupying the land of Canaan at this time, whereas only seven are mentioned in the times of Moses and Joshua; and these three are not among them, and seem before those times to have been extinct, or were mixed with the other nations, and were no more distinct ones; though Aben Ezra thinks these people had two names, and Jarchi interprets them of the Edomites, Moabites, and Ammonites, who shall be the inheritance of the children of Israel in future times, according to (^{<23114>}Isaiah 11:14); and so the Jerusalem Talmud ^{f1025}, from whence he seems to have taken it; and some are of opinion that the Midianites are meant by the Kenites, since Jethro, Moses's father in law, who was of Midian, is called the Kenite, as was also Heber, who was of the same race, (^{<00116>}Judges 1:16 4:11); there were Kenites near to the Amalekites in the times of Balaam, and who dwelt among them in the times of Saul, (^{<0021>}Numbers 24:20,21 ^{<0156>}1 Samuel 15:6); as there were also some of this name that descended from the father of the house of Rechab, or the Rechabites, who were associates and proselytes to the people of Israel, (^{<1325>}1 Chronicles 2:55); the Kenizzites are supposed by some to be the descendants of Kenaz, a grandson of Esau, (^{<0031>}Genesis 36:11); but then they must be so called here by anticipation, since Kenaz was not now born, and rather then would have had the name of Kenazites; besides, none of the land of the children of Esau, at least of those that dwelt about Mount Seir, was to be given to the children of Israel, (^{<0005>}Deuteronomy 1:5); could indeed the Edomites or Idumeans be intended, it might be thought this had its accomplishment in the times of David, and more especially when the Idumeans became Jews, embraced their religion, and were one people with them, in the times of Hyrcanus ^{f1026}: the Kadmonites, or the Orientals, were, as Bochart ^{f1027} very probably thinks, the Hivites, who inhabited the eastern part of the land of Canaan about Mount Hermon, and from thence might have their name, as they are in the Jerusalem Targum called the children of the east; and hence came the names of Cadmus and Hermione his wife, who were Hivites, and the fable of their being turned into serpents, which the word Hivites signifies.

Ver. 20. *And the Hittites,* etc.] Who had their name from Heth, a son of Canaan, (see ^{<0005>}Genesis 10:15); they dwelt about Hebron, in the south of the land of Canaan:

and the Perizzites; these dwelt in the wood country of the land, (^{<0675>}Joshua 17:15); and seem to have their name from dwelling in villages, and at a

distance from towns and cities, and were a boorish and uncivilized people, (see ^{<0137>}Genesis 13:7):

and the Rephaims; or “giants”, as the Targums of Onkelos, and Jonathan; they dwelt near the Perizzites, (^{<0175>}Joshua 17:15); of these (see ^{<0145>}Genesis 14:5).

Ver. 21. *And the Amorites*, etc.] The same with the Amorite, (^{<0106>}Genesis 10:16); they inhabited both on this and the other side Jordan:

and the Canaanites; which were a particular tribe or nation that bore the name of their great ancestor Canaan, (see ^{<0137>}Genesis 13:7):

and the Girgashites; the same with the Gergesenes in (^{<0088>}Matthew 8:28); of these (see ^{<0106>}Genesis 10:16):

and the Jebusites; who inhabited Jerusalem and about it, which was first called Jebus, from the founder of this nation, (see Gill on “^{<0106>}Genesis 10:16”).

CHAPTER 16

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 16

This chapter gives an account of Abram's marrying his maid, at the instance of his wife Sarai, (^{<0161>}Genesis 16:1-3), who, upon conceiving, despised her mistress; of which complaint is made to Abram, who leaving his maid to his wife, to deal with her as she pleased, dealt harshly by her, and therefore fled from her, (^{<0164>}Genesis 16:4-6); when she was met by an angel, who advised her to return and submit herself to her mistress, and told her her seed would be greatly multiplied, gave a name to the child she went with, and described his temper and disposition, (^{<0167>}Genesis 16:7-12); and then we have the name of God that spoke to her, and of the place where the discourse passed between them, (^{<0163>}Genesis 16:13,14); and the chapter is concluded with the birth of Ishmael, and the age of Abram at his birth, (^{<0165>}Genesis 16:15,16).

Ver. 1. *Now Sarai, Abram's wife, bare him no children*, etc.] She is before said to be barren, and he to be childless, (^{<0113>}Genesis 11:30 15:2); God had promised him a seed, but as yet he had none, which was a trial of his faith; he had been married many years to Sarai his wife, she was his wife when they came out of Ur of the Chaldees, and how long before cannot be said; they stayed and dwelt some time at Haran, the Jews ^{f1028} say five years, and they had been now ten years in the land of Canaan, (^{<0163>}Genesis 16:3); and were advanced in years, the one being seventy five, and the other eighty five, so that there was no great probability of having any children, wherefore the following step was taken:

and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name [was] Hagar; no doubt but she had many, but this was a principal one, that might be over others, and was chiefly entrusted with the care and management of family affairs under her mistress; she might be the daughter of an Egyptian, born in Abram's house, as Eliezer was the son of a Syrian of Damascus, born there also; or she might be one of the maidservants Pharaoh, king of Egypt, gave to Abram, (^{<0126>}Genesis 12:16); the Jews ^{f1029} have a tradition, that she was a daughter of Pharaoh, who, when he saw the wonders done for Sarai, said, it is better that my daughter should be a handmaid in this house, than

a mistress in another, and therefore gave her to Sarai; others say ^{f1030} she was a daughter of his by a concubine, but neither is probable: from her came the people called Hagarites, (^{<1350>}1 Chronicles 5:10), and Hagarenes, (^{<1386>}Psalm 83:6); and there were a people in Arabia called Agraai, both by Strabo ^{f1031} and Pliny ^{f1032}; and the latter speaks of a royal city in that country called Agra, which seem to have their names from this person. Melo ^{f1033}, an Heathen writer, speaking of Abram, says, that he had two wives, one of his own country, and akin to him, and the other an Egyptian, a servant; of the Egyptian he beget twelve sons, who, going into Arabia, divided the country among them, and were the first that reigned over the inhabitants of it; as to her twelve sons, he mistakes, for these were not Hagar's sons by Abram, but her grandsons, the sons of Ishmael, (see ^{<1173>}Genesis 17:20).

Ver. 2. *And Sarai said unto Abram, behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing,* etc.] Or, “hath shut me up” ^{f1034}; that is, her womb, as were the wombs of the house of Abimelech, (^{<1208>}Genesis 20:18); so that she could not conceive and bear children; she now at this age despaired of having children, perceiving very probably that it ceased to be with her after the manner of women; and this she refers to the will and power of God; for, as children are his gift, and an heritage from him, (^{<1378>}Psalm 127:3), so it is his will and pleasure sometimes to withhold this blessing from those who are very desirous of them:

I pray thee go in unto my maid; Hagar, the Egyptian before mentioned; her meaning is, that he would take her to wife, and use her as such:

it may be that I may obtain children by her; for whatsoever were born of her handmaid, and in her house, were her own, and so she should account them, and especially as they would be her husband's, (see ^{<1204>}Exodus 21:4); or, “may be builded by her” ^{f1035}; for women, by bearing children, build up an house, (see ^{<1241>}Ruth 4:11); hence a son in Hebrew is called “ben”, from “banah”, to build:

and Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai; without consulting God about it, the proposal being agreeable to the flesh, which may be imputed to the infirmity of the good man; though it does not appear to arise from previous lust predominant in him; but both Sarai's proposal, and his compliance with it, might be owing to the eager desire of each after the promised seed; they both believed the promise, but did not know it, being not as yet revealed, that Abram should have a son by Sarai; so that Sarai knowing her own case

and circumstances, might conclude it was to be by another, and by her handmaid; and Abram might reason and judge after the same manner, which inclined him to listen to her: Josephus^{f1036} says, indeed, that Sarai moved this to Abram by the direction and order of God himself; and the Jewish writers say^{f1037}, that Abram hearkened to the Holy Spirit of God that was in her.

Ver. 3. *And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, etc.]* Took her by the hand, it is probable, and led her into the apartment where Abram was, and presented her to him; their characters are very exactly described, and the contrast beautifully given, that the affair might be the more remarkable and observable:

after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan; so that he was now eighty five years of age, for he was sventy five when he departed from Haran and came into Canaan, (¹⁰³⁶Genesis 12:4); and Sarai, being ten years younger than he, must be sventy five; the Jews from hence have formed a rule or canon; that if a man marries a woman, and she has no children in ten years, he is obliged to marry another^{f1038}:

and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife; his secondary wife, or concubine; which, though contrary to the first institution of marriage, was connived at of God, and was practised by good men: nothing can excuse them but their earnest desire after the Messiah, the promised seed; and one may conclude, that nothing but this especially could move Sarai to take such a step, so contrary to the temper and disposition of women in common.

Ver. 4. *And he went in unto Hagar, and she conceived, etc.]* The formality of the marriage being over, he enjoyed her as his wife, and she immediately conceived by him:

and when she saw that she had conceived; when she perceived that she was with child:

her mistress was despised in her eyes; she thought herself above her, and treated her as her inferior, with contempt, and reproached her for her barrenness, as Peninnah did Hannah, (¹⁰³⁶1 Samuel 1:6,7); and it was the more ungrateful, as it was at the motion of her mistress that she was given to Abram for wife.

Ver. 5. *And Sarai said to Abram*, etc.] Being affronted with the behaviour of her maid to her, she applies to Abram for the redress of her grievance, judging it, perhaps, below her dignity to enter into an altercation with her maid:

my wrong [be] upon thee; in her passion imprecating evil on him, as a just punishment upon him for suffering wrong to be done her by her maid; or, “is upon thee”^{f1039}; pointing at his duty, and suggesting to him what he ought to do; that it was incumbent on him as her husband to right her wrongs, and do her justice, and vindicate her from the calumnies and reproaches of her servant; and tacitly complaining of him, and accusing him with indolence and unconcern at the injury done her, being silent when it became him to check her insolence and chide her for it: or, “is for thee”^{f1040}; for thy sake; it was for the sake of Abram chiefly, that he might have a son and heir, which he was very solicitous, that she gave him her maid to wife; the consequence of which was, that she was now insulted and abused by her, and so suffered wrong for his sake; and the rather she might be tempted to say it was on his account, as she might be jealous of a growing affection in him to Hagar, and that he showed greater respect to her, being likely to have a child by her, and so connived at her haughtiness and arrogance:

I have given my maid into thy bosom; to be his wife, (~~3005~~ Micah 7:5); Sarai had no reason to upbraid Abram with this, since it was not at his solicitations she gave her to him, but it was her own motion:

and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes; when she found herself with child, and hoped to bring forth a son, that should be heir to Abram’s large possessions, and inherit the land of Canaan, given to his seed, she began to think highly of herself, and looked with disdain upon her mistress, set lightly by her, made no account of her, showed her no respect, carried it haughtily to her, as if she was beneath her, and as if she had more authority in the house, and a better claim to the affection of Abram, and deserving of more honour and respect, as she was favoured of God with conception, a blessing Sarai never enjoyed:

the Lord judge between me and thee: which was very rashly and hastily said, as if Abram was not inclined and was unwilling to do her justice, and therefore she appeals to God against him, as an unrighteous man, and desires that he would interpose, and by his providence show who was in the right and who in the wrong: or “the Lord will judge”^{f1041}; expressing

her confidence not only in the justness of her cause, but in the appearance of divine Providence in her favour; believing that the Lord would arise and help her, and defend her against the insults made upon her, and resent the injury done her.

Ver. 6. *But Abram said unto Sarai*, etc.] In a meek, mild and gentle manner:

behold, thy maid [is] in thine hand; though Hagar was Abram's secondary wife he still considers her as Sarai's maid, and as subject to her, and allows her to exercise authority over her; for he still retained the same love and affection for Sarai, his first and lawful wife, and showed the same respect he ever did, and supported her in her honour and dignity:

do to her as it pleaseth thee: not giving her liberty to take away her life, nor even to use her cruelly, but to deal with her as a mistress might lawfully do with a servant, or however exercise that power which a first wife had over a second: perhaps Abram, in complaisance to Sarai, gave her too large a commission, and left it too much in her power to distress Hagar; and it might have been more correct to have heard both sides, and judged between them, and used his own authority, by reproving and correcting as he saw meet; had she been only Sarai's maid and not his wife, it would have been less exceptionable; however, for peace sake, he gave leave to Sarai to do as she would:

and when Sarai dealt hardly with her; or afflicted her^{f1042}, not only with words but with blows, as some think, and unmercifully beat her, and laid hard service upon her she was not able to go through, especially in her circumstances; though it may be she only chastised her in such a manner as a mistress may chastise her maid, since the angel seems to approve of what she did, (^{416B}Genesis 16:9); which her proud spirit not being able to bear,

she fled from her face; which was set against her, and was full of wrath and fury: she deserted her service, quitted Abram's house though with child by him; unmindful of the various relations she stood in, which should have obliged her to have kept her place, and especially until she had made proper remonstrances of her ill usage, and could have no redress; but, unable to bear the treatment she met with, meditated a flight into her own country, Egypt, for by what follows it appears she steered her course that way; this flight of hers was agreeable to her name, for Hagar in the Arabic

language signifies to “flee”, hence the flight of Mahomet is called the Hegira.

Ver. 7. *And the angel of the Lord found her*, etc.] This is the first time that mention is made of an angel in Scripture, but is not to be understood of a created angel, but of a divine Person, as appears from (^{<0160>}Genesis 16:10,13), the uncreated angel, the Logos or Son of God, called the Angel of God’s presence, and the Angel of the covenant, (^{<2609>}Isaiah 63:9) (^{<300E>}Malachi 3:1); who often appeared in an human form before his incarnation, being sent by his divine Father on one account or another; and hence called an angel, a messenger, or one sent, as in the fulness of time he was sent in human nature to be the Redeemer of his people; though many of the Jewish writers take this angel to be a man sent of God. Gersom^{f1043} says he was one of the prophets that lived in those times, and observes, that some of their Rabbins say^{f1044} he was Shem, the son of Noah; and Maimonides^{f1045} suggests, that this angel was but a mere man, by comparing this passage with that in (^{<0E75>}Genesis 37:15), “a certain man found him”, etc. but the context most clearly confutes this notion, and proves him to be the almighty and omniscient God; since he promises to do what none but the omnipotent Being could do, and declares such things as none but the omniscient God could know: and when it is said he “found Hagar”, it is not to be understood as if it was a chance matter, or the fruit and effect of search and inquiry, or as if he had not seen her before; but rather it shows that his eye was upon her, and he had a concern for her, and at a proper time and place appeared to her at once, and unawares, and unthought of by her. And the place where he found her was

by a fountain of water in the wilderness; which lay between Egypt and Canaan, the same through which the Israelites passed afterwards from the one to the other: here was a fountain of water, and meeting with it she stopped to refresh herself,

by the fountain in the way to Shur; a place before or over against Egypt, from whence the wilderness had its name, (see ^{<0E58>}Genesis 25:18 ^{<0957>}1 Samuel 15:7) (^{<0F52>}Exodus 15:22), which shows that she was making her way to Egypt, as fast as she could, her native country, where in all probability she proposed to continue, and never return more: what the name of the place the angel found her at was, at that time, is not certain, or whether it had any; for it seems to be so called from the Lord’s “looking” upon her here, which “Shur” signifies: the Jerusalem Targum calls it

Chalaza; and both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan name it Chagra or Hagra, after her own name, as it should seem: and it is remarkable, that this very place, and the wilderness, and parts adjacent, were the habitation of her posterity, the sons of Ishmael, (¹⁰²⁵¹⁸Genesis 25:18); and must be in Arabia Petraea, which they inhabited; and Ptolemy^{f1046} speaks of a city called Suratta, in that country.

Ver. 8. *And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid*, etc.] He calls her by her name, which might surprise her, and describes her by her character and condition, in order to check her pride, and put her in mind of her duty to her mistress; and to suggest to her, that she ought to have been not where she was, but in the house of her mistress, and doing her service:

whence camest thou? this question the angel asked, not as ignorant, for he that could call her by her name, and describe her character and state, knew from whence she came; but he said this not only to lead on to what he had further to say to her, but to put her upon considering from whence she came, what she had left behind, and what blessings she had deprived herself of; she had not only left her husband and her mistress, but the house of God; for such Abram's family was, where the worship of God was kept up, and where the Lord granted his presence, and indulged with communion with himself:

and whither wilt thou go? he knew her intention and resolution was to go to Egypt, and he would have her think of the place whither she intended to go, as well as that she had left, as that her journey to it was dangerous, through a wilderness; that the country she was bound for was a wicked and an idolatrous one, where she would not have the free exercise of her religion she had embraced, nor any opportunity of attending the pure worship of God, and would be liable to be drawn into a sinful course of life, and into idolatrous worship:

and she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai; this was very ingenuously said, she acknowledges Sarai to be her mistress, and owns that, she had displeased her, and caused her face to be against her; and confesses the truth, that she had fled from her, not being able to bear her frowns and corrections, at least her spirit was too high to submit to them.

Ver. 9. *And the angel of the Lord said unto her*, etc.] The same angel; though Jarchi thinks that one angel after another was sent, and that at every speech there was a fresh angel; and because this phrase is repeated

again and again, some of the Rabbins have fancied there were four angels ^{f1047}, and others five, but without any reason:

return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands; go back to her, humble thyself before her, acknowledge thy fault, enter into her service again, and be subject to her; do her work and business, bear her corrections and chastisements; and “suffer thyself to be afflicted” ^{f1048}, by her, as the word may be rendered; take all patiently from her, which will be much more to thy profit and advantage than to pursue the course thou art in: and the more to encourage her to take his advice, he promises the following things, (^{<0160>}Genesis 16:10-12).

Ver. 10. *And the angel of the Lord said unto her*, etc.] The same as before, who, by what follows, appears to be Jehovah himself:

I will multiply thy seed exceedingly; not that she should have many children herself, for that she had more than this one she now went with, is not certain; but that that seed she had conceived should be exceedingly multiplied, and he should have a numerous posterity, as he had twelve princes sprung from him, the heads of Arab nations:

that it shall not be numbered for multitude; such the Turks are at this day, supposed to be the seed of Ishmael, Hagar’s son.

Ver. 11. *And the angel of the Lord said unto her*, etc.] Continued his discourse with her, informing her she should have a son, and what his name should be, and what his character, and the place of his habitation:

behold, thou [art] with child; this she knew, and it is said, not for her information, as to this respect, but to lead on to something else he had to acquaint her with, she did not know. Jarchi indeed would have the sense to be, “thou shalt conceive” or “be with child”, as was said to Manoah’s wife, (^{<0135>}Judges 13:5); for it is a fancy of his, that Hagar had miscarried, and he, supposes the angel to promise her, that if she would return, or when she should return, she should conceive again; but this is said and supposed without any foundation:

and shalt bear a son; this was what she hoped for, but was not certain of; but the angel assures her of it, that the child she went with was a son, which none could foretell but God, that is omniscient:

and shall call his name Ishmael; the Jews ^{f1049} observe, there were six persons who had their names given them before they were born, and Ishmael is one of them; the six were Isaac, (^{<0179>}Genesis 17:19); Ishmael, here; Moses, (^{<0120>}Exodus 2:10); Solomon, (^{<0024>}2 Samuel 12:24); Josiah, (^{<0132>}1 Kings 13:2); and the Messiah, (^{<2074>}Isaiah 7:14 ^{<0025>}Matthew 1:21 ^{<0031>}Luke 1:31); the reason of his name follows,

because the Lord hath heard thy affliction: heard of it, had took notice of it, and observed, and fully understood the nature and cause of it; he had heard her groans and sighs under it, and her prayer and cries for deliverance from it; and so the Targum of Onkelos,

“for the Lord hath received thy prayer,”

which she had put up in her affliction, both when in the service of her mistress, and since her flight from her.

Ver. 12. *And he will be a wild man*, etc.] Living in a wilderness, delighting in hunting and killing wild beasts, and robbing and plundering all that pass by; and such an one Ishmael was, (see ^{<0023>}Genesis 21:20,21); and such the Saracens, his posterity, were, and such the wild Arabs are to this day, who descended from him; or “the wild ass of a man” ^{f1050}; or “a wild ass among men”, as Onkelos; or “like to a wild ass among men”, as the Targum of Jonathan; wild, fierce, untamed, not subject to a yoke, and impatient of it, (see ^{<0812>}Job 11:12); such was Ishmael, and such are his posterity, who never could be subdued or brought into bondage, neither by the Assyrians, nor Medes and Persians, nor by the Greeks nor Romans, nor any other people ^{f1051}; and at this day the Arabs live independent on the Turks, nay, oblige the Turks to pay a yearly tribute for the passage of their pilgrims to Mecca, and also to pay for their caravans that pass through their country, as travellers into those parts unanimously report; wherefore Aben Ezra translates the word rendered “wild”, or “wild ass”, by *yçpj*, “free”, and refers to the passage in (^{<0805>}Job 39:5). These people having been always free, and never in bondage, always lived as free booters upon others:

his hand [will be] against every man, and every man’s hand against him; signifying, that he would be of a quarrelsome temper and warlike disposition, continually engaged in fighting with his neighbours, and they with him in their own defence; and such the Arabs his posterity always have been, and still are, given to rapine and plunder, harassing their neighbours by continual excursions and robberies, and pillaging passengers

of all nations, which they think they have a right to do; their father Ishmael being turned out into the plains and deserts, which were given him as his patrimony, and as they suppose a permission from God to take whatever he could get. And a late traveller into those parts observes ^{f1052}, that they are not to be accused of plundering strangers only, or whomsoever they may find unarmed or defenceless; but for those many implacable and hereditary animosities which continually subsist among themselves, literally fulfilling to this day the prophecy of the angel to Hagar, (^{<0162>}Genesis 16:12); the greatest as well as the smallest tribes are perpetually at variance with one another, frequently occasioned upon the most trivial account, as if they were from the very days of their first ancestor naturally prone to discord and contention.

And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren; the sons of Abram by Keturah, the Midianites, and others; and the Edomites that sprung from Esau, the son of his brother Isaac; and the Israelites, the descendants of Jacob, another son of Isaac; and his kinsmen the Moabites and Ammonites, upon all which he and his posterity bordered, (see ^{<0258>}Genesis 25:18). It may be rendered, “he shall tabernacle” ^{f1053}, or dwell in tents, as he did, and his posterity afterwards; particularly the Scenite Arabs, so called from their dwelling in tents, and the Bedouins, such were the tents of Kedar, one of his sons, (^{<0005>}Song of Solomon 1:5); the same with them to this day: according to Jarchi, the sense of the phrase is, that his seed should be large and numerous, and spread themselves, and reach to the borders of all their brethren.

Ver. 13. *And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her*, etc.] Either she called on the name of the Lord, and prayed unto him, that he would forgive her sin and give her some fresh tokens of his love; and also gave him thanks for his gracious regards unto her, that he should look upon, and look after so mean a creature, and such a backslider as she was, and return her, and make such gracious promises to her; so the Targum of Onkelos,

“she prayed in the name of the Lord;”

and the Targum of Jonathan is,

“and she confessed, or gave thanks before the Lord, whose Word spake unto her;”

and the Jerusalem Targum takes in both prayer and praise,

“and Hagar gave thanks, and prayed in the name of the Word of the Lord, who was revealed unto her:”

in which may be observed the sense of the ancient synagogue, that this angel that appeared to Hagar, and talked with her, was the Word of the Lord, the eternal Logos, or Son of God: or else the sense is, that she gave the following name or epithet to the Lord, that vouchsafed to discourse with her,

thou God seest me; she perceived by experience his eye was upon her wherever she was, and saw all she did; saw all her transgressions, her contempt of her mistress, and her flight from her; saw her when she was at the fountain, and reproved and recalled her, and sent her back; saw all the workings of her heart, her repentance and sorrow for her sins; looked and smiled upon her, and gave her exceeding great and precious promises: he looked upon her, both with his eye of omniscience and providence, and with his eye of love, and grace, and mercy; yea, she was sensible that he was not only the God that saw her, but saw all things; was God omniscient, and therefore gives him this name under a thorough conviction and deep sense of his omniscience; and so Onkelos paraphrases the words,

“thou art he, the God that sees all things;”

for she said, have I also here looked after him that seeth me? this she said within herself, either as blaming herself, that she should not look after God in this desolate place until now, and call upon him, and praise his name, whose eye was upon her, and had a concern for her, and care over her; and yet so ungrateful she had been as to neglect him, and not seek after him as it became her: or as wondering that here, in this wilderness, she should be favoured with the sight of God, and of his angel, whom she had seen in Abram’s house; where to see him was not so strange and marvellous, but it was to have a sight of him in such a place, and under such circumstances as she was: or else as admiring that she should be alive after she had had such a vision of God, it being a notion that pretty much obtained, that none could see God and live, only his back parts were to be seen; wherefore others read the words, and they will bear such a version, “have not I also seen here the back parts of him that seeth me?”^{f1054} so Moses did, (^{<02323>}Exodus 33:23).

Ver. 14. *Wherefore the well was called Beerlahairoi*, etc.] That is, the fountain where the angel found her, (^{<01637>}Genesis 16:7); this, from the

appearance of God to her at it, was afterwards called by her and others by this name, which signifies “the well of him that liveth and seeth me”; that is, of the living and all seeing God, and who had taken a special care of her, and favoured her with a peculiar discovery of his love to her: or this may have respect to herself, and be rendered, “the well of her that liveth and seeth”; that had had a sight of God, and yet was alive; lived though she had seen him, and after she had seen him, and was still indulged with a sight of him. Aben Ezra says, the name of this well, at the time he lived, was called Zemum, he doubtless means Zemzem, a well near Mecca, which the Arabs say ^{f1055} is the well by which Hagar sat down with Ishmael, and where she was comforted by the angel, (^{<01219>}Genesis 21:19):

behold, [it is] between Kadesh and Bered; Kadesh is the same with Kadesh Barnea in the wilderness, (^{<0433>}Numbers 13:3,26 ^{<0647>}Joshua 14:7). The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call it Rekam, the same with Petra, the chief city of Arabia Petraea, inhabited in later times by the Nabathaeans, the posterity of Ishmael: and Bered is nowhere else mentioned, it is called by Onkelos Chagra or Hagra, by which he interprets Shur, (^{<01137>}Genesis 16:7); and by the Targum of Jonathan it is called Chaluza, a noted town in Idumea, the same with Chelus, mentioned with Kades in the Apocrypha;

“And to all that were in Samaria and the cities thereof, and beyond Jordan unto Jerusalem, and Betane, and Chelus, and Kades, and the river of Egypt, and Taphnes, and Ramesse, and all the land of Gesem,” (Judith 1:9)

and so Jerom ^{f1056} speaks of a place called Elusa, near the wilderness of Kadesh, which in his times was inhabited by Saracens, the descendants of Ishmael; and this bids fair to the Bered here spoken of, and seems to be its Greek name, and both are of the same signification; for Bered signifies hail, as does Chalaza in Greek, which the Targumists here make Chaluza; between Kadesh and Barath, as Jerom ^{f1057} calls it, Hagar’s well was shown in his days.

Ver. 15. *And Hagar bare Abram a son*, etc.] Being returned to his house, and received by him, and reconciled to Sarai, she brought forth a son to Abram, according to the prediction of the angel:

and Abram called his son’s name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael; and this name Jarchi suggests he gave by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that dwelt in him: but it is highly reasonable to suppose, that Hagar upon her

return reported to Abram the whole of the conversation she had with the angel; wherefore Abram believing what she said, in obedience to the order and command of the angel, gave him this name.

Ver. 16. *And Abram [was] eighty years old when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.*] Which is easily reckoned, for he was seventy five years of age when he left Haran, (^{<0124>}Genesis 12:4); and he had been ten years in Canaan when Hagar was given him by Sarai for his wife, (^{<0163>}Genesis 16:3); and so must be then eighty five years of age, and of course must be eighty six when Ishmael was born.

CHAPTER 17

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 17

This chapter treats of a covenant made with Abram, sometimes called the covenant of circumcision, the time when God appeared to him, and promised to make it, and did, (^{<01706>}Genesis 17:1-3); the particulars of it, both with respect to himself, whose name was now changed, and to his posterity, (^{<01704>}Genesis 17:4-8); the token of it, circumcision, the time of its performance, and the persons obliged to it, (^{<01719>}Genesis 17:9-14); the change of Sarai's name, and a promise made that she should have a son, to the great surprise of Abraham, (^{<01715>}Genesis 17:15-17); a prayer of his for Ishmael, and the answer to it, with a confirmation of Sarah's having a son, whose name should be called Isaac, and the establishment of the covenant with him, (^{<01718>}Genesis 17:18-22); and the chapter is closed with an account of the circumcision of Abraham, and all his family of the male sort, agreeably to the command of God, (^{<01723>}Genesis 17:23-27).

Ver. 1. *And when Abram was ninety years old and nine*, etc.] Which was thirteen years after the birth of Ishmael last mentioned; so many years more it was before he is expressly told he should have a son by Sarai, or had the promise of Isaac, which was for the trial of his faith; and his age is here observed, that the power of God might be more manifest in fulfilling his promise, and giving him a son by Sarai:

the Lord appeared to Abram; in a visible manner, in an human form very probably, even the Logos, the Word and Son of God: it seems as if the Lord had not appeared to him since the birth of Ishmael, until this time; and if so, it may be thought to be a correction of him for listening to the voice of his wife in marrying Hagar, without asking counsel of God:

and said unto him, I [am] the Almighty God; as the Word of God is, as appears by his creation of all things, his in sustaining of them, his government of the church, his redemption of it, and preservation of his people safe to glory, (see ^{<01008>}Revelation 1:8); and this epithet is very appropriate here, when the Lord was about to give out a promise of a son to Abram and Sarai, so much stricken in years. Some render it "all

sufficient”^{f1058}, as Jehovah is, sufficient in and of himself, and for himself, and stands in no need of any, or of anything from another; and has a sufficiency for others, both in a way of providence and grace:

walk before me: not as though Abram had not so walked, or had discontinued his walk before God, but that he would go on to walk by faith in a dependence on him for everything he wanted, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual; and to walk in all his commandments and ordinances, that he either had given, or should give him; and all this as in his presence, and under his watchful eye, that sees and observes all things, and before whom all things are naked and open, as all are to the essential Word of God, (^{<38412>}Hebrews 4:12,13);

and be thou perfect: upright and sincere in acts of faith, and in duties of religion, and go on to perfection; which though a sinless one is not attainable in this life, is desirable, and is to be had in Christ, though not in ourselves: but here it chiefly denotes an holy and unblamable life and conversation, which though not entirely free from sin, yet without any notorious ones, which bring dishonour to God, and disgrace upon a man’s character and profession, (see ^{<1009>}Genesis 6:9). This respects not perfection in his body or flesh, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, through circumcision, by which the Jews^{f1059} fancy Abram became perfect, but was not till circumcised.

Ver. 2. *And I will make my covenant between me and thee*, etc.] The covenant of circumcision, so called from the token of it, which God is said to make or give^{f1060}, being his own constitution, and depended on his sovereign will and pleasure, (see ^{<4078>}Acts 7:8);

and will multiply thee exceedingly; as he had before promised at several times, and now renews it, lest he should think that Ishmael was the promised seed; for though Hagar’s seed is promised to be multiplied, yet here Abram’s seed by Sarai is intended, which should be exceeding exceedingly, or in great abundance multiplied; and especially as this may include both his natural seed by her, and his spiritual seed among all nations, who are of the same faith with him, (see ^{<1127>}Genesis 12:2 13:16 15:5).

Ver. 3. *And Abram fell on his face*, etc.] At the sight of so glorious a Person that appeared to him, and in reverence of his majesty, and as sensible of his unworthiness of such a visit, and of having such favours

bestowed upon him; and not because he was not as yet circumcised, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it; and so other Jewish ^{f1061} writers observe, that before he was circumcised he fell, when God spoke to him, but afterwards he sat and stood, (^{<0180>}Genesis 18:1); but it may be observed, that not only uncircumcised persons, as Balaam, (^{<0231>}Numbers 22:31), in whom Jarchi instances, but circumcised ones, as Ezekiel, (^{<0128>}Ezekiel 1:28), Joshua, (^{<0514>}Joshua 5:14), and others, have fallen on their faces at a divine appearance:

and God talked with him; after he was raised up, and was strengthened and encouraged to stand up before God, and hear what he had to say to him; for after this we read of his falling on his face again, (^{<0177>}Genesis 17:17); which shows that he had been erect, after he first fell on his face: saying; as follows.

Ver. 4. *As for me, behold, my covenant [is] with thee*, etc.] Who was gracious to make it, faithful to keep it, and immutable in it, though Abram was but a man, and sinful:

and thou shalt be a father of many nations: as he was of many Arabian nations, and of the Turks in the line of Ishmael; and of the Midianites, and others, in the line of his sons by Keturah; and of the Israelites in the line of Isaac, as well as of the Edomites in the line of Esau; and in a spiritual sense the father of all that believe, in all the nations of the world, circumcised or uncircumcised, as the apostle explains it, (^{<0411>}Romans 4:11,12,16-18).

Ver. 5. *Neither shall thy name be any more called Abram*, etc.] Which signifies an “high father”, which name he bore for many years before he was the father of anyone:

but thy name shall be Abraham: with all addition of the letter **h** inserted into it, and makes the last syllable two, “raham”: which word in the Arabic language, as Hottinger ^{f1062} observes, signifies “numerous” ^{f1063}; so that with this addition his name Abraham may be interpreted, the father of a numerous offspring; and with this agrees the reason of it, as follows:

for a father of many nations have I made thee; not that he was so already in fact, but in the purpose and promise of God, (^{<0417>}Romans 4:17); Abraham has not only been the father of many nations, in a literal sense, as before observed, but in a mystical sense, of the whole world; that is, of all in it that believe, whether Jews or Gentiles; and so the Rabbins ^{f1064}

interpret it: at first, they say, he was the father of Aram, and therefore his name was called Abram, but now he is the father of the whole world, and therefore called Abraham; and so Maimonides^{f1065} himself says, quoting this passage,

“behold he is the father of the whole world, who are gathered under the wings of the Shechinah.”

Ver. 6. *And I will make thee exceeding fruitful*, etc.] In children, for he had not only a son by Sarai, from whom sprung a numerous offspring, but he had six sons by Keturah, who became the heads of large nations:

and I will make nations of thee; as the nations of Israel and Judah, of the Midianites and Edomites, of the Arabs, Saracens, and Turks:

and kings shall come out of thee; as the twelve princes of Ishmael, the kings of Edom and Midian, of the Arabs, Saracens, and Turks, and of Israel and Judah, and especially, as observed by Grotius, and others, the King Messiah: to which may be added, in a mystical sense, all Christian kings and princes of the same faith with him; nay, all believers, who are all kings and priests unto God.

Ver. 7. *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee*, etc.] Not only renew it, but confirm it by the following token of circumcision:

and thy seed after thee, in their generation; such blessings in it as belonged to his natural seed, as such he confirmed to them, to be enjoyed by them in successive ages; and such as belonged to his spiritual seed, to them also, as they should be raised up in future times in one place and another:

for an everlasting covenant; to his natural seed, as long as they should continue in the true worship of God; and in their own land; or until the Messiah came, in whom the covenant of circumcision had its accomplishment, and was at an end; and to all his spiritual seed, with respect to the spiritual blessings of it, which are everlasting, and are never taken away, or become void;

to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee; to his natural seed, as the God of nature and providence, communicating the good things of life unto them; protecting, preserving, and continuing them in the land he gave them, and in the possessive of all the good things in it, so long as they were obedient to him as their King and their God; and to his spiritual seed, as the

God of all grace, supplying them with grace here, and bestowing upon them glory hereafter.

Ver. 8. *And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee*, etc.] To him in right, and to them in possession, and for an inheritance:

the land wherein thou art a stranger; or “the land of sojournings” or “pilgrimages”^{f1066}, which were many; for he often removed from place to place, and sometimes sojourned in one place, and sometimes in another:

all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; this respects only the natural seed of Abraham, and those in the line of Isaac and Jacob, to whom this land was given to hold for ever, in case they were obedient to the will of God; and therefore whenever they were disobedient, they were carried captive from it, as they are at this day; but when they shall be converted, they will return to this land and possess it to the end of the world; and which was a figure of the heavenly inheritance, which is an eternal one, and will be enjoyed by all his spiritual seed to all eternity:

and I will be their God; as he was to all the natural seed of Abraham in a spiritual sense, to whom the adoption belonged, and whom he chose and separated as a peculiar people to himself, and bestowed in providence many peculiar favours upon them, both in a civil and religious way; and as he is to all his spiritual seed in an evangelic sense, to whom he stands in the relation of their covenant God and Father in Christ, in whom he blesses them with all spiritual blessings, and will continue to be so unto death, and to all eternity.

Ver. 9. *And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my covenant therefore*, etc.] Observe the sign or token of it, circumcision, in the manner after related:

thou, and thy seed after thee, in their generations; in successive ages until the Messiah come, the end of the law for righteousness.

Ver. 10. *This [is] my covenant*, etc.] The token of it, for the promise itself was given before, which is more properly the covenant; circumcision is so called in an improper sense, being only the sign of it:

which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; which was to be observed by Abraham, and the males in his house then with him,

as Ishmael, and those that were born in his house, or bought with his money, and by his posterity in succeeding ages, and it is what follows:

every man child among you shall be circumcised; this was the first institution of circumcision, and it was an institution of God, and not of man. Indeed Herodotus says ^{f1067}, that

“the Colchi, Egyptians, and Ethiopians only of all men circumcised from the beginning; and the Phoenicians and Syrians, which are in Palestine, learnt it of the Egyptians, as they themselves confess.”

So Diodorus Siculus ^{f1068} speaks of circumcision as an Egyptian rite, and says there are some who make the nation of the Colchi, and of the Jews, to come from the Egyptians: hence he observes, that with these nations there is an ancient tradition to circumcise their newborn infants, which rite was derived from the Egyptians: but as the original of the Jewish nation is mistaken, so likewise the original this rite. And they may as well be thought to be mistaken in the one as in the other. Those in Palestine that were circumcised were the Jews only, as Josephus ^{f1069} observes; but they did not learn this rite from the Egyptians, nor do they ever confess it, but on the contrary suggest, that the Egyptians learnt it from them in the times of Joseph; for their principal lexicographer says ^{f1070}, the Egyptians were circumcised in the times of Joseph, and when Joseph died they drew over the foreskin of the flesh. The Colchi indeed, who were a colony of the Egyptians, might learn it from them; and so the Ethiopians, who were their neighbours likewise, and agreed with them in many things. Artapanus ^{f1071}, an Heathen writer, says, indeed, that the Ethiopians, though enemies, had such a regard for Moses, that they learned from him the rite of circumcision; and not only they, but all the priests, that is, in Egypt; and indeed the Egyptian priests only, and not the people, were circumcised. It is not very difficult to account for it, how other nations besides the Jews should receive circumcision, which was first enjoined Abraham and his seed; the Ishmaelites had it from Ishmael the son of Abraham; from them the old Arabs; from the Arabs, the Saracens; and from the Saracens, the Turks to this day: other Arabian nations, as the Midianites, and others, had it from the sons of Abraham by Keturah; and perhaps the Egyptians and Ethiopians from them, if the former had it not from the Israelites; and the Edomites had it from Edom or Esau, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham; so that all originally had it from Abraham, and he by a divine command. It is not so much to be wondered at, that Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus,

men either imposed upon by the Egyptian priests, as the former, or wrote in favour of that nation, as the latter, and wholly ignorant of divine revelation, should assert what they have done; but that Christian writers, who have the advantage of divine revelation, and have read the history of the Bible, such as Marsham, Spencer, and Leviticus Clerc, should incline to the same sentiment, is amazing; and especially when our blessed Lord has expressly said in (~~<B172>~~John 7:22), that circumcision is “of the fathers”, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, first given to them, and practised by them. Even Theodotus ^{f1072}, an Heathen writer, agrees with this sacred testimony of Moses, when speaking of the circumcision of Shechem, in the times of Jacob, he traces this rite to its original, and observes, that when Abraham was brought out of his own country, he was ordered “from heaven” to circumcise every man in his house. It may indeed seem strange how it should obtain in the islands of the West Indies, as in Jucatan, Sancta Crux, and others, where the Spaniards found in the beginning of the sixteenth century those isles inhabited by idolaters, who were circumcised ^{f1073}.

Ver. 11. *And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin*, etc.] Or “the foreskin of your flesh” ^{f1074}; by an hypallage ^{f1075}, the manner in which this was performed may be seen in the Jewish writers ^{f1076}, as well as the cure of the wound made, is particularly described by Leo Modena ^{f1077}, and which when performed, they used to provide a dish full of sand to put the foreskin into; which was done, as Buxtorf ^{f1078} relates, to show that their seed should be as the sand of the sea, and to call to mind what Balaam said of them, (~~<B230>~~Numbers 23:10); and with respect to the old serpent that deceived man, whose food is the dust of the earth, (~~<B34>~~Genesis 3:14): the instrument with which this operation was performed, according to the Jewish canons, was as follows ^{f1079},

“they may circumcise with anything, with a flint, or with glass, and with anything that cuts, excepting with a cane or reed, because of danger; but it is best to circumcise with an iron instrument, either with a knife or a razor; all Israelites use a knife.”

The persons who might perform it, according to their rules, are these;

“all are fit to circumcise (says Maimonides ^{f1080}), even an uncircumcised person, and a servant, and a woman, and a little one may circumcise where there is no man, but a Gentile may not circumcise at all; and if he does circumcise, there is no need to repeat it, and to circumcise a second time.”

It is a little differently expressed by another ^{f1081} writer of theirs,

“all are fit to circumcise, even a servant, a woman, and a little one, and an uncircumcised Israelite, whose brethren died through circumcision; but if there is an Israelite grown, and knows how to circumcise, he is to be preferred before them all; (some say a woman may not circumcise;) but an idolater, though he is circumcised, may not circumcise at all; but if he does, there is no need to repeat it, and to circumcise else a second time:”

and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you: of the promise of God to Abraham, that he should be the father of many nations. The apostle explains it, (^{f1081} Romans 4:11); to be a seal, or what gave assurance to Abraham, or was a sure token to him, that righteousness would be wrought out by Christ, by his obedience, and the shedding of his blood, which is received by faith; and that this was imputed to him while he was uncircumcised, (^{f1082} Genesis 15:6); and that this also would “be in the uncircumcision”, or uncircumcised Gentiles that should believe as he did, and be imputed to them, as to him, and so he would appear to be the father of them all. Moreover, this was a sign or token of that part of the promise or covenant, which gave to his seed the land of Canaan: this was a seal of the lease of that land, which was made while Abraham was in it, and which the Israelites were obliged to submit to, upon entrance into it in Joshua’s time, as a token of it; and which they were to observe while in it until the Messiah’s coming, and by which they were distinguished from other nations, and kept a distinct nation, that it might appear he came of them: and to use the words of Tacitus ^{f1082}, this rite was instituted “ut diversitate noscantur”, that they might be distinguished and known from others; it was typical of Christ, the end of it, who submitted to it, that it might appear he was really man, a son of Abraham, and a minister of the circumcision, and was made under the law, and so laid under obligation to fulfil it; and that he was to satisfy for the sins of men by the effusion of his blood, and endure pains and sufferings, signified thereby: it was also an emblem of spiritual circumcision, or circumcision of the heart, which ties in the putting off the body of sin, in renouncing man’s own righteousness, and in his being by the grace of God, and blood of Christ, cleansed from the impurity of his nature, propagated by carnal generation, in which the member circumcised has a principal concern.

Ver. 12. *And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you,* etc.] A son or infant of eight days old; it might not be circumcised before, but for some reasons might be deferred longer. The reasons why this rite was ordered to be performed in infancy, according to Maimonides ^{f1083}, were, because if it had been deferred to riper age it might have been neglected, and never performed; and because at such an age the pain is not so sensibly felt, by reason of the tenderness of the skin, and the weakness of the imagination; as also because the affections of parents are not then so strong as they are when one year, and especially three or four years old; and particularly it was ordered on the eighth day, because all animals, as soon as born, on account of their great humidity, are very weak, and scarce any other than they were in their mother's womb, until the end of seven days, after which they begin to be reckoned among those that perceive the air of this world; and so he remarks the same is to be observed in beasts, that seven days they were to be with their dam, (^{f1023}Exodus 22:30). According to the Jewish canon ^{f1084},

“an infant might be circumcised on the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth, neither less nor more; (not less than eight days, nor more than twelve ^{f1085};) according to the usual custom on the eighth; if he was born between the two evenings, he is circumcised on the ninth; if between the two evenings of the evening of the sabbath, he is circumcised on the tenth; if on a festival day, after the sabbath, he is circumcised on the eleventh; if on the two days of the beginning of the year, he is circumcised on the twelfth: an infant that is sick, they do not circumcise it until it is well.”

Which sickness they interpret not of sore eyes, and the like, but of an ague or fever; and when a child on the eighth day is red or yellow, or a woman has lost her children through circumcision, two or three one after another, then it is deferred; and they reckon seven days from a child's recovery from sickness, and then circumcise it ^{f1086}; but circumcision on the eighth day was always reckoned most valid and authentic, and according to rule, (see Gill on “^{f1085}Philippians 3:5”); and the Jews were careful to do it on the eighth day as soon as they could, though only when and while it was day. Their canon or rule runs thus ^{f1087},

“they do not circumcise until the sun shines out on the eighth day of a child's birth, and all the day is fit for circumcision; but they that

are prepared hasten to the commandment, and circumcise immediately in the morning; and indeed circumcision, which is not in its proper time, is never performed but in the day:”

for they observe ^{f1088}, it is said on the eighth day, (^{<0112B>}Leviticus 12:3); the day, and not the night. And this was to be done to

every man child in your generations; in all succeeding ages until the Messiah came, the end of the law; and when the lease of the land of Canaan, of which this was a seal, would be out; and when the righteousness of faith, it was also a seal of, would come upon the uncircumcised Gentiles:

he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which [is] not of thy seed; concerning which Maimonides ^{f1089} gives these rules,

“a servant is born in the power of an Israelite, and another that is taken from Heathens, the master is bound to circumcise them; but he that is born in the house is circumcised on the eighth day; and he that is bought with money is circumcised on the day that he is received, even if he received him on the day he is born, he is circumcised on that day; if he receives a grown servant of Heathens, and the servant is not willing to be circumcised, he bears with him a whole year, but more than that it is forbidden to keep him, seeing he is uncircumcised, but he must send him again to the Heathens.”

No man was to be forced to embrace the true religion, or obliged against his will to submit to its ordinances.

Ver. 13. *He that is born in thine house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised*, etc.] Or “in circumcising shall be circumcised” ^{f1090}, shall certainly be circumcised; this is repeated to denote the necessity of it, and what care should be taken that this be done, because there was to be no uncircumcised male among them, (^{<0117D>}Genesis 17:10); nor any conversation and communion to be had among them, especially in a religious way.

And my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant; circumcision was to be seen in their flesh, and no methods were to be taken to draw over the foreskin again, but it was to continue as long as they

lived; and so in their posterity, in all succeeding ages, as a sign of the covenant and promise which should remain until the Messiah's coming.

Ver. 14. *And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised*, etc.] Whose circumcision was neglected by his father, or by his mother, or by the civil magistrate, or by himself; for each of these, according to the Jewish canons, were obliged to see this performed;

“the commandment lies upon a father to circumcise his son, and upon a master to circumcise his servants born in his house, or bought with money ^{f1091}.”

and it is elsewhere said ^{f1092},

“if a father does not circumcise his son, the sanhedrim are bound to circumcise him; and if they do not circumcise him, he is obliged when he is grown up to circumcise himself; and if he does not circumcise himself, he is guilty of cutting off,”

as it here follows:

that soul shall be cut off from his people; which Jarchi interprets of his being childless, and dying before his time; and which, according to some in Aben Ezra, is, when a man dies before he is fifty two years of age; and some erroneous persons, as the same writer calls them, thought that if a child died, and was not circumcised, it had no part in the world to come. The simplest and plainest meaning of the phrase seems to be, that such should be cut off, and deprived of all civil and religious privileges with the Israelites in the land of Canaan, and be reckoned as Heathens. Concerning this matter, Maimonides ^{f1093} thus writes;

“a father or a mother that transgress, and circumcise not, make void the affirmative commandment, but are not guilty of cutting off; for no cutting off depends but upon the uncircumcised person himself; and the sanhedrim are commanded to circumcise a son or a servant in its time, that they may not leave an uncircumcised person in Israel, nor among their servants; if the thing is hid from the sanhedrim, and they do not circumcise him, when he is grown up, he is bound to circumcise himself; and every day that passes over him, after he is grown up, and he does not circumcise himself, lo, he maketh the commandment to cease; but he is not guilty of

cutting off until he dies, and he is a presumptuous uncircumcised person;”

and so, according to him, this must respect his punishment after death in another world:

he hath broken my covenant; made it null and void, neglecting the token of it, circumcision.

Ver. 15. *And God said unto Abraham*, etc.] After he had changed his name, and given him the covenant of circumcision:

as for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah her name [shall be]; her former name Sarai signifies “my princess”, or rather “princesses”, being to him in the room of many, and better than ten thousand; yet only a princess to him, and in his family, being sole mistress there: but Sarah signifies, as Jarchi observes, “princess” absolutely, because she was princess over all the princes and people that should come of her, as well as be the mother and princess of all female believers, who are called her daughters, (~~and~~ 1 Peter 3:6).

Ver. 16. *And I will bless her*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds, “in her body”, with fruitfulness, who before was barren, and in her soul with spiritual blessings, and in both with the blessing of eternal life:

and give thee a son also of her; as he had given him one of Hagar: God had before promised Abraham a son that should be his heir, but he had not till now told him that he should be born of Sarah his wife:

yea, I will bless her; which is repeated for the confirmation of it, and for the greater strengthening Abraham’s faith in it:

and she shall be [a mother] of nations; of the twelve tribes of Israel; of the two nations of Israel and Judah;

kings of people shall be of her; as David, Solomon, and others, and especially the King Messiah.

Ver. 17. *Then Abraham fell upon his face*, etc.] In reverence of the divine Being, and as amazed at what was told him:

and laughed; not through distrust and diffidence of the promise, as Sarah did, for he staggered not at that through unbelief, but for joy at such good news; and so Onkelos renders it, “and he rejoiced”, with the joy of faith; it

may be our Lord refers to this in (^{<086>}John 8:56); he saw Christ in the promise of Isaac, and rejoiced that he should spring from his seed: the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, “and he wondered”; he was amazed at the grace of God that gave him such a promise, and he was astonished at the power of God that must be exerted in the fulfilment of it: and therefore it follows,

and said in his heart; within himself, without expressing anything as to be heard and understood by any creature; but the omniscient God knew what he said, and the language of it, whether of unbelief or not:

shall [a child] be born unto him that is an hundred years old? not that he was now a full an hundred years old, he was ninety nine, and going in his hundredth year; but then he would be, as he was, an hundred years old when this child was born to him, (^{<0205>}Genesis 21:5). It had been no unusual thing for a child to be born to a man when an hundred, and even many hundred years old, but it was so in Abraham’s time; though indeed after this we read that Abraham himself had six sons by Keturah, when, his natural strength was afresh invigorated, and his youth was renewed like the eagle’s; and besides Abraham said this, not so much with respect to himself, though his age was a circumstance that served to heighten the wonder, as with respect to Sarah, and the circumstances in which she was, who was to bear this son to him:

and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? and with whom it had ceased to be after the manner of women, which made it more difficult of belief how it could be. Some think that Abraham said this, as somewhat doubting of it, until he was more strongly assured by the Lord that so it would be indeed, as is expressed in (^{<0179>}Genesis 17:19); but meeting with no reproof for what he said and did, as Sarah, it seems to show the contrary.

Ver. 18. *And Abraham said unto God*, etc.] Being told he should have a son by Sarah, that should be his heir, he is concerned for Ishmael what would become of him; and who, being grown up, had doubtless a large share in his affections, and it is highly probable he began to think he was the promised seed, since he had lived to such an age, and had no other son, and Sarah was past bearing children: but now perceiving it would be otherwise, he puts up a petition for Ishmael, whom he did not neglect upon the promise of another, and to show his love to him, and regard for his welfare:

O that Ishmael might live before thee; he prays that his life might be preserved, and that it might be spent in the fear, worship, and service of God; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“O that Ishmael might live and worship before thee,”

and to the same sense Jarchi also; that he might enjoy the favour of God, his gracious presence and communion with him; that he might live a holy spiritual life here, acceptable and well pleasing to God, and possess eternal life hereafter: for we must take this prayer in as large a sense as we can suppose the heart of a father to be drawn forth in it for the good of his child; though it may greatly respect his sharing with the promised son in his blessings, and particularly regards the propagation of his offspring, or his living in his posterity at least; this was what the Lord took notice of, and answered him in.

Ver. 19. *And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed*, etc.]

This is repeated for the confirmation of it, and thus expressed to remove all doubt about it, if any there were, that hung upon Abraham’s mind; as well as to let him know that the promise of a son by Sarah was not to be superseded by his prayer for Ishmael, for whom he might have a greater flow of natural affection than for his unborn son, in whom his seed should be called:

and thou shall call his name Isaac; which signifies “laughter”; and which name was given him from the laughter of Abraham at the promise of him, and not from the laughter of Sarah, which as yet was not; wherefore Josephus^{f1094} is wrong when he suggests, that Isaac had this name from Sarah’s laughing at God’s saying, that she should bear a son: though his birth was matter of laughter and joy to both, as it was to all good people that heard of it, (⁰²⁰⁸Genesis 21:8). So Polyhistor^{f1095} from Melo, an Heathen writer, speaking of Abraham, says, that of his married or lawful wife one son was born to him, whose name in Greek is “Gelos”, that is, laughter. Isaac is one of those the Jews^{f1096} observe had his name given him before he was born, (see Gill on “⁰¹⁶¹Genesis 16:11”):

and I will establish my covenant with him, for an everlasting covenant, [and] with his seed after him; the covenant of circumcision just made with Abraham, the promise of the land of Canaan to him and his posterity, and of the Messiah that should spring from him, until whose coming this covenant would continue, and therefore called everlasting.

Ver. 20. *And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee, etc.* Took notice of his prayer for him, and accepted of and would answer him, and did, as follows:

behold, I have blessed him; determined in his mind to bless him, promised to bless him, (^{f1060}Genesis 16:10,12); had blessings laid up and in reserve for him:

and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; as he did, many of the Arabian nations, the Hagarenes, Saracens, and Turks, all springing from him:

twelve princes shall he beget; whose names are given, (^{f1053}Genesis 25:13-15); and their number there exactly agrees with this prophecy. Melo ^{f1097}, the Heathen writer above mentioned, says, that Abraham, of his other wife, the Egyptian servant (that is, Hagar), begat twelve sons, which he mistakes for twelve sons of Ishmael, his son by Hagar; and, adds he, these going into Arabia, divided the country among them, and were the first that reigned over the inhabitants of it; hence down to our times the kings of the Arabians have twelve names like to those. So the Saracens were divided into twelve tribes, of which there were so many “phylarchi”, or governors; and the Turks also are divided into the same number of tribes ^{f1098}. And

I will make him a great nation; as the nation of the Turks especially is; and the Turkish empire is frequently called in Jewish writings the kingdom of Ishmael, as the Arabic language is called the Ishmaelish language.

Ver. 21. *But my covenant will one establish with Isaac, etc.*] The covenant of circumcision; for though Ishmael was circumcised, and his posterity practised that rite, yet it was not enjoined them of God; nor was it to them, or served the same purpose as to the Israelites; and particularly the promise of the land of Canaan, made in that covenant, belonged only to the posterity of Isaac, and to those only in the line of Jacob, and especially that of the Messiah springing from him, which circumcision had a respect unto:

whom Sarah shall bear unto thee, at this set time, in the next year: that is, at the end of nine months, which is the set time a woman goes with child.

Ver. 22. *And he left off talking; with him, etc.*] After he had finished all he had to say to him at this time. It was great condescension in the divine Being to talk with a creature; it was wonderful grace and kindness to make such promises to him, as he did, and indulge him with answers of prayer

and communion with him; but the highest enjoyments of God here are not lasting; uninterrupted communion with him is reserved for another world:

and God went up from Abraham; from the earth, where he had been with Abraham, and ascended above him up to heaven, in a visible, and very likely in an human form, in which he descended: the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, “the glory of the Lord”, the glorious Shechinah, the Lord of life and glory.

Ver. 23. *And Abraham took Ishmael his son*, etc.] To circumcise him; he took his son first, to set an example to his servants, and that they might the more readily comply when they saw that Abraham’s son, and at that time his only son, was circumcised before their eyes:

and all that were born in his house; which were three hundred and eighteen when he rescued Lot from the kings, (^{Q1144}Genesis 14:14); and perhaps they might be now increased:

and all that were bought with his money; how many those were, it is not easy to say, no doubt they were many:

every male among the men of Abraham’s house; whether children or servants, and those little or grown up:

and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin, in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him; he performed this operation in the manner God directed him, the same day he spoke to him of it; he was not disobedient, nor dilatory to obey the command of God, but at once complied with it, not consulting flesh and blood, not regarding the pain he and his should endure, or the shame or danger they should be exposed unto through the Heathens about them; but trusting in God, and committing himself to him, and having his fear before his eyes, he hesitated not, but cheerfully did the will of God. In doing this work he might have some assistance: it is highly probable he began it himself, and circumcised several; and having taught some of his servants how to perform it according to the divine prescription, they might assist him in going through with it.

Ver. 24. *And Abraham [was] ninety years old and nine*, etc.] (see ^{Q1718}Genesis 17:1). This circumstance of his age is observed the more to commend his faith and obedience, that though he was an old man, he did not consider his age, or make that an objection; that he was unable to bear

the pain, or it would be shameful for a man of his years to be uncovered before his servants:

when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin; who circumcised him is not said, very probably Eliezer his head servant: the Jews, who affect to know everything, say ^{f1099}, that he sent for Shem, the son of Noah, who circumcised him and his son Ishmael; but it is most likely that Ishmael was circumcised by Abraham himself, as seems from (^{<1173}Genesis 17:23); and Abraham might circumcise himself, as Ben Melech thinks.

Ver. 25. *And Ishmael his son [was] thirteen years old when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin.*]. Hence the Arabians, as Josephus ^{f1100} relates, circumcise their children when at thirteen years of age, because Ishmael, the founder of their nation, was circumcised at that age; and Origen ^{f1101} asserts the same; and with which agrees what an Arabic writer says ^{f1102} of the Arabians before Mahomet, that they used to circumcise at a certain age, between the tenth and fifteenth years of their age. So Rauwolff says ^{f1103}, there are some, chiefly among the Arabians, that imitate their patriarch Ishmael. As for the Mahometans, though they circumcise, they do not always do it in the thirteenth year, as some write; for it is performed by them sometimes in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, or sixteenth, and sometimes in the sixth or seventh year ^{f1104}. The Egyptians, according to Ambrose ^{f1105}, circumcised their children at fourteen years of age, which comes pretty near to the time of the Ishmaelites or Arabs, from whom they might receive circumcision, if not of the Israelites, as before observed. A certain traveller says ^{f1106}, the modern Egyptians, as the rest of the Mahometans, are not circumcised until the thirteenth year. The Africans circumcise on the seventh day, which comes nearer to the Jews ^{f1107}.

Ver. 26. *In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.*]. This is repeated, that it might be taken notice of that both were circumcised according to the command of God, and on the very day in which it was given. Jarchi observes, it was in the day, and not in the night; which shows, says he, he was not afraid of the Heathen, and of mockers; and that his enemies, and the men of that generation, might not say, if we had seen him, we would not have suffered him to be circumcised, and keep the commandment of God: and some of the Jewish writers ^{f1108} fable, that he was circumcised on the day afterwards appointed by Moses for the day of atonement, and that in the place where he was circumcised the altar was

built; but all this is without any foundation. This affair was transacted, according to Bishop Usher^{f1109}, A. M. 2107, and before Christ 1897.

Ver. 27. *And all the men of his house*, etc.] All the males, whether children or adult:

born in the house, or bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him; by their will, and with their consent; not forced to it, as Aben Ezra rightly observes; and these being before trained up by him in religious exercises, were more easily prevailed upon by him to follow his example; this also is repeated, that it might be served, and be an example to follow in after generations.

CHAPTER 18

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 18

Another appearance of God to Abraham is here recorded; three persons are seen by him in an human form, whom he kindly invites to stop with him, and generously entertains them, (~~OL181~~Genesis 18:1-8); they inquire concerning Sarah his wife, and one of them renews the promise of her bearing a son to him, which occasions laughter in her, for which she is reproved, (~~OL189~~Genesis 18:9-15); upon their departure the Lord thought fit, for reasons given, to make known to Abraham his intention to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, (~~OL186~~Genesis 18:16-22); when Abraham intercedes for the preservation of those cities in a most importunate and affectionate manner, (~~OL183~~Genesis 18:23-33).

Ver. 1. *And the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre*, etc.]

That is, to Abraham; and very likely this appearance of God was quickly after the affair of the circumcision, to show his approbation of his ready obedience to his command; and at this time he was in the plains, or at the oaks of Mamre, the oaken grove there, as has been observed on (~~OL138~~Genesis 13:18); and which seems to be the best rendering of the words, since in (~~OL184~~Genesis 18:4,8); mention is made of a tree to sit and stand under; and Abraham might choose this place for his habitation, because of the shadiness of it, in those hot countries:

and he sat in the tent door, in the heat of the day; partly to cool and refresh himself, and partly to observe if any passengers passed by, to invite them in; this being a time of day when such needed refreshment, and it was proper for them to lie by a while, and not proceed on their journey until it was cooler: or rather to or “near” the tent door, as Noldius^{f1110}, or before it, without or under the shade of the tree, after mentioned.

Ver. 2. *And he lifted up his eyes and looked*, etc.] To see if he could observe any passengers coming that way:

and, lo, three men stood by him; having perhaps descended at once from heaven upon the spot near where Abraham sat; for these, whoever they were, appeared in an human form, and they were took by Abraham at first

sight to be men, and as such he treated them: some have taken these to be the three divine Persons, as some of the ancients; of which opinion was Dr. Lightfoot, who expressly says ^{f1111},

“three months after this, (i.e. the institution of the circumcision,) the three Persons in the Trinity dine with Abraham, and foretell the birth of Isaac; again, the Son and the Holy Ghost go down to Sodom, but the first Person in the Trinity stayeth with Abraham”

and elsewhere ^{f1112},

“the three Persons in the Trinity, in the shape of three men, appear to Abraham and dine with him, and eat the first flesh mentioned eaten in all the Scripture.”

But to this may be objected, that the Father and the Holy Spirit are never said to appear in an human form, (see ^{<REF>}John 5:37); or are ever called angels, as these are, (^{<REF>}Genesis 19:1); but they rather seem to be angels, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call them, in the likeness of men, who were sent on three messages, as they suggest; one to bring the news of Sarah’s bearing Isaac; the other to deliver Lot; and the third to overthrow Sodom and Gomorrah; which is a much better sense than that of Ben Gersom, who takes them to be three prophets, and mentions the names of two of them, Shem and Heber; for two of these are expressly called angels, (^{<REF>}Genesis 19:1); and the apostle seems to refer to this history, (^{<REF>}Hebrews 13:2); in the Talmud ^{f1113} they are said to be Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael: the truth of the matter seems to be this, that one of them was the son of God in an human form, that chiefly conversed with Abraham, and who rained from heaven brimstone on Sodom; and the other two were angels in the like form that accompanied him in that expedition:

and when he saw [them], he ran to meet them from the tent door; for, though they are before said to stand “by him”, it must be understood of their being near him, but at some little distance; and as soon as he saw them, he did not stay for their coming up to him, but, to show how ready he was to entertain them, he arises from his seat at the tent door and ran to meet them, and gave them an hearty welcome to what he would provide for them:

and bowed himself toward the ground; not in a way of religious adoration, for, had he took them for angels, he could not have done that, and he knew not as yet that one of them was Jehovah; but in a civil manner, as was the

custom of those countries when in the presence of, or when they received? great personages, and such, by their look and habit, Abraham took these to be.

Ver. 3. *And said, my Lord*, etc.] He addressed himself to one of them who appeared to him to be the greatest and most honourable, either by the appearance of his countenance, or by his dress, or by the situation in which he was between the other two, and by their carriage and behaviour to him:

if now I have found favour in thy sight; signifying he should esteem it an honour done him, that he and his companions would vouchsafe to stop and refresh themselves:

pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant; they might seem, by some motion they made, as if they were going another way, and declined turning in to him.

Ver. 4. *Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet*, etc.] Which was very refreshing to travellers in hot countries, who walked barefoot or in sandals; and this he proposes to be done by one of his servants, whose business it was, only desires they would give him leave to order it, (^{f1114}1 Samuel 25:41); and so it was usual in other countries, and in later times, for servants to fetch water to wash the hands and feet of guests ^{f1114}:

and rest yourselves under the tree; before the tent door, under which doubtless were seats to sit down upon, where they might rest their weary limbs; it is very probable this was an oak tree, and which, and a turpentine tree the ancient writers speak of, continued unto the times of Constantine, (see Gill on “^{f1115}Genesis 13:18”); and the Jewish writers say ^{f1115}, that now near the city (Hebron), between the vineyards, are the oaks of Mamre, where is the house of Abraham our father, on whom be peace, and the tree under which the angels ate, and the stone on which he (Abraham) sat when he was circumcised.

Ver. 5. *And I will fetch a morsel of bread*, etc.] A piece or a loaf of bread, as De Dieu shows the word signifies; bread being put for all the necessities of life:

and comfort ye your hearts; eat to refresh your spirits and renew your strength, that ye may be able to pursue your journey: and

after that ye shall pass on your way; I will retard you no longer:

for therefore are ye come to your servant; not that he thought they came this way on purpose to take some refreshment with him, but so it was ordered by the providence of God; and since it was, he desires that they would accept of his invitation:

and they said, so do as thou hast said; they agreed to it, that water should be fetched to wash their feet, and food for them to eat.

Ver. 6. *And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah*, etc.] In order to acquaint her with his guests, and to give proper instructions for providing food for them; and this he hastened to do, being hearty in the entertainment of them, and that he might not keep them too long from their journey:

and said, to Sarah his wife,

make ready quickly three measures of fine meal; which was ready sifted from the bran, and was the finest flour that was in the house, and only wanted to be mixed and kneaded and made up into cakes; and he ordered three measures or seahs of them, each of which held more than our peck, and all three made an ephah or bushel, being willing to have enough, and to make a generous entertainment for them; this he enjoined Sarah to do, but not of herself, but by her maids, and no doubt, for quicker dispatch, she might assist herself, wherefore it follows:

knead [it], and make cakes upon the hearth; after the fine flour was made dough and kneaded, it was made into round cakes, and these were put upon an hearth made hot, and then covered with hot embers, by which means they were soon baked and fit to eat; this was done “upon hot stones”^{f1116}; and a traveller^{f1117} into those parts some years ago reports, that, passing through the deserts of Arabia, when they chose to eat new bread, instead of, or for want of biscuits, they made a paste of flour and water, and wrought it into broad cakes about the thickness of a finger, and put them in a hot place on the ground, heated on purpose by fire, and covered them with ashes and coals, and turned them several times until they were enough, and that these cakes were savoury and good to eat: some of the Arabians, he says: have in their tents stones or copper plates, made on purpose to bake them, and gives^{f1118} an instance of a woman they met with in a country lying between Mesopotamia and Media, making such cakes for them in the same manner.

Ver. 7. *And Abraham ran unto the herd*, etc.] While Sarah and her maids were kneading the dough and making the cakes:

and fetched a calf tender and good; a fine fat calf, which was reckoned very delicious food, and much in use with the ancients^{f1119} and generally made a part in any grand entertainment, and was accounted fit for a king, (see ~~<089>~~ 1 Samuel 28:24,25 ~~<053>~~ Luke 15:23):

and gave [it] unto a young man: one of his servants, to kill and dress as soon as possible; Jarchi says this was Ishmael, whom he trained up to such service:

and he hastened to dress it; the young man made all the haste he could to get it ready, according to the orders of Abraham.

Ver. 8. *And he took butter and milk*, etc.] Jarchi says, it was the fat of the milk gathered from the top of it, he means cream, and is different both from butter and from milk: this was either Abraham himself, who took and brought these, as Sarah or her maidens might bring the cakes when baked; or else Abraham's young man, since it follows:

and the calf which he had dressed; either the whole of it, or some principal parts of it, reckoned the finest and choicest; though by what follows it seems to be Abraham himself, who may be said to dress the calf, it being done by his orders:

and set [it] before them; a table being placed under the tree, he set, or ordered to be set, all those provisions before the three men, to feed upon, the cakes and butter, the milk and fatted calf:

and he stood by them under the tree; not only to bid them welcome, but to minister to them; nor will this seem strange, or that the above several things were chiefly done by Abraham and Sarah, when it is observed that the greatest personages in the eastern countries, in early times, used to perform such services, and still do to this day, as a late traveller^{f1120} informs us:

“it is here (says he) no disgrace for persons of the highest character to busy themselves in what we should reckon menial employments; the greatest prince assists in the most laborious actions of husbandry; neither is he ashamed to fetch a lamb from his herd and kill it, while the princess his wife is impatient till she has prepared

her fire and her kettle to seethe and dress it: the custom that still continues of walking either barefoot or with slippers requires the ancient compliment of bringing water upon the arrival of a stranger to wash his feet; and who is the person that presents himself first to do this office, and to give the “mar habbeh”, or welcome, but the master of the family himself? who always distinguishes himself by being the most officious; and, after his entertainment is prepared, accounts it a breach of respect to sit down with his guests, but stands up all the time and serves them.”

All which serves greatly to illustrate this passage; and the same learned author observes, that in this manner we find Achilles and Patroclus employed, as described by Homer^{f1121}, in providing an entertainment:

and they did eat; or seemed to eat, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi; though as they assumed bodies so animated as to be capable of talking and walking, why not of eating and drinking? and there must have been a consumption of food some way or other, or Abraham would have known they had not eaten: we read of angels’ food, (^{<0125>}Psalm 78:25); our English poet had a notion of angels eating, and represents Eve providing a repast for the angel, which he owns to be no ungrateful food^{f1122}.

Ver. 9. *And they said unto him, where [is] Sarah thy wife?* etc.] One of them put the question; and so the Septuagint version renders it, “and he said unto him”, the principal of them, whom Abraham at first addressed and called him “my Lord”, and was no other than the Son of God in an human form; and various things in the context show him to be a divine Person, particularly his promise of return next year, and Sarah should have a son: and the question here put by him was not out of ignorance, for he who knew the name of Abraham’s wife, knew where she was; but this was asked in order to lead on to say something more concerning her, and that, hearing her name, she might draw nearer and listen to what was said of her:

and he said, behold, in the tent; for in those times they dwelt in tents, and this was either the tent common to the family, or rather was Sarah’s own tent, (^{<0125>}Genesis 24:67); Sarah was where she should be, in her own apartment, attending to the business of her family, and answered to the description the apostle gives of a good housewife, a keeper at home, (^{<0125>}Titus 2:5);

Ver. 10. *And he said*, etc.] The same that put the question, Jehovah himself, as appears by what follows:

I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; not by a personal appearance as now, but by the fulfilment of his promise which he had before given to Abraham, that he should have a son by Sarah, and now renews it; and this would be about the same time in the next year, perhaps at the spring of the year, which may be called “a time of life”, when all things revive, which in the winter season seem to be dead; a fit emblem this of the case and condition of Abraham and Sarah, both as they now were, and afterwards would be; for, though their bodies were as it were dead and unfit for generation, yet nature would revive in them again: unless it be understood of the whole time of the conception, quickening, and birth of an infant, at the usual time a woman goes with child, which is nine months, when the infant is a perfect living child. All the Targums paraphrase it,

“in which ye shall be alive,”

safe and well, and so most of the Jewish commentators; as if it was a promise to Abraham and Sarah, that they should live to see the promise made good next given; but this seems not so agreeable as either of the former, (see ¹¹²³2 Kings 4:16):

and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son; it was by degrees that this was made known to Abraham; first he was told he should have a son, but it was not said by whom he should have it; some years after that he is informed he should have a son by Sarah, but not when; but now it is revealed to him, that he should have one by her the next year;

and Sarah heard [it] in the tent door, which [was] behind him; or, “and it was behind him”^{fi123}; that is, the tent door was at the back of the person speaking; Sarah, hearing her name mentioned, got to the tent door to listen to what might be further said; and the place where she was, was behind the speaker, who stood between her and Abraham, with whom he was conversing; Abraham was before high, and Sarah behind him, so that he could not see her when she laughed, and yet he knew she did; and for the sake of that, this circumstance is remarked: both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase the clause,

“and Ishmael stood behind it,”

the tent door; and the former adds, and hearkened to what the angel said.

Ver. 11. *Now Abraham and Sarah [were] old, [and] well stricken in age,* etc.] The one being ninety nine years of age, and the other eighty nine; and which is observed to make it the more surprising that they should have a son at such an age; and what follows still makes it more so:

[and] it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women; her monthly visitors had left her, so that she was unfit for conception, and there could be no hope of it in a natural way; though the philosopher^{f1124} intimates, that there are some, that it is possible, may conceive without them.

Ver. 12. *Therefore Sarah laughed within herself,* etc.] Not for joy of a son, and as pleased with it, believing so it would be; but as disbelieving it, and perhaps deriding it, and confuting it with a laugh, which, though it did not appear in her countenance, was secretly in her heart:

saying, not with her mouth, but in her mind,

after I am waxed old, being almost ninety years of age,

shall I have pleasure? in conception, or rather in having a son, and in suckling and nursing him, and bringing him up; for in bearing and bringing forth is sorrow:

and my Lord being old also; which increased the difficulty and her unbelief: the Apostle Peter seems to have respect to this in (~~amr6~~ 1 Peter 3:6).

Ver. 13. *And the Lord said unto Abraham,* etc.] This discovers who the person was that had been conversing with Abraham, that he was a divine Person, as appears by his name “Jehovah”, as well as by his knowledge of Sarah’s behaviour; he did not turn himself to her, that it might be more manifest that it was not upon the sight of her he judged she laughed, but from his own omniscience; and he chose rather to speak to her husband than to her, appearing as a stranger, and that he might reprove her:

wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? suggesting there was no reason for it, and signifying his displeasure and indignation at it.

Ver. 14. *Is anything too hard for the Lord?* etc.] Whose power is infinite; or “too wonderful”^{f1125}, so wonderful and beyond all belief, that it can never be thought it will be done by him; and why then should it be thought incredible or impossible that Sarah should have a child, though she is old?

Or, is “anything hidden from the Lord”^{f1126}? Nothing can be, not Sarah’s laughter.

At the time appointed will I return to thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son; which words are repeated not merely for the confirmation of Abraham’s faith, which staggered not, but to remove Sarah’s unbelief, and to encourage her faith in the divine promise.

Ver. 15. *Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not*, etc.] Some render the words, “Sarah lied”^{f1127}; and indeed it was no other than a lie, to say she did not laugh when she did; which she might be tempted to say in her confusion, partly because the back of the speaker was to her, and he could not see her, and partly because it was inward, and very little at least discoverable in her countenance:

for she was afraid; of the reproof of her husband; and of the charge of ill manners to a stranger; and especially as she had reason to believe that it was the Lord himself that had spoken these words, and therefore could gladly have excused herself, and wiped off the reproach:

and he said, nay, but thou didst laugh; it is not true what thou sayest, for thou didst certainly laugh; this he knew, being the omniscient God, notwithstanding, as he appeared as a man, his back was to her, and though her laughter was more internal than external.

Ver. 16. *And the men rose up from thence*, etc.] From their seats at Abraham’s table under the tree, all three of them:

and looked toward Sodom; set their faces and steered their course that way, by which it appeared they intended to go thither: the Targum of Jonathan says, that he that brought the news to Sarah went up, to the highest heavens, and two of them looked toward Sodom; but it seems most likely, that, when the two went on their way to Sodom, the third stayed with Abraham:

and Abraham went with them, to bring them on the way; which was another piece of civility to strangers used in those early times, as well as in later ones, (~~408~~ Acts 20:38 21:5).

Ver. 17. *And the Lord said*, etc.] Either unto Abraham himself, so leading on to what he was about to make known to him; and without supposing this it will be difficult to account for Abraham’s intercession for Sodom

upon this: or to the two angels with him; not as consulting them whether he should or no do what he next suggests, but to give to them Abraham's just character, and the reasons of his using him in such a friendly manner: or it may be, to the other divine Persons, the Father and Spirit, one with the Son of God, and always present with him:

shall I hide from Abraham the thing which I do? which he was about to do, namely, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah: the Jewish writers ^{f1128} observe, that these cities were given in the grant of the whole land to Abraham, and therefore it was right to acquaint him with it first: but other and better reasons are given in the next words; Abraham was a friend of the Lord, and he had showed himself friendly to him, not only now, but heretofore, and therefore will treat him as his friend, by imparting his secrets to him.

Ver. 18. *Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation*, etc.] Which was fulfilled in the nation of Israel, so called, not so much for the largeness of the place they dwelt in, and the number of its inhabitants, as for the law of God that was given them, and the worship of God kept up among them; on account of which there was no nation so great, (^{<R08>}Deuteronomy 4:8);

and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him; in his seed, the Messiah, in whom some of all nations are blessed with all spiritual blessings. Now, since God had promised, and would do such great things for him and his, he judged it right and proper not to hide from him what he was about to do at Sodom, and the rather, as he had a near relation that dwelt there.

Ver. 19. *For I know him*, etc.] Not only by his omniscience, but with a special knowledge, such as is accompanied with peculiar love and affection; and so Jarchi says, it is expressive of love. God loved Abraham, he was a peculiar favourite of his, and therefore he would reveal his secrets to him, (see ^{<R09>}Amos 3:2,7); and he knew not only who he was, but what he was, a holy good man, made so by his own grace, and what he would do by the assistance of that grace, and particularly what follows:

that he will command his children, and his household after him; to serve and worship the Lord: not his own children only, but his servants also, all in his family; lay his injunctions on them, use his authority with them, give

them all needful instructions, and take such methods with them as would tend to propagate and preserve the true religion after his death:

and they shall keep the way of the Lord; which he has prescribed to men, and directed them to walk in, even everything respecting instituted worship then revealed, and particularly,

to do justice and judgment; to attend to all the laws, statutes, and judgments of God; to do that which is just and right between man and man; not as a justifying righteousness, by which Abraham himself was not justified before God; but to show their regard to the will of God, in gratitude for favours received from him, and to glorify him, as well as for the good of their fellow creatures:

that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him: not only on Abraham personally, but upon his posterity, they walking in the ways of the Lord, according to his command and direction: the word “that” here rather signifies, as Vatablus rightly observes, the consequence than the cause, what would follow upon these things, rather than as procured by them; these being the way in which God designed to bestow them, though not for them.

Ver. 20. *And the Lord said*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds, to the ministering angels, the two angels that were with him in the likeness of men; or to Abraham, at least in his hearing, by which he understood that Sodom and other cities were about to be destroyed for their sins:

because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great; either of Lot in it, whose righteous soul was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, and cried to heaven against them; or of the inhabitants that were oppressed by others, either in their bodies, being forced to submit to their unnatural usage of them, or in their estates, of which they wronged them; particularly the cry of the poor among them, whom they suffered to starve, though there were fulness of bread in the midst of them, (see ²³⁶⁹ Ezekiel 16:49,50); the Jews ^{f1129} say, they appointed false judges, who oppressed all strangers that came to Sodom, and made a law, that whoever relieved a poor person should be burnt with fire: or the cry of their sins, which were many and great, and openly and impudently committed; the cry of which came into the ears of the Lord of hosts, and called for vengeance. Those two cities, which perhaps were the greatest and the most remarkable for their sins, are put for all the five cities of the plain, called Pentapolis.

And because their sin is very grievous; attended with very aggravated circumstances, they enjoyed great plenty of good things; and were not to be bore with, being so exceeding sinful, and so publicly and audaciously committed, especially that sin so frequent among them, which has its name from Sodom, (see ^{<0113>}Genesis 13:13).

Ver. 21. *I will go down now*, etc.] The Son of God in an human form now with Abraham, who proposes to go from the place where he was, which perhaps was on higher ground, to the plain in which Sodom and Gomorrah stood; and whither it seems certain he did go down, after he had done talking with Abraham, (see ^{<0124>}Genesis 19:24):

and see whether they have done altogether; committed all the sins, and in such manner, and with such circumstances as reported; or, “have made a full end”^{f1130}, have tilled up the measure of their iniquities, and so are ripe for ruin:

according to the cry of it which is come unto me; this is spoken after the manner of men; for otherwise God saw all their wickedness, and knew full well the nature and circumstances of it, and how general it was; but this method he proposes to take, to show the justice of his proceedings, and to instruct judges, and set an example to them, not to condemn any without thoroughly examining their cause:

and if not, I will know: the reason of this cry, and what is proper to be done. The note of Aben Ezra is,

“if they have so done (according to the cry) I will make a consumption among them (so he takes the sense of the word^{f1131} we render “altogether”); but if not, “I will know”, I will have mercy on them.”

Ver. 22. *And the men turned their faces from thence*, etc.] From the place to which Abraham brought them on; these were only two of them, for the third continued with Abraham:

and went towards Sodom; and are the two angels said to come thither at evening, (^{<0125>}Genesis 19:1):

but Abraham stood yet before the Lord; before the third person, whom Abraham now began to know more clearly; he stood before him with all reverence and humility, to hear what he had further to say to him, as well

as to say something to him himself; he stood “yet”, he continued to stand after the departure of the two angels that were gone to Sodom. Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it,

“he ministered in prayer before the Lord.”

Ver. 23. *And Abraham drew near*, etc.] To the Lord; he approached nearer to him, to have more close and intimate conversation with him on the subject of the destruction of Sodom, which he perceived, by what had been said, was like to be; he drew nigh to God in prayer; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and Abraham prayed and said;”

he drew nigh with faith and freedom, and an holy boldness and confidence, and yet with great reverence of the divine Majesty, and in all humility, under a deep sense of his own meanness and unworthiness:

and said, wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? having in his mind righteous Lot, who dwelt in Sodom, whom he knew to be a just man, though he had departed from him, and was dwelling in such a wicked place; and he might charitably hope there were more in so large a city and in the parts adjacent, at least that were not so flagitious and abominably wicked as the greater part were, and who, in comparison of them, were sober and moral people.

Ver. 24. *Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city*, etc.] Within the Pentapolis, which consisted of five cities; and so ten righteous persons are supposed to be in each, as Jarchi observes, agreeably to the Targum of Jonathan;

“perhaps there may be fifty righteous persons in the city who pray before thee, ten for every city, answerable to the five cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboiim, and Zoar:”

wilt thou also destroy, and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that [are] therein? here Abraham becomes an advocate and intercessor for all the inhabitants of the place, even the wicked, that they might not be destroyed, but spared and be delivered from impending ruin, for the sake of the fifty righteous among them; before he seemed only concerned for the righteous, lest they should perish with the rest, and that some method might be found out and taken to distinguish them from them; but here he

expresses himself in favour of the wicked also, that they might be spared, provided such a number of righteous ones was found among them.

Ver. 25. *That be far from thee to do after this manner*, etc.] He represents it as a thing unbecoming the divine Majesty, and contrary to the nature and perfections of God,

to slay the righteous with the wicked; which is true of eternal punishment, but not of temporal calamities, in which the righteous are often involved with the wicked, though not for the same reasons, and under the same considerations, and for the same ends:

and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee; the one suffer as the other; that he judged was not agreeable to his divine Majesty; nor are they treated without any difference; what befalls the righteous is not for their sins, nor considered as a punishment for them, nor intended for their hurt, but for their good, as the issue of them proves; but it is the reverse with the wicked:

shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? meaning the Lord, to whom he drew nigh, and was praying to, and pleading with, even the Son of God in human form, who, as he made the world, was the Governor of it and Judge in it; and indeed, as Mediator, has all judgment committed to him, and is appointed to be Judge of quick and dead at the last day, and who does all things that are just and equitable in Providence now; for there is no unrighteousness in him, nor in any of ways and works, and who will judge righteous judgment hereafter. Though by “right” Abraham seems to mean, not strict rigorous justice, but a mixture of mercy with justice, even moderation and clemency; for such are used by earthly judges, with whom it is a maxim, “*summum jus summa injuria*” (i.e. extreme law, extreme injustice); and therefore Abraham argues, surely the supreme Judge of all the earth will show mercy, and in the midst of deserved wrath remember it, and not deal according to the rules of inexorable and inflexible justice; and to this sense the answer of the Lord inclines.

Ver. 26. *If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city*, etc.] Sodom is particularly mentioned because Lot dwelt there, and being the metropolis, and the city of greatest note, as Jarchi observes, it is put for the rest; and the sense is, if fifty righteous persons could be found in all the five cities, mercy should be shown them:

then will I spare all the place for their sakes; not Sodom only, but the whole country, of which Sodom was the chief; the Lord takes up and agrees to the number Abraham pitched upon, and grants the request he makes.

Ver. 27. *And Abraham answered and said*, etc.] In a very humble and modest manner, encouraged by the answer given him:

behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord; suggesting that it was bold and daring in him, and was what he was unfit for and unworthy of; or, “I have begun to speak”^{f1132}; and since he had, he intimates, it would be a favour, and what he was undeserving of, might he be permitted to proceed; or, “I am desirous to speak”^{f1133}; it is a pleasure to me, as well as an honour done me, to be permitted to speak unto the Lord, though I deserve it not,

which [am but] dust and ashes; whose original was out of the dust, and to which he would return, and was now a frail, feeble, mortal creature, mean and despicable, unworthy to speak to God; the disproportion between the speaker and the person spoken to was infinite; wherefore the most profound humility and self-abasement are necessary in a creature’s approach to the divine Being.

Ver. 28. *Peradventure there should lack five of the fifty righteous*, etc.] Or there should be but forty five; for Abraham perceived, by the Lord’s answer, that there were not fifty righteous persons in the place:

wilt thou destroy all the city for [lack of] five? Abraham proceeds gradually in his requests, and does not ask too much at once, lest he should not succeed:

and he said, if I find there forty and five, I will not destroy [it]; that is, forty five righteous persons.

Ver. 29. *And he spake [unto him] yet again, and said*, etc.] Being encouraged by such a gracious answer:

Peradventure there shall be forty found there; forty righteous persons; and, from preceding passages, it must be supplied,

“wilt thou destroy and not spare the place for their sakes?”

and he said, I will not do [it] for forty's sake; but spare them for their sake.

Ver. 30. *And he said unto him, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak*, etc.] He feared, through his importunity, he should be wearisome to him and incur his displeasure; this being often the case among men, especially when inferiors are soliciting their superiors, and, not content with one favour, are pressing for more:

Peradventure there shall thirty be found there; the abatement is larger than before; he only made an abatement of five at a time, now ten at once, and so he proceeds;

and he said, I will not do [it], if I find thirty there; not destroy the place for their sake.

Ver. 31. *And he said, behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{Q1827}Genesis 18:27”):

Peradventure there shall be twenty found there; wouldest thou destroy it, such a number being in it; or, wouldest thou spare it for their sakes?

and he said, I will not destroy [it] for twenty's sake; if there were no more in it, I would spare it for their sake.

Ver. 32. *And he said, Oh, let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once*, etc.] This should be the last request he should make on this account, and therefore he desired he might be heard without any marks of his displeasure;

Peradventure ten shall be found there: how would the place be dealt with then? would it be consumed or not?

and he said, I will not destroy [it] for ten's sake; though no more righteous persons were found in it. Some of the Jewish writers say ^{f1134}, he ended at ten, because he supposed there were ten righteous persons in Lot's family, Lot and his wife, and their four daughters, and their four husbands; but they forgot that two of Lot's daughters were unmarried, and how many he had married is not known; ten they say make a congregation, and wherever there are ten righteous persons, a place is saved for their sakes.

Ver. 33. *And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham*, etc.] It is great and wonderful condescension for God to commune with a creature; it is an act of sovereignty how long he will continue to do so; communion with him always is not to be expected in this life; he communes for a while, and then leaves off and goes his way, (see ~~2448~~ Jeremiah 14:8); the Son of God in an human form, as soon as he had done talking with Abraham, perhaps disappeared to him, and went his way to Sodom, for there we find him in the next chapter:

and Abraham returned unto his place; to his tent in the plains of Mamre, waiting to observe or hear what would be the issue and event of things respecting Sodom and Gomorrah.

CHAPTER 19

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 19

The contents of this chapter are Lot's entertainment of two angels that came to Sodom, (^{<01901}Genesis 19:1-3); the rude behaviour of the men of Sodom towards them, who for it were smote with blindness, (^{<01904}Genesis 19:4-11); the deliverance of Lot, his wife and two daughters, by means of the angels he entertained, (^{<01912}Genesis 19:12-17); the sparing of the city of Zoar at the entreaty of Lot, to which he was allowed to flee, (^{<01918}Genesis 19:18-22); the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, (^{<01923}Genesis 19:23-25); Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt for looking back, (^{<01926}Genesis 19:26); Abraham's view of the conflagration of the cities, (^{<01928}Genesis 19:28,29); Lot's betaking himself to a mountain, and dwelling in a cave with his two daughters, by whom he had two sons, the one called Moab, and the other Benammi, (^{<01930}Genesis 19:30-38).

Ver. 1. *And there came two angels to Sodom at even*, etc.] Or “the two angels”^{f1135}, the two men who were angels in the likeness of men, that had been with Abraham in the heat of the day at Hebron, on the evening of the same day came to Sodom:

and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: not as a civil magistrate to try causes there, being appointed a judge over them, as Jarchi relates; yea, the Jews say^{f1136}: that that day five judges were appointed by the men of Sodom, and Lot was the chief of them; but this is not likely, and seems to be contradicted, (^{<01909}Genesis 19:9); but he sat there to observe strangers that might pass by, and invite them into his house, and that they might not fall into the hands of the wicked Sodomites, who might abuse them; this being a time when not only travellers would be glad to put up and take refreshment, but his wicked neighbours lay in wait for them to satisfy their lusts on them: he had learnt this hospitality from Abraham;

and Lot seeing [them], rose up to meet them: he arose from his seat and went forward to meet them, which showed his readiness and heartiness to receive them:

and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground; not in a religious way, as paying worship to angels, for as yet he did not know them to be such, and if he had, would not have given them divine adoration; but in a civil way, as was the custom of the eastern countries to bow very low in their civil respects to men, especially to great personages; and such Lot took these to be by their goodly looks and by their dress, as appears by his salutation of them in (~~CHAP~~Genesis 19:2).

Ver. 2. *And he said, behold now, my lords*, etc.] Taking them to be, and bespeaking them as persons of quality, who appeared with majesty in their countenances, and looked as if they had been well brought up, and were upon their travels; not knowing them to be angels, whom he received and entertained unawares, as the apostle, referring to Lot and Abraham, observes, (~~CHAP~~Hebrews 13:2);

turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house; meaning himself, who was their humble servant, and entreats them to turn in to his house, which perhaps was hard by, and take up their lodging with him: the ancient Jews ^{f1137} give the sense of the phrase thus, go a roundabout, winding, crooked way to my house, that the men of Sodom may not see you go in there, and know you are there. This is taken from the signification of the word to “turn in”, which in a different construction signifies to decline, to go back; and so the Targum of Jonathan,

“turn here, and there, and go into the house of your servant.”

and tarry all night, and wash your feet; the meaning is, that they would stay all night, and take up their lodging with him, when they had washed their feet, which was usually done before they laid down, and even before they supped; and indeed was the first thing that was done to a stranger upon his entering into the house, (~~CHAP~~Genesis 18:4 ~~CHAP~~Luke 7:44):

and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways: signifying that he would not detain them longer than they thought fit; they might rise as soon in the morning as they pleased, and pursue their journey, only he entreats they would accept of a night's lodging with him:

and they said, nay, but we will abide in the street all night; which they said partly out of modesty, it not becoming strangers to be too forward in accepting an invitation, and partly to try whether Lot was hearty in the invitation he gave them; and hereby also reigning ignorance of the manners and behaviour of the men of Sodom, as if they might be safe from their

insults in the street in the night; and this made Lot the more pressing upon them, that they might not be exposed to his wicked neighbours.

Ver. 3. *And he pressed them greatly*, etc.] He prayed, he entreated, he persuaded, he made use of a multitude of words, and of all the arguments he could think of, to prevail upon them; and might not only press them with words, but make use of gestures, as taking them by the hand, or by their clothes, and as it were forcing them into his house, whereby it plainly appeared he was cordial and hearty in his invitation:

and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house: went along with him to it, and instead of proceeding forward, or continuing where they were, or steering their course to a street in the city, they turned in to Lot's house:

and he made them a feast; a large, liberal, and generous entertainment, as Abraham did, consisting of a variety of eatables and drinkables; indeed it has its name only from drinking, wine being a principal part of a banquet:

and did bake unleavened bread; not because it was the time of the passover, as Jarchi suggests, for as yet that was not instituted; but for quicker dispatch, that his guests might have their supper the sooner, and get to bed the earlier, and rest themselves; bread without leaven in it being sooner baked than that which is made with it:

and they did eat; the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem are,

“they seemed as if they ate.”

(See Gill on “~~Q188~~Genesis 18:8”);

Ver. 4. *But before they lay down*, etc.] Upon their beds to sleep; it was between supper time and bedtime that the following affair happened, while the angels were talking to Lot about the men of Sodom, and inquiring what sort of men they were, as the Jewish writers^{f1138} suggest:

the men of the city, [even] the men of Sodom, compassed the house round about; the house of Lot, where the angels were:

both old and young: the males of the city of every age; some that were past committing the sin they were so infamous for, as well as those that burned with that unnatural lust; some that could not be actors were willing to be

spectators; and all were curious to see the lovely persons, that it was reported all over the city were seen to go into Lot's house:

all the people from every quarter; all from one end of the city to the other, and from every corner in it: which shows the general corruption and depravity of the city, that it was so far from having ten righteous persons in it, that of the proper inhabitants of it, there was not, as Jarchi notes, one righteous person, no, not one.

Ver. 5. *And they called unto Lot*, etc.] With a loud voice, that he might hear, they being in the street, and he within doors; and perhaps there might be a court before his house, through which there was a passage up to it, as seems from (^{<0196>}Genesis 19:6):

and said unto him, where are the men which came in to thee this night? for though they were angels, they appeared like men, and they seemed to be so to them who saw them go into Lot's house:

bring them out unto us, that we may know them; not who they were, and from whence they came, and what their business was; nor did they pretend anything of this kind to hide and cover their design from Lot, but they were open and impudent, and declared their sin without shame and blushing, which is their character, (^{<0199>}Isaiah 3:9); their meaning was, that they might commit that unnatural sin with them, they were addicted to, and in common used, and which from them to this day bears the name of Sodomy. As lawful copulation with a man's wife is modestly expressed by knowing her, (^{<0100>}Genesis 4:1,17,25); so this unlawful and shocking copulation of man with man is expressed by this phrase; and that this was their meaning is plain from Lot's answer to them, (^{<0198>}Genesis 19:8).

Ver. 6. *And Lot went out at the door unto them*, etc.] At the door of his house:

and shut the door after him; the door of the passage to his house, the courtyard door, for another word is here used; unless the one was properly the door, and the other a hatch: however, this precaution of shutting it was used to prevent the men of Sodom rushing in, and taking away the men by violence; and that Lot might have some opportunity of trying what he could do by arguments, to prevail upon them to desist from their attempt.

Ver. 7. *And said, I pray you, brethren*, etc.] Not by family or nation, for the Sodomites were of the race of Ham, in the line of Canaan, and Lot was

a descendant of Shem, in the line of Arphaxad; nor by religion, for the one were idolaters, and the other a worshipper of the true God, but by community of nature; and especially he called them so by reason of their having been neighbours considerable time, and on the score of friendship, (see ^{<1193>}1 Kings 9:13); and with this soft and loving language Lot hoped to win his neighbours, and to persuade them from pursuing their unlawful measures: for which purpose and that alone he used it, saying to them,

do not so wickedly; as to use ill a man's guests, to abuse strangers, to break the laws and rules of hospitality, and especially to commit that unnatural sin they were bent upon.

Ver. 8. *Behold now, I have two daughters, which have not known man,* etc.] Though some think they were espoused to men, but had not yet cohabited with them, (see ^{<1194>}Genesis 19:14):

let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as [is] good in your eyes; this was a very great evil in Lot to make such an offer of his daughters; it was contrary to parental love and affection, an exposing the chastity of his daughters, which should have been his care to preserve; nor had he a power to dispose of them in such a manner: and though fornication is a lesser evil than sodomy, yet all evil is to be avoided, and even it is not to be done that good may come: nothing can be said to excuse this good man, but the hurry of spirit, and confusion of mind that he was in, not knowing what to say or do to prevent the base designs of those men; that he might be pretty certain they would not accept of his offer, their lust burning more after men than women; that this showed his great regard to the laws of hospitality, that he had rather sacrifice his daughters to their brutal lusts, than give up the men that were in his house to them; and that he might hope that this would soften their minds, and put them off of any further attempt; but after all it must be condemned as a dangerous and imprudent action:

only unto these men do nothing; for as yet he knew them not to be angels; had he, it would not have given him the concern it did, since he must have known that they were able to defend themselves, and that the sin these men offered to commit could not be perpetrated on them: but he took them for mere men, and his request is, that no injury might be done to their persons in any respect, and especially in that way which their wicked hearts put them upon, and is so shocking to nature:

for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof; for though it was not their intention in coming, nor the design of Providence in bringing them into Lot's house, to secure them from the violence of the men of Sodom, but for the preservation of Lot and his family, which as yet he knew nothing of, yet it was what Lot had in view in giving the invitation to them: and the laws of hospitality being reckoned sacred and inviolable, a man's house was accounted an asylum for strangers when taken into it.

Ver. 9. *And they said, stand back*, etc.] Turn on one side, get away from the door, that we may come to it:

and they said [again]: to one another:

this one [fellow] came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge; this one man, and he a stranger and sojourner, no freeman or citizen of this city, sets himself against the whole body of the inhabitants, and takes upon him to judge what is right and wrong to be done; and if he is let alone in "judging he will judge"^{f1139}, as it may be rendered; he will take upon him this office, and continue to exercise it, and determine and decide all matters among us at his pleasure. This confutes the above notion of the Jews, that Lot was appointed a judge by the men of Sodom, yea, the president of the court for that day; (see Gill on "~~Q190~~Genesis 19:1"):

now will we deal worse with thee than with them: the men in his house, both by abusing his body in their unnatural way, and by beating and bruising him, and pulling him in pieces, limb from limb; something of this kind they seem to threaten him with, and attempted to effect, as follows:

and they pressed sore upon the man, [even] Lot; not only with words in a bullying way, with menaces and threats, with oaths, and curses, and imprecations; for it is the same word that is used of Lot, pressing the angels with words and arguments to come into his house, (~~Q193~~Genesis 19:3); but they rushed in upon him in a body, and pushed him away, and pulled him about, and would in all probability have torn him to pieces, had he not been rescued by the angels:

and came near to break the door: that which was shut, the door of the passage that led to the house.

Ver. 10. *But the men put forth their hand*, etc.] They came to the door, and opened it, and put out their hands, one on one side the door, and the other on the other:

and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door; and thus they rescued Lot from the fury and rage of the men of Sodom, and prevented his daughters being exposed unto them, as he had offered. This action showed them to be more than men, that they should open the door, take in Lot, and shut it so suddenly, that the men of Sodom could take no advantage of it, could neither retain Lot, nor enter the door when opened, and especially what follows.

Ver. 11. *And they smote the men that [were] at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great*, etc.] with “blindnesses”^{f1140}; with extreme blindness, with blindness both of eye and heart, as Aben Ezra interprets it; and indeed had they not been given up to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, such a stroke upon them might have convinced them that their ways were evil, and their works not right, and that by them they had incurred the displeasure of God, and would desisted from their enterprise; but, on the contrary, they went on with it, and sought with all diligence and labour as much as possible to effect it. The word for “blindness” is only used here and in (~~ms~~ 2 Kings 6:18), and denotes a peculiar sort of blindness; not an entire blindness with respect to every object, but only with regard to that they were intent upon; for otherwise they would not have continued about Lot’s house, or fatigued themselves with searching for the door of it, but would rather have been glad to have groped to their own houses as well as they could: and thus it was with the Syrians, when they were smitten at the prayer of Elisha, it was not total, for they could follow the prophet in the way he went and led them, but they could not see their way to the place where they intended to go; and so these men of Sodom could see other objects, but not the door of Lot’s house, their heads were so confused, and their imaginations so disturbed as in drunken men; or the medium of the visive faculty, the air, so altered, or the form of the object to be seen so changed, that they could not discern it; when they saw the door, it looked like the wall, and that which seemed to them to be the door, proved to be the wall:

so that they wearied themselves to find the door; went backwards and forwards, fancying the door was here, and then it was there, and when they came to it, they perceived it was not; and thus they went to and fro, until they were quite weary of seeking it, and despaired of finding it, and left off.

Ver. 12. *And the men said unto Lot*, etc.] When they had got him into the house again, they began to make themselves known unto him, and to acquaint him with the business they came to do:

hast thou here any besides? which they ask not as being ignorant, though angels know not everything relative to men, but to show their great regard to Lot, who had been so kind to them, and so careful of them; that for his sake they would save them all, if they would take the benefit of their protection, and in this they doubtless had the mind of God revealed to them:

son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters; it should be rendered either “son-in-law, or thy sons, or thy daughters”^{f1141}; if thou hast any son-in-law that has married a daughter of thine, or any sons of thine own that live from thee; or grandsons, the sons of thy married daughters, as Jarchi interprets it; or any other daughters besides those two we here see:

and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring [them] out of this place; that is, whatsoever relations he had, whether more near or remote; for as for his goods, whether in his own house, or in any other part of the city, there was no time for saving them.

Ver. 13. *For we will destroy this place*, etc.] Or “we are destroying it”^{f1142}, are about to do it, and will quickly and immediately do it:

because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; the cry of the sins of the inhabitants of it, which were many, and openly, and daringly committed, and reached to heaven, and called for immediate vengeance and punishment:

and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it; by which they discovered themselves to be angels, and what their business was, to destroy Sodom; and which confutes the notion of the Jews, that they were sent on different errands; whereas it is clear from hence, these two were sent to do one and the same thing; (see Gill on “^{<0182>}Genesis 18:2”).

Ver. 14. *And Lot went out*, etc.] From his house, after the men of Sodom were gone from it, and before the morning, very probably about midnight:

and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters: according to Aben Ezra, he had two other daughters that perished in Sodom, which he gathers from (^{<0195>}Genesis 19:15), “which are here”, as if he had some

elsewhere; and so Jarchi says, he had two daughters married in the city. And the Jewish writers ^{f1143} speak of one of them, whose name was Pelothith, married to one of the grandees of Sodom: but it seems rather, that these were the daughters Lot had at home with him; who, according to Josephus ^{f1144} were espoused to men in the city, but not yet married; and on account of such espousals, as were usual in the eastern countries, Lot calls them his sons-in-law, as they were intended, and so the words may be rendered, “that were about to take his daughters” ^{f1145}; to take them for wives, and to their own houses, neither of which they had as yet done; for if these had been daughters of his married, and taken home, he would not only have spoke unto their husbands, but to them also; and would have been still more pressing upon them to arise and make their escape; of which nothing is said, nor of any answer of theirs to him, only of his sons-in-law, as they are called on the above account:

and said, up, get ye out of this place; that is, get up from your beds, anne immediately, and make your escape out of the city:

for the Lord will destroy this city; now, directly, immediately; therefore there is no time to be lost, but at once prepare for your safety:

but he seemed as one that mocked to his sons in law; as one that was in jest, and had a mind to have a little sport with them, to get them out of their beds, and put them into a flight, and then laugh at them.

Ver. 15. *And when the morning arose*, etc.] When it was break of day, for as yet the sun was not risen, nor did it rise until Lot got to Zoar, (⁽¹¹²³⁾Genesis 19:23). He was now returned from his sons-in-law, and by this time it began to be light:

then the angels hastened Lot; urged him to get out of his house as fast as he could:

saying, arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; from whence Aben Ezra, and others, have concluded, as has been observed, that he had other daughters elsewhere, which they suppose were married to men of Sodom; but the phrase, “which are here”, or “are found”, or “are present” ^{f1146}, relates to his wife, as well as his daughters, and only signifies, that he should take all his relations that were present; and these may be only opposed to and distinguished from his sons-in-law that were absent, and refused to hearken to his advice and exhortations. Onkelos paraphrases the words, “who are found faithful with thee”; who believed what the

angels said concerning the destruction of Sodom, as well as he, as did his wife and two daughters:

lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city; in the punishment inflicted on the city for their iniquity. (see ⁶⁶⁸⁰Revelation 18:4).

Ver. 16. *And while he lingered*, etc.] Delayed going out of his house, either loath to leave his goods and substance behind him; or waiting to see whether his sons-in-law would come to him; or, as others, praying that God would spare the city: though rather the sense is, that he was so amazed, and filled with horror and trembling at the thought of what judgments were coming on the city, that he was like one stupid, that had no power to stir nor move, which seems best to agree with the sense of the word used ^{f1147}:

the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; one of them took hold of his hand with one of his hands, and on his wife's with the other, and the second took hold of one of his daughters with one hand, and of the other with his other hand, and so led them out:

the Lord being merciful unto him; and so saved them from the ruin and destruction of the city, in which had they stayed a little longer they would have been involved. It was not owing to their merits, but to the mercy of God that they were spared:

and they brought him forth, and set him without the city; not him only, but his wife and two daughters also, and having so done, left them and returned to the city; for so the last clause may be rendered, "and left him without the city" ^{f1148}, to shift for themselves; or rather well knowing that there would be one that would immediately appear and take them under his care and protection, as the event shows.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad*, etc.] Into the fields of Sodom, or the suburbs of it:

that he said, escape for thy life; not one of the two men or angels that had been with him all the night past, for they had now left him, and were gone back to the city: but Jehovah the Son of God, who had been communing with Abraham, and now came to Sodom, and appeared to Lot, just at the time the two angels left him, and bid him escape with all haste, if he had any regard for his life, and that of those with him:

look not behind thee; as showing any concern for his goods and substance he had left behind him, or for his sons-in-law, who refused to come with him, and much less for the wicked inhabitants of the city; and this command was not given to Lot only, but to his wife and daughters, as appears by the sequel:

neither stay thou in all the plain: in the plain of Jordan, for the whole plain, and the cities in it, were to be destroyed:

escape to the mountain, lest thou be destroyed, lest thou be consumed; the same mountain the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and they that were with them after the battle of the kings, fled to, (¹¹¹⁴⁰Genesis 14:10); here only he and his could be safe from the conflagration of the plain.

Ver. 18. *And Lot said unto them*, etc.] Supposing three present, not observing that the two angels had left him that had brought him thither; though it is but to one of them he addresses himself, even to him who had bid him make the best of his way to the mountain, as appears by what follows:

oh, not so, my Lord; that is, let me not be obliged to go so far as to the mountain; though R. Samuel takes it to be an assent, and interprets the phrase of his being willing: but this does not agree with what follows, and is rejected by Aben Ezra, who relates it; and who also observes, that the word “Lord” is a common name, that is, that belongs to a creature; but Jarchi says their Rabbins take it to be an holy name, that is, a name that belongs to God, and gives a good reason why it is so to be understood here; since the person spoken to had it in his power to kill or make alive, to save or destroy, as the following words show; so Ben Melech and the Targum of Oukelos render it by Jehovah.

Ver. 19. *Behold, now thy servant hath found grace in thy sight*, etc.] In sending two of his angels to him, to inform him of the approaching destruction of Sodom; to pluck him out of it as a brand out of the burning, and to place him without the city, and in directing and encouraging him to escape for his life:

and thou hast magnified thy mercy which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; he owns it was owing to the mercy of this illustrious Person, whom he knew and acknowledges, by what he says, to be a divine one, that his life was saved; and that this appeared exceeding great in it, that he should spare him and his family, when such multitudes of souls

would perish; and he might have perished with the rest, if he had not had timely notice in such a gracious manner:

and I cannot, or, “but now”^{f1149}, I cannot”

escape to the mountain; it is too far for me; he signifies that his strength would not hold out through the fatigues of the night past, and want of sleep and rest; but this was owing more to the infirmity of his mind than of his body, for he could go to this same mountain afterwards:

lest some evil take me, and I die; or “that evil”^{f1150}, the burning of Sodom, and the cities of the plain, lest that should overtake him before he got to the mountain: thus he began to distrust the power of God to strengthen him to go thither, who had appeared so wonderfully for him in his present deliverance; and he might have assured himself, that he that brought him out of Sodom would never suffer him to perish in the destruction of it.

Ver. 20. *Behold now, this city [is] near to flee unto*, etc.] Pointing to Bela, afterwards called Zoar, from what follows: it is said to be two miles distant from Sodom^{f1151}. But the Jews^{f1152} say it was four miles, and some say^{f1153} five; for they reckon that a man may go five miles from the ascent of the morning (or break of day) till the sun shines out:

and it [is] a little one: a little city, and the houses and buildings in it few, the inhabitants few; and the sins of it few, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, in comparison of Sodom and Gomorrah; and therefore Lot hoped this favour would be granted him, that this city might be saved, and he be allowed to flee to it, and go no further; but others think this refers not to the city, which some say^{f1154} was a large and spacious one, but to his request, that it was a small thing he asked, and hoped therefore it would not be denied, and in which he was very importunate:

oh, let me escape thither, ([is] it not a little one?); or “is it not a little thing”^{f1155}? a small request that I make:

and my soul shall live: I shall not only be able to get thither, and so my life will be preserved; but I shall be in good spirits, rejoice and be glad, that I am got safe and out of the reach of danger; my spirits, which are now faint, and therefore can never think of getting so far as to the mountain, but, if this favour is granted me, they will revive, and I shall cheerfully pursue my journey thither, and be comfortable.

Ver. 21. *And he said unto him, see, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also*, etc.] Accepted thy prayer and granted thy request, as well as in other things; shown grace and mercy to thee: or, “have lifted up thy face” ^{f1156}; alluding to the custom of the eastern countries, where persons, when they come into the presence of their superiors, used to prostrate their faces to the ground; when, as a token of their acceptance of them, and good will to them, they used to order them to be lifted up, or them to lift up their faces, and stand before them:

that I will not overthrow this city for the which thou hast spoken; for, though he had not in express words petitioned that the city might be spared, yet he had tacitly done it, insomuch as he had requested he might flee unto it, where he could not have been safe had it been destroyed.

Ver. 22. *Haste thee, escape thither*, etc.] Seeing he had granted him his request, he is urgent upon him to be gone, and not to delay upon any account, or make other excuses:

for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither; that is, consistent with the decree of God, that Lot and his family should be delivered and preserved, and with his promise made to him, that he would not overthrow that city; and therefore the catastrophe which would befall all the cities at once could not begin until he was safely arrived there:

therefore the name of the city was called Zoar; in later times, and probably first by Lot, from his use of the word “little”, which was his request, which Zoar signifies; it before was called Bela, (see ^{<1142>}Genesis 14:2).

Ver. 23. *And the sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar*.] Which is observed partly to point at the time of his entrance into the city, and of the burning of Sodom, which began at the same time; and partly to show what a fine morning it was, and what little appearance there was of such a tempest rising as quickly did; so that the inhabitants of Sodom, who were up so early, little thought of so sudden a catastrophe, and those that were in their beds were at once surprised with it: it was a morning of light and joy to Lot, who was so wonderfully delivered, but a dreadful one to the men of Sodom and the rest of the cities of the plain, with whom the scene was soon altered; likewise from hence it appeared, that the following tempest was extraordinary, and did not proceed from natural causes.

Ver. 24. *Then the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.*] And not upon those two cities only, but upon Admah and Zeboiim also, (see ^{<6923>}Deuteronomy 29:23); this was not a common storm of thunder and lightning, with which often there is a smell of sulphur or brimstone; but this was a continued shower of sulphurous fire, or of burning flaming brimstone, which at once consumed those cities and the inhabitants of them; and the land adjacent being bituminous, or however some parts of it, full of slimepits, or pits of bitumen, a liquid of a pitchy quality, (^{<0140>}Genesis 14:10); this flaming sulphur falling thereon, must burn in a most fierce and furious manner; and which utterly consumed not only houses, goods, and everything upon the land, but the land itself, and turned it into a bituminous lake, called to this day, from thence, the Lake Asphaltites, the Greek word for bitumen being “asphaltos”. Of this conflagration some Heathen writers speak, as particularly Tacitus ^{f1157} who says, some large and famous cities, or, as some copies have it, Jewish ones, not far from Jordan, were struck with thunderbolts, and were fired “igni ceolesti”, with fire from heaven, and were consumed; and so Solinus ^{f1158} relates, that,

“at some distance from Jerusalem, a sorrowful lake appears, which the black ground testifies was stricken by heaven and turned into ashes; where were two towns, the one called Sodomum, the other Gomorrum.”

This was a righteous judgment on those cities, and a just retaliation for their sin; their sin was an unnatural one, and nature is inverted to punish them, fire comes down from heaven, or hell from heaven, as Salvian’s words are, to consume them; they burned with lusts one against another, and flaming sheets of sulphurous fire fall upon them, burn and destroy them; and, in allusion to this terrible conflagration, hell is called the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, (^{<6907>}Jude 1:7) (^{<6914>}Revelation 20:14,15 21:8); and this destruction was brought upon them by Jehovah the Son of God, who had appeared to Abraham in an human form, and gave him notice of it, and heard all he had to plead for those cities, and then departed from him to Sodom, and was the author of this sad catastrophe; this amazing shower of fire and brimstone was rained by him from Jehovah his Father, out of heaven; so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem both call him, the Word of the Lord.

Ver. 25. *And he overthrew those cities*, etc.] Of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim: very probably at the same time that this fiery tempest was in the heavens, there was an earthquake which overthrew the cities; and so Strabo^{f1159} makes the lake, which is now the place where they stood, to be owing to earthquakes and eruptions of fire, and of hot bituminous and sulphurous waters; and says nothing of fire from heaven, which yet Tacitus and Solinus do, being unacquainted with the sacred history:

and all the plain; the plain of Jordan, and the cities on it, all but Zoar; not all the five cities, as Josephus^{f1160}: Egesippus^{f1161} and other authors mistake, only the four above mentioned. Strabo^{f1162} speaks of thirteen cities being formerly upon this spot, of which Sodom was the metropolis:

and all the inhabitants of the cities; none were spared, all were destroyed, but Lot, his wife, and two daughters:

and that which grew upon the ground; the trees, herbs, and plants; these were all turned up by the earthquake, and burnt with fire from heaven: Tacitus, in his account of this conflagration, says,

“the fields, which were formerly fruitful, and inhabited by many cities, were burnt up with lightning; and there are traces (he adds) yet remain; the earth itself looks torrid, and has lost its fruitful virtue; for whatsoever grows up of itself, or is sown and rises up in the plant or flower, or grows up to its usual species, becomes black and empty, and vanishes into ashes.”

The place where those cities stood is now a lake, and is sometimes called the salt sea, (^{CHB}Genesis 14:3); and sometimes the dead sea, because it is said, no creature can live in it; and sometimes called the Lake Asphaltites, from its bituminous and pitchy quality: though Reland^{f1163} has attempted to confute the notion that the cities of Sodom, etc. stood where this lake now is: and the many things that have been reported of this lake and parts adjacent, by various historians, supposed to be of good credit, are by modern travellers exploded^{f1164}; as those of no living creature being bred in it; of bodies not sinking in it; and of birds being unable to fly over it; and of the cities appearing under water in a clear day; and of the apples of Sodom, which look beautiful to the eye, but when touched fall into ashes; many of which Josephus^{f1165} himself relates: indeed, Ludovicus Vartomanus^{f1166}, a traveller in those parts in the beginning of the sixteenth century, says,

“there yet remain the ruins of the destroyed city, as a witness of God’s wrath; we may affirm, there are three cities, and each of them situated on the decline of three hills, and the ruins appear about the height of three or four cubits; there is yet seen, I scarce know what, something like blood, or rather like red wax mixed with earth:”

and our countryman Mr. Sandys^{f1167}, though he questions some of the above things before related, especially concerning the apples, yet says,

“not far from thence grows a tree whose fruit is like a green walnut, which he saw, and which they say never ripens.”

This lake of Sodom, according to Josephus^{f1168}, is five hundred and eighty furlongs in length unto Zoar, and one hundred fifty broad; but, according to modern accounts, it is twenty four leagues in length, and six or seven in breadth^{f1169}; the Arabic geographer^{f1170} says, it is sixty miles in length, and twelve in breadth; it is now called by the Arabs, Bahar Louth, Lot’s lake.

Ver. 26. *But his wife looked back from behind him*, etc.] That is, the wife of Lot, whose name the Jewish writers^{f1171} say was Adith, or as others Irith^{f1172}; and, according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, she was a native of Sodom: now, as they were going from Sodom to Zoar, she was behind Lot, his back was to her, so that he could not see her; this was a temptation to her to look back, since her husband could not see her; and this she did, either, as the above paraphrases suggest, that she might see what would be the end of her father’s house and family, or whether her married daughters, if she had any, were following her, after whom her bowels yearned; or being grieved for the goods and substance left behind, and for the people of Sodom in general, for whom she had too much concern; however, be it on what account it may, she was severely punished for it:

and she became a pillar of salt; was struck dead at once, either by the immediate hand of God, or by the shower of fire and brimstone; and her body was at once changed into a metallic substance, a kind of salt, hard and durable, such as Pliny^{f1173} speaks of, cut out of rocks, with which houses were built, and hardened with the sun, and could scarcely be cut with an iron instrument; so that she did not fall to the ground, but stood up erect as a pillar, retaining very probably the human form, Josephus^{f1174} says, this pillar continued to his times, and that he saw it; Irenaeus^{f1175} and

Tertullian^{f1176} speak of it as in their times, a thing incredible; and Benjamin of Tudela says^{f1177}, it stood in his times two paras from the sea of Sodom; and though the flocks were continually licking it, yet it grew again to its former size. Rauwolf^{f1178} relates something of the same kind by information, but not on his own testimony; that the pilgrims who visit it used to beat off some small pieces, and yet was found whole again; nay, which is beyond all credit, that they once knocked off a whole hand and took it away, and when they returned found it whole again: and one^{f1179} that travelled in those parts in the beginning of the sixteenth century affirms, that almost in the midway to Zoar is seen to this day the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned; he does not say indeed that he saw it, but leaves his reader to think so; and the Jerusalem Targum says, it will remain until the resurrection; but modern travellers of credit and intelligence could never see it; and when they have inquired of the country people about it, they either tell them there is no such thing, or say it stands in the mountains, where it cannot be come at, because of the Arabs, or because of wild beasts^{f1180}: but no doubt there was such a statue, but how long it continued cannot be said; nor should it be thought incredible, when there are similar facts affirmed by authors of the best credit and reputation: Aventinus^{f1181} reports, that in Bavaria, in 1348, more than fifty peasants, with the cows they had milked, at the time of an earthquake were struck with a pestilential air, and stiffened into statues of salt, and which he himself saw, and the chancellor of Austria: and Bisselius relates^{f1182}, that Didacus Almagrus, who was the first person that with his army penetrated through the cold countries from Peru into Chile, lost abundance of his men, through the extremity of the cold and a pestiferous air; and that, returning to the same place five months afterwards, he found his men, horse and foot, standing unmoved, unconsumed, in the same situation, form, and habit, the pestilence had fastened them; one lying on the ground, another standing upright, another holding his bridle in his hand, as if about to shake it; in short, he found them just as he left them, without any ill smell or colour, common to corpses: indeed, the very fables of the Heathens, which seem to be hammered out of this history, serve to confirm the truth of the whole of it: as the fable of Jupiter and Mercury coming to a certain place in Phrygia, where they were hospitably entertained by Baucis and Philemon, when the doors were shut against them by others; wherefore they directed their guests, after being entertained by them, to leave the place and follow them to the mountains, when they turned the town into a standing lake^{f1183}; and also that of Niobe being changed into a marble stone while weeping for

the death of her children: and of Olenus and Lethaea, turned into stones also ^{f1184}. But, leaving these, and passing by other instances that might be observed, we are directed to remember this wonderful case by our Lord himself, (^{<0173>}Luke 17:32); and it should be an instruction to us not to look back nor turn back from the profession of the true religion we have made, but to follow Christ, and abide by his truths and ordinances.

Ver. 27. *And Abraham got up early in the morning*, etc.] Perhaps he had had but little sleep the whole night, his thoughts being taken up with what was to befall the cities of the plain; and especially being in great concern for Lot and his family:

to the place where he stood before the Lord; (^{<0182>}Genesis 18:22); to the very spot of ground where he had stood the day before in the presence of the Lord, and had conversed with him, and prayed unto him; and so the Targum of Jonathan,

“to the place where he ministered in prayer before the Lord;”

here he came and stood waiting for an answer to his prayers; and perhaps this place was an eminence, from whence he could have a view of the plain of Jordan and the cities on it; and so it appears from (^{<0188>}Genesis 19:28).

Ver. 28. *And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain*, etc.] To see how it fared with them: very probably the Lord had hinted it to him, that the destruction would be that morning, and therefore he rose early, got to the place bearily, and being on an eminence, looked wistly to see if he could observe any sign of it:

and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace; after the fiery shower was over, and the cities burnt down, the smoke ascended toward heaven, as the smoke of mystical Babylon will do, (^{<0193>}Revelation 19:3); like the reek of a boiling cauldron; or, as Jarchi, like the smoke of a lime kiln always burning.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain*, etc.] Not when he had destroyed them, but when he was about to destroy them; for Lot was sent out from them, and delivered out of them, before they were destroyed; and therefore Noldius rightly renders the words, “before God destroyed” ^{f1185} them:

that God remembered Abraham; his promise to him, that he would bless them that blessed him, (^{<0112B>}Genesis 12:3); and his prayer to him for Lot in (^{<01823>}Genesis 18:23-32); for, though he does not mention him by name, he bore him on his heart, and he was always in the number of the righteous ones, on whose account he interceded for the sparing of the cities; and, though God did not hear and answer him with regard to the cities, yet he did with respect to the righteous men in them:

and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow; by two angels, who took him by the hand and brought him out of Sodom, now overthrown:

when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt; that is, in one of which Lot dwelt, namely, Sodom, as Aben Ezra rightly observes, comparing the passage with (^{<0112B>}Judges 12:7); unless it can be thought that Lot first dwelt in one of those cities and then in another, and first and last in them all, which is not very likely.

Ver. 30. *And Lot went up out of Zoar*, etc.] Which lay in the plain, and therefore when he went from thence to the mountain, it was by an ascent:

and dwelt in the mountain; which the Lord had directed him to go to before, but was unwilling, and chose Zoar, and desired he might flee thither, and that that might be spared; but now he likes God's advice for him better than his own, and therefore betook himself to the mountain, where he might think himself safest, and where he continued; very probably this was the mountain Engaddi, under which Zoar is said to lie by Adrichomius ^{f1186}:

and his two daughters with him: his wife was turned into a pillar of salt, and these two were all of his family that with him were saved from the destruction; and these are the rather mentioned for the sake of an anecdote hereafter related:

for he feared to dwell in Zoar; it being near to Sodom; and the smoke of that city and the rest might not only be terrible but troublesome to him, and the tremor of the earth might continue and reach as far as Zoar; and perceiving the waters to rise and overflow the plain, which formed the lake where the cities stood, he might fear they would reach to Zoar and swallow up that; and especially his fears were increased, when he found the inhabitants were as wicked as those of the other cities, and were unreformed by the judgment on them; and so he might fear that a like shower of fire would descend on them and destroy them, as it had the rest,

though it had been spared for a while at his intercession; and, according to the Jewish writers^{f1187}, it remained but one year after Sodom:

and he dwelt in a cave, he and his two daughters; which was in the mountain, the mountain of Engedi. Josephus^{f1188} makes mention of the mountains of Engedi; and here was a cave, where David with six hundred men were, in the sides of it, when Saul went into it, (~~1~~1 Samuel 24:1,3); and perhaps may be the same cave where Lot and his two daughters lived.

Ver. 31. *And the firstborn said unto the younger*, etc.] That is, the firstborn of those two, or the elder of them; for, if Lot had other daughters that were married in Sodom, it is probable they were elder than either of these: Aben Ezra intimates, that Lot had another wife, who died first, and these were by his second; the following motion is made by the eldest of them to the youngest, as being bolder, having more authority, and a greater influence to persuade:

our father [is] old; if he was fifty years of age when he was taken captive by the kings, as says the Jewish chronologer^{f1189} he must now be sixty five, since the destruction of Sodom, according to Bishop Usher^{f1190}, was fifteen years after that:

and [there] is not a man in the earth to come in unto us after the manner of all the earth; to marry them, cohabit with them, and procreate children of them, which was the common way of the propagation of mankind in the earth; they thought the whole world was destroyed by fire, as it had been by a flood; they understood it would be no more consumed by water, but they had been told it would be by fire, and they imagined the time was now come, and this was the case; that not only Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire, and that by this time the fire had reached to Zoar, and had consumed that, but that the whole earth was destroyed, and not a man left but their father, and therefore thought it could be excusable in them, and lawful for them to take the following method to repopulate the world; or else they supposed there were none in the land, the land of Canaan, not of any of their kindred and relations, for they might be ignorant of Abraham and his family, or however of any good man that they knew of, that they could be joined to in marriage; for as for the inhabitants of Zoar, they had just left, they were as wicked as any, and therefore could not think of living with them in such a near relation: but all this is not a sufficient excuse for contriving and executing what is after related; for they should have inquired of their father, who could have informed them better.

Ver. 32. *Come, let us make our father drink wine*, etc.] Meaning to excess, so as to be inebriated with it, and not know what he did: this wine might be brought with them from Sodom, with other provisions for their refreshment and support; or it may be rather from Zoar, where they furnished themselves with a quantity for their support in the mountain they betook themselves unto:

and we will lie with him, that we may preserve the seed of our father; have children by him, and propagate and preserve the human species; this they might think lawful, such incestuous copulations being usual among their neighbours the Arabs, as appears from Strabo^{f1191} and other writers, and especially when there seemed to them to be a necessity for it; and it may be this did not arise from a spirit of uncleanness, or a brutish lust prevailing in them, having been religiously educated, and having preserved their chastity among such an impure generation as the men of Sodom: wherefore this might rather arise, as Bishop Patrick and others have thought, from an eager desire after the Messiah, they might hope would spring from them; their father being a descendant of Shem, a son of Abraham's elder brother, and now remarkably saved from Sodom, which they might conclude was for this purpose; and they knew of no way in which it could be brought about but in this they proposed; and the rather this may be thought to be their view, as the above learned commentator observes, when we remark their former chaste life in Sodom; their joining together in this contrivance, which, had it been a lustful business, they would have been ashamed to have communicated their thoughts of it to one another; and their imposition of names on their children to perpetuate the memory of this fact, which they rather gloried in, than were ashamed of: to which may be added, that the ancient Jewish writers^{f1192} interpret this of the Messiah; and they observe,

“it is not said a son, but seed, that seed, which is he that comes from another place: and what is this? this is the King Messiah:”

and Ruth, the Moabitess, who was of the race of the eldest daughter of Lot, stands in the genealogy of our Lord, (~~405~~ Matthew 1:5): however, let the intention be ever so good, it will, not justify an action so monstrously vile.

Ver. 33. *And they made their father drink wine that night*, etc.] They persuaded him to drink liberally, urged him to it again, in order to make him drunk, and so complete their design; and Lot might be the more

prevailed upon to drink freely, in order to remove his sorrow, and refresh his spirits under the loss of his wife, and his daughters, if he had any married in Sodom, as some suppose, and his sons-in-law, and of all his goods and substance; though this will not excuse his drinking to excess, nor can ignorance of the strength of wine be pleaded, since he must needs know it as well as his daughters, who, it is plain, did, and therefore plied him with it:

and the firstborn went in and lay with her father; went to his bed, and lay down by him, which she would not have dared to have done, but that she knew he was drunk and insensible:

and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose: never heard her come to bed nor get up, so dead drunk and fast asleep was he; but finding a woman in bed with him, lay with her, taking her to be his wife, forgetting, through the force of liquor, that she was dead. There is an extraordinary prick on the Vau in Kumah, rendered “she arose”, which the Jews say ^{f1193} is to show that he knew her not when she lay down, but when she arose he knew her; and indeed it may be rendered, but in her rising up.

Ver. 34. *And it came to pass on the morrow*, etc.] The day following the night, in which the above was transacted:

that the firstborn said to the younger, behold, I lay yesternight with my father; informed her, that what they had contrived succeeded according to their wish, and therefore, for her encouragement to go on, proposes to take the same method again:

let us make him drink wine this night also, and go thou in [and] lie with him, that we may preserve seed of our father; may have children by him, and so our family be kept up, from whence it may be hoped the Messiah will spring, (see Gill on “~~0192~~Genesis 19:32”).

Ver. 35. *And they made their father drink wine that night also*, etc.] Until he was drunk; which is an aggravation of his sin, that he should be overtaken a second time, and that so soon as the next night, when he ought to have been upon his guard, knowing how he had fallen into it the night before:

and the younger arose and lay with him; arose from her own bed, and went to her father’s, and lay down by him:

and he perceived not when she lay down, nor when she arose; (see Gill on ~~“-0193~~ Genesis 19:33”).

Ver. 36. *Thus were both the daughters of Lot with child by their father.*]

We learn from hence what the best of men are when left to themselves; a good man, a righteous Lot, is guilty of crimes the most shocking; he exposed the chastity of his daughters to the men of Sodom, and now his daughters attacked him, and succeeded, being both with child by him; and this brought about by excessive drinking, a sin which often leads on to the foulest crimes, and therefore to be carefully avoided; these sins Lot fell into when as it were alone, on a mountain, in a cave, none but his family with him, and these only his two daughters; he that had stood his ground in the midst of Sodom, notwithstanding all the excesses of that place, the impurities in it, and the temptations that every day offered, now falls when seemingly out of the way of all: these sins and failings of good men are recorded for our admonition and caution, that we may shun all appearance of evil, and be careful lest we fall, and neither be presumptuous nor self-confident, (see ~~“-602~~ 1 Corinthians 10:12).

Ver. 37. *And the firstborn bare a son, and called his name Moab,* etc.] As if it was “Meab”, from the father, as Aben Ezra, and so Josephus, that is, which she had by her father; and she was so far from being ashamed that it might be known in time to come, she gave him this name. Hillerus ^{f1194} makes it to be a compound of **ba** and **abwm**, and to signify “going into”, or “lying with a father”, which still more notoriously points to her own action. Drusius has another derivation of the word, at least proposes it, and renders it “aqua patris”; “mo” in the Egyptian language signifying “water”, which is sometimes used for seed, (see ~~“-380~~ Isaiah 48:1):

the same [is] the father of the Moabites unto this day; a people that lived on the borders of the land of Canaan, often troublesome to the Israelites, and frequently spoken of in the Old Testament.

Ver. 38. *And the younger, she also bare a son, and called his name Benammi,* etc.] That is, “the son of my people”, being the son of her father; which though it does not so manifestly appear in this name, as in the other, yet there is some trace of it; and she would have it be known by this, that he was not the son of a stranger, but of a relation of her own: some attribute this to her being more modest than her elder sister; but it looks as

if neither of them were sensible of any crime they had been guilty of, but rather thought it a commendable action, at least that it was excusable:

the same is the father of the children of Ammon unto this day; a people that lived near their brethren the Moabites, and were both enemies to the people of God; they quickly falling into idolatry, and whose names we often meet with in the sacred writings; and of these two sons, Josephus says ^{f1195}, the one begat the Moabites, being still a great nation, and the other the Ammonites, and both inhabit Coelesyria; they are both called the children of Lot, (~~9838~~ Psalm 83:8). After this we hear no more of Lot in this history; and it is remarkable, that there never was, as we know of, any town or city that had in it any, trace of his name; but we are not from hence to conclude that he was a wicked man, whose memory perished with him; for mention is made of him in the New Testament, where he has a very honourable character, and is called “just Lot”, (~~6007~~ 2 Peter 2:7).

CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 20

This chapter relates the removal of Abraham to Gerar, (⁰²⁰¹Genesis 20:1); the king of Gerar's taking to him Sarah, whom Abraham had called his sister, (⁰²⁰²Genesis 20:2); who is rebuked of God for it in a dream, (⁰²⁰³Genesis 20:3); for which he makes an apology that is admitted, only he is ordered to restore to Abraham his wife, (⁰²⁰⁴Genesis 20:4-7); and accordingly early in the morning he called his servants, and acquainted them with what had happened, (⁰²⁰⁵Genesis 20:8); and then sent for Abraham, and expressed his resentment at his usage of him, (⁰²⁰⁶Genesis 20:9); which Abraham defended as well as he could, (⁰²⁰⁷Genesis 20:10-13); the issue of all which was, great kindness was shown to Abraham, and his wife restored to him, though with a reproof to her from the king, (⁰²⁰⁸Genesis 20:14-16); upon which Abraham prayed for the healing of Abimelech and his family, in which he was heard and answered, (⁰²⁰⁹Genesis 20:17,18).

Ver. 1. *And Abraham journeyed from thence towards the south country,* etc.] He returned from the plains or oaks of Mamre, where he had lived fifteen or twenty years, into the more southern parts of the land of Canaan: the reason of this remove is not certain; some think, because he could not bear the stench of the sulphurous lake, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were become; and others, because of the scandal of Lot's incest with his daughters, which prejudiced the idolatrous people in those parts more against the true religion; neither of which are likely, by reason of the distance; but the better reason seems to be, that it was so ordered in Providence that he should remove from place to place, that it might appear that he was but a sojourner in the land:

and dwelt between Kadesh and Shur; two wildernesses, as Jerom says ^{f1196}, one of which joined to Egypt, to which the people of Israel went when they passed over the Red sea, and the other, Kadesh, reached to the desert of the Saracens. Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase the words between Rekam and Chagra, or Hagra, the same place where the angel of the Lord met

with Hagar at the well, (see Gill on “^{<0167>}Genesis 16:7”) and (see Gill on “^{<0164>}Genesis 16:14”):

and sojourned in Gerar; or Gerara, as Jerom ^{f1197} calls it,

“from whence he says the Geraritic country in his time beyond Daroma, or the south, had its name, and was twenty five miles distance from Eleutheropolis to the south, and was formerly the southern border of the Canaanites, and the metropolis of Palestine.”

According to the Samaritan version, Gerar is the same with Ashkelon, which was afterwards, when aristocracy took place in this country, one of the five lordships of the Philistines; and so says Africanus ^{f1198}; and that Gerar was in the country of the Philistines, and Abimelech was king of them, is clear from (^{<0173>}Genesis 21:32 26:1). This place was about six miles from Mamre ^{f1199}, from whence Abraham removed.

Ver. 2. *And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, she [is] my sister*, etc.] This he gave out in all conversation he came into, and said it to every one that asked who she was, which was little better than a lie; it at least was an equivocation and deception, and not at all justifiable, and tended to expose his wife’s chastity, and discovered a distrust of divine Providence; the same infirmity he had given way to, and the same evil he had fallen into in Egypt, (^{<0121>}Genesis 12:11-20), and therefore was the more inexcusable now; good men not only fall into sin, but have their relapses:

and Abimelech king of Gerar sent and took Sarah; having heard or seen what a beautiful woman. Sarah was, though ninety years of age, having never bore children; and understanding she was a single person, sent his servants to take her, and bring her to his house, in order to be his wife, which seems to be done with some kind of force; and it can hardly be thought that Abraham and Sarah would freely agree to it, at least it must be done with reluctance on their parts. Whether Abimelech was the first king of Palestine of this name, is not certain; if he was, which is not improbable, it became usual afterwards for the kings thereof to be so called, as Pharaoh was a common name to the kings of Egypt; it signifies “father” and “king”, as kings should be the fathers of their people.

Ver. 3. *But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night*, etc.] Put a dream into his mind, by which he cautioned him against taking Sarah to be his wife; so careful was the Lord that no wrong should be done to such a godly and virtuous person, to which she was exposed through the

weakness of her husband. Aben Ezra wrongly interprets this of an angel, when it was God himself:

and said unto him, behold, thou [art but] a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; that is, God would punish him with death, unless he restored the woman, whom he had taken, to her husband; not for any uncleanness he had committed with her, but for taking her without her free and full consent, and without inquiring more strictly into her relation to Abraham, and connection with him, and for his impure and unlawful desires after her, if persisted in:

for she [is] a man's wife, or “married to an husband”^{f1200}; and therefore it was unlawful in him to take her to be his wife.

Ver. 4. *But Abimelech had not come near her*, etc.] Sarah had been put into an apartment in his palace, and not yet admitted into his company, not at least to his bed; he had not lain with her, which is the design of the expression: the Septuagint version is, “had not touched her”, as in (^{<0206>}Genesis 20:6); which is another phrase expressive of the same thing:

and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? meaning either his family, the greater part of which were not accessory to this affair; or rather his kingdom, as Aben Ezra, (see ^{<0209>}Genesis 20:9); which though not a nation of righteous men, in a strict sense, (see ^{<0211>}Genesis 20:11); yet with regard to this business of Sarah were no ways criminal: either God had threatened to destroy his people, as well as himself, if he did not return Sarah to her husband, or committed iniquity with her; or he knew that this had been usual for people to suffer for the crimes of their governors, and like a true father of his country shows an affectionate concern for their welfare in the first place; for this may be the sense of the word “also”, on which an emphasis is put; wilt thou not only slay me, but also a whole nation for my sake, a nation free from all fault and blame in this matter? though some think he has reference to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, a recent action, and fresh in his mind; as if he should say, thou hast justly destroyed a wicked people for their sins, and wilt thou also destroy a nation that at least, in comparison of them, is a just and righteous one?

Ver. 5. *Said he not unto me, she [is] my sister?* etc.] By this it appears, that Abimelech had a personal conversation with Abraham, and inquired of him about Sarah, who she was, and what relation she was to him, who told

him that she was his sister; and for the truth of this he appeals to the omniscient God, who knew that Abraham had told him this:

and she, even she herself said, he [is] my brother; when Sarah was asked what relation she stood in to Abraham, and he to her, she declared he was her brother; so that Abimelech had reason to conclude, from what both of them had said, that this was the truth of the matter, and especially from what Sarah said, who he thought might be depended on, and would speak out the whole truth on such an occasion:

in the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands, have I done this; hereby declaring, that his design was not to defile the woman, and to gratify his lust, but to take her to be his wife; and this he thought to be no evil, though he had a wife, (^{<0017>}Genesis 20:17); polygamy not being reckoned a sin in those times; and that he had used no violence in taking her, they both seemingly agreeing to it.

Ver. 6. *And God said unto him in a dream*, etc.] The same dream continued:

yea, or “also”

I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; not only thou knowest, but I, who know all things, know and acknowledge that this was so done by thee. Abimelech’s plea is admitted, and a very great testimony borne to his integrity in this matter; and throughout the whole account he appears to be a man of great honour and uprightness, especially in this affair, if not a good man:

for I also withheld thee from sinning against me; for had he committed adultery with her, it had been not only a sin against her, and against her husband, but against God being contrary to his will revealed in the minds of men by the law and light of nature, before the law of Moses was given: and indeed all sin against the neighbour is ultimately against God, (see ^{<504>}Psalm 51:4); and now from the commission of this sin God restrained Abimelech, either by some impulse upon his mind not to take her to be his wife as yet, or by throwing some thing or other in the way of it, in his providence, or by inflicting some disease upon him, which rendered him incapable of it, (^{<0017>}Genesis 20:17);

therefore suffered I thee not to touch her; that is, to have carnal knowledge of her, (see ^{<001>}1 Corinthians 7:1); as there is nothing done but what is

done by divine permission, so many more evils would be committed than there are, were it not that men are restrained from them by the power and providence of God, not suffering them to do them; and in particular this sin was prevented, that it might not in any respect be a doubtful point whether Isaac, whom Sarah had now conceived, was a legitimate son of Abraham; and these expressions of Abimelech not coming near her, (^{<02104>}Genesis 20:4); and not touching her as here, are used for that purpose.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore restore the man [his] wife*, etc.] Which will be a full proof and evidence to all of the integrity of thy heart, and the innocence of thine hands, which thou pleadest, and which I own:

for he [is] a prophet; familiar with God, dear unto him, a friend of his, to whom he communicates his secrets; is able to foretell things to come, as well as to interpret the mind of God, and instruct in the knowledge of divine things, all which agrees with Abraham's character; and he is the first man that is dignified in Scripture with the title of a prophet; so he is called in the Apocrypha:

“Beware of all whoredom, my son, and chiefly take a wife of the seed of thy fathers, and take not a strange woman to wife, which is not of thy father's tribe: for we are the children of the prophets, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: remember, my son, that our fathers from the beginning, even that they all married wives of their own kindred, and were blessed in their children, and their seed shall inherit the land.” (Tobit 4:12)

Jarchi thinks this is observed to encourage Abimelech to return his wife to him, because being a prophet he knew he had not touched her, and therefore would receive her more readily, and entertain no ill opinion of her; but rather it is mentioned for the reason following:

and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live; it being one part of the business of a prophet to pray for others, and make intercession for them, especially in any distress or trouble, (see ^{<02718>}Jeremiah 27:18). Prophets were praying persons, had usually a great gift in prayer, and great power with God, and prevailed with him for the good of others; and such an one was Abraham; and it is here intimated, that upon the restoration of his wife to him, as he was familiar with God, and had an interest with him, he would make use of it, and pray for Abimelech, that whatsoever offence he had been guilty of to God or men, it might be forgiven, and that he might

be healed of the disease with which he was smitten, and so recover of it, and live in health and happiness:

and if thou restore [her] not, know thou, that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that [are] thine: if he proceeded to take her to be his wife, and defile her, he is strongly assured that he should die, death being the punishment for adultery before the law of Moses, (see ~~1832~~ Genesis 38:24); and not only he, but all his family, especially such who had been, or would be accessory to this affair, and even all who might he justly punished of God for other sins they had committed; and Abimelech being punished, both in his own person, and in his servants and subjects, the greater his punishment was, the greater abhorrence and detestation was shown to the sin he would be guilty of, to deter him from which this threatening is given out.

Ver. 8. *Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning*, etc.] Awaking upon the dream, could sleep no more, his thoughts running upon what had been said to him by the Lord in it: wherefore as soon as it was light he rose from his bed,

and called all his servants; his household servants, and particularly his courtiers and counsellors, who had advised him to take Sarah for his wife, and had been assisting in it:

and told all those things in their ears: how that God appeared to him in a dream, and told him that Sarah, whom he had taken into his house, was another man's wife, and that if he did not immediately return her to her husband, he would die, and all that belonged to him:

and the men were sore afraid; lest they should be struck with death; and perhaps they might call to mind the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah for their sins, they had lately heard of, and might fear that some such calamity would befall them.

Ver. 9. *Then Abimelech called Abraham*, etc.] Who might be in the king's palace, being taken into it caressed by the king for the sake of Sarah:

and said unto him; not in a passion, as might have been expected, but in a mild and gentle manner, yet with great strength of reasoning, and making very just expostulations with him:

what hast thou done unto us? what evil to him, his family, and his subjects? this was very probably said in the presence of his servants he had called, and therefore the plural number is used:

and what have I offended thee, that thou hast brought on me, and on my kingdom, a great sin? the sin of adultery, he had been in danger of committing, which by the light of nature was known and acknowledged to be a great sin, and therefore was avoided by Heathens, and prohibited and punished by them; or else a “great punishment”^{f1201}, as death to him, and all his subjects: and now Abimelech expostulates with him, and desires to know what he had done to incur his displeasure, that he should take such a method as this to avenge himself of him; he plainly intimates that he was not conscious to himself that he had done any thing to offend him; he had suffered him to come into his kingdom, and sojourn in it, and used him well, and in no instance, as he knew of, had done anything to affront him:

thou hast done deeds unto me that ought not to be done; in saying Sarah was his sister, and persuading her to say the same, and so virtually disowning his marriage with her, equivocating in this affair, and dissembling truth, and thereby exposing the chastity of his wife, and the king to the commission of sin with her; things that ought not to be done by any man, and much less by a man professing religion and godliness.

Ver. 10. *And Abimelech said unto Abraham,* etc.] Continuing his discourse with him:

what sawest thou, that thou hast done this thing? he desires to know what he had observed, either in him or his people, that gave him any reason to conclude that they were a lustful people, and would stick at nothing to gratify their lusts, which put him upon taking such a method to secure his life, lest they should kill him for his wife’s sake.

Ver. 11. *And Abraham said,* etc.] In defence of himself, as well as he could:

because I thought; within himself, concluding from the general depravity of the Canaanites, that this was the case of the inhabitants of Gerar:

surely the fear of God [is] not in this place; this is a certain truth, which he thought might be depended upon, and taken for granted, since so it was everywhere: or “only”^{f1202}, as the word used signifies; this was the only thing he had to plead, that he verily thought with himself that there was no

true religion and godliness in Gerar: that the inhabitants of it were without any fear of God before their eyes, or in their hearts; and he knew, where this is the case, there is nothing to restrain from the commission of the grossest sins:

and they will slay me for my wife's sake; that they might marry her, (see ^{<1122>}Genesis 12:12).

Ver. 12. *And yet indeed [she is] my sister*, etc.] In the same sense as Lot was his brother; for she was sister to Lot, and both were the children of Haran, the brother of Abraham:

she [is] the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; she was the daughter of his father, being his granddaughter, grandchildren are sometimes called children, but not the daughter or granddaughter of Abraham's mother; Terah having had two wives, by the one he had Haran, the father of Sarah, and by the other Abraham. According to the Arabic writers ^{f1203}, Abraham and Sarah were the immediate children of Terah, but by two mothers:

“the mother of Abraham (they say) died, whose name was Juna, and Terah married another wife, whose name was Lahazib, some say Tahuitha, who bore him Sarah, afterwards married to Abraham; hence Abraham said, she is my sister on my father's side, but not on my mother's side.”

and she became my wife; as in those times it was judged lawful, and so it has been accounted lawful in many nations to marry sisters on the father's side, when those on the mother's were prohibited ^{f1204}.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house*, etc.] In Ur of the Chaldees, from whence God called him to go forth; which laid him under an obligation to depart from thence, and move from place to place, and go he knew not where, as in (^{<8108>}Hebrews 11:8); or “the Gods”, as it is in the plural number, and so the verb in construction with it; not the idol gods, the gods of the Gentiles, as the Targum of Jonathan, who interprets the words thus,

“and it was when the worshippers of idols sought to cause men to err, and I went from my father's house;”

but the true God, as Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Melech acknowledge, and is by many Christian interpreters understood of the three Persons in the Godhead:

that I said unto her, this [is] thy kindness which thou shalt show unto me; this I shall take as a favour done me, as an instance of tender affection unto me:

at every place whither we shall come, say of me; or for the sake of me, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi, in order to save me from the hands of wicked men, whom he feared would slay him for her sake:

he [is] my brother; and so he hoped, instead of being ill used, he should meet with favour and friendship on her account, being thus nearly related to her: this he observes to Abimelech, to show that this was an old agreement, near thirty years ago, when they first set out on their travels, and was no new device and scheme which they pursued on account of him and his people in particular; but what they had formerly agreed upon should be said in all places wherever they came, and therefore there was no intention to affront Abimelech; only it supposed they might come into places where wicked men dwelt.

Ver. 14. *And Abimelech took sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and womenservants, and gave [them] unto Abraham,* etc.] In a good measure satisfied with what Abraham had said to excuse himself; and these gifts he gave unto him, that he might, as Jarchi observes, pray and intercede for him, that he and his family might be healed, having understood by the divine oracle that he was a prophet, and if he prayed for him he would be restored to health: and these were not given to bribe him to give his consent that Sarah might be continued with him, since it follows,

and restored him Sarah his wife; untouched by him, as he was directed by God to do.

Ver. 15. *And Abimelech said, behold, my whole land [is] before thee,* etc.] Instead of bidding him be gone, and sending him away in haste out of his country, as the king of Egypt did in a like case, he solicits his stay in it; and to encourage him to it, makes an offer of his whole kingdom to him, to choose which part of it he would to dwell in:

dwelt where it pleaseth thee; if there was anyone part of it better than another, or more convenient for him, his family and his flocks, he was welcome to it.

Ver. 16. *And unto Sarah he said, behold, I have given thy brother a thousand [pieces] of silver*, etc.] Or shekels of silver, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, which, if two shillings and sixpence of our money, amount to one hundred and twenty five pounds; though perhaps little pieces of silver, current in this country, may be meant, that were not worth so much. Some think that the sheep, oxen, etc. Abimelech had given to Abraham, were worth so many pieces of silver: but it rather seems that he gave these over and above them, and chiefly for Sarah's use, as will be observed hereafter; since the words are directed to her, and in which there is a sharp cutting expression, calling Abraham her brother, and not her husband, thereby putting her in mind and upbraiding her with her equivocation and dissimulation:

behold, he [is] to thee a covering of the eyes, unto all that [are] with thee; a protection of her person and chastity: so an husband, in our language, is said to be a cover to his wife, and she under a cover: thus Abraham being now known to be the husband of Sarah, would for the future be a covering to her, that no one should look upon her, and desire her, and take her to be his wife; and he would also be a protection to her maidens that were with her, the wives of his servants, that these also might not be taken from him: but it seems best to refer this to the gift of the thousand pieces of silver, and read the words, "behold, this is to thee ^{f1205} a covering of the eyes"; so the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; for the words are a continued biting sarcasm on Sarah; as Abimelech twits her with calling Abraham her brother in the preceding clause, so in this he tells her that he had given him so much money to buy her a veil with, and to supply her with veils from time to time to cover her eyes, that nobody might be tempted to lust after her, and that it might be known she was a married woman; for in these countries married women wore veils for distinction, (^{f1245}Genesis 24:65); and so not to be had by another, nor would any be deceived by her; and not only was this money given to buy veils for her, but for her female servants also that were married, that they might be known to be another's property; though this latter phrase "unto", or "with all that [are] with thee" ^{f1206}, may be understood, not of persons, but of things, even of all the girls which Abimelech had given her while in his house; these he did not, take back

again, but continued them with her, either for the above use, or whatever she pleased; and the following phrase,

and with all [other], as we render it, making a considerable stop, should, according to the accents, be read with what follows thus, “and with all this was she reproved”^{f1207}; so Aben Ezra; and so they are the words of Moses, observing, that by and with all this that Abimelech had said and done,

thus she was reproved; Sarah was reproved for saying that Abraham was her brother: or the words may be rendered thus, “and so before all she was reproved”^{f1208}; before her husband, and before Abimelech’s courtiers, and perhaps before her own servants; though Ainsworth, and others, take them to be the words of Abimelech, and render them, “and all that”, or “all this is that thou mayest be rebuked”^{f1209}, or instructed; all that I have said and done is for this end, that thou mayest be warned and be careful for the future to speak out truth, without any equivocation, and not call Abraham thy brother, when he is thy husband.

Ver. 17. *So Abraham prayed unto God*, etc.] As the Lord had told Abimelech he would, (^{QIII}Genesis 20:7); he might pray for the forgiveness of him and his wife, and might give thanks that Sarah had been restored to him; but chiefly it was on account of Abimelech and his family:

and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants: who by reason of some disease were rendered unfit for and incapable of cohabitation with their husbands, and they with them; but upon Abraham’s prayer for them, who was heard, they were healed, and the disorder removed; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“his wife and concubines;”

and they bare [children]; cohabited and conceived, and bare and brought forth children, all which are comprehended in this expression.

Ver. 18. *For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech*, etc.] With large tumours probably, so that they could not cohabit with their husbands and conceive; nor could those that had conceived bring forth: and this disorder they were smitten with, because of Sarah Abraham’s wife; who was taken into the house of Abimelech, in order to be his; to rebuke and punish for which, and to convince of the evil of it, and cause to abstain from it, this disorder was inflicted on them.

CHAPTER 21

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 21

This chapter gives an account of the conception, birth, circumcision, and weaning of Isaac, (^{<0201>}Genesis 21:1-8); of the mocking of Ishmael, and of the casting out of him and his mother from Abraham's house, at the request of Sarah, which, though grievous to Abraham, he complied with at the direction of God, (^{<0209>}Genesis 21:9-13); of the provision Abraham made for their departure, and of the supply they met with in the wilderness from God, where Ishmael was brought up, and where he married, (^{<0214>}Genesis 21:14-21); and of a covenant between Abraham and Abimelech, king of Gerar, (^{<0222>}Genesis 21:22-32); and of Abraham's planting a grove, and calling on the name of the Lord, (^{<0233>}Genesis 21:33); and the chapter is closed with this observation, that Abraham sojourned in the land of the Philistines many days, (^{<0234>}Genesis 21:34).

Ver. 1. *And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said*, etc.] To Abraham, (^{<0176>}Genesis 17:16,19,21 18:10,14); in a way of mercy and kindness, by fulfilling his promise, giving strength to conceive and bear a child; (see ^{<0021>}1 Samuel 2:21):

and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken; which intends the same thing in different words; and the repetition is made to cause attention to God's fulfilment of his promise, who is always faithful to his word, even in things very difficult and seemingly impossible, as in the present case: hence the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it, God did a wonder or wonders for Sarah in causing her to conceive when she was so old, and in such circumstances as she was.

Ver. 2. *For Sarah conceived*, etc.] This explains what is meant by the Lord's visiting her, and doing to her according to his word, (see ^{<0811>}Hebrews 11:11);

and bare Abraham a son in his old age; which circumstance is remarked, that the favour might appear the greater, and the more wonderful; or, "unto", or "for his old age"^{f1210}, for the comfort of him in his old age, who

having lived so many years under the promise of a son, and in the expectation of one, even of the promised seed, from whom the Messiah should spring, now has one, than which nothing could yield him greater consolation:

at the set time of which God had spoken to him, (^{<01721>}Genesis 17:21 18:10-14); God was not only faithful in fulfilling his promise, but in keeping the exact time of it.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham called the name of his son that was borne unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac.*] Which is the name he was directed to give him, (^{<01719>}Genesis 17:19); and he remembers the order, and is obedient to it; the reason of which name, which signifies laughter, was on account of his laughing for joy at the promise made him, as well as there might be afterwards a further reason for it, from Sarah's laughing through distrust; and it might presignify the joy and laughter that would be expressed by others at his birth; and perhaps also that he would be the object of the laughter and derision of his brother; such a number of events agreeing with his name.

Ver. 4. *And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac, being eight days old as, God had commanded him.*] (^{<01712>}Genesis 17:12), and was the first that we read of that was circumcised on that day, according to the divine precept, which Abraham strictly observed; for though this was the son of the promise, and of his old age, for whom he had the most affectionate regard, yet he administered this bloody ordinance on him; nor did he defer it beyond the time, and was himself the operator, as it seems; all which shows his strict regard, and ready and cheerful obedience to the command of God.

Ver. 5. *And Abraham was an hundred years old when son Isaac was born unto him.*] So that this was years after his departure from Haran, and coming into the land of Canaan, for then he was seventy five years of age, (^{<01124>}Genesis 12:4); and this exactly agrees with the account of Demetrius, as related by Polyhistor, an Heathen writer ^{f1211}, who makes Isaac to be born just twenty five years from Abraham's coming into the land of Canaan, and who must be now an hundred years old, being ninety nine at the time the Lord appeared unto him, and promised him a son at the set time the next year, (^{<01701>}Genesis 17:1,21). This is observed, both to show the wonderful favour to Abraham, and the faithfulness of God in the exact performance of his promise: according to Bishop Usher ^{f1212}, Isaac was

born A. M. 2108, and before Christ 1896, and probably at Beersheba, (see ~~<023>~~Genesis 21:33, 34).

Ver. 6. *And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh*, etc.] This she said on occasion of the name of her son Isaac, which name her husband had given him by divine direction, and to which she assented. This doubtless brought to her mind her former laughing, when she first heard that she should have a son, which was in a way of diffidence and distrust; but now God having given her a son, laid a foundation for laughter of another kind, for real, solid, joy and thankfulness:

[so that] all that hear will laugh with me; not laugh at her, and deride her, as Piscator interprets it; but congratulate her, and rejoice with her on this occasion, as on a like one the neighbours of Elisabeth did with her, (~~<0158>~~Luke 1:58).

Ver. 7. *And she said, who would have said unto Abraham*, etc.] No one a year ago could ever have thought of such a thing, much less have come and told Abraham that he should have a child or children by Sarah; the thing was incredible, and next to impossible; none but God himself, or an angel from him, could have declared this, as none but he could bring it about, the thing is so marvellous and astonishing:

that Sarah should have given children suck? that she who was ninety years of age should bear a child, and suckle it, as she did; and in doing which she set an example to her daughters to do the like, since neither age nor grandeur, nor the business of her family, were any objection to this duty of nature; and her being able to do this was a clear proof that this was truly a child of her own. The plural number may be put for the singular, as it often is, (see ~~<0423>~~Genesis 46:23); or Sarah might think, as she had strength given her to bear and suckle one child, she might bear and suckle more; though the phrase seems only to be expressive and descriptive of her as a nursing mother:

for I have borne him a son in his old age; (see Gill on “~~<0202>~~Genesis 21:2”).

Ver. 8. *And the child grew, and was weaned*, etc.] He thrived under the nursing of its mother, and through the blessing of God upon him; and being healthy and robust, and capable of digesting stronger food, and living upon it, he was weaned from the breast: at what age Isaac was when weaned is not certain, there being no fixed time for such an affair, but it was at the discretion of parents, and as they liked it, and the case of their children

required; and in those times, when men lived to a greater age than now, they might not be weaned so early, as we find their marrying and begetting children were when they were more advanced in years. The Jewish writers are not agreed about this matter. Jarchi and Ben Melech say that Isaac was weaned twenty four months after his birth; a chronologer of theirs says ^{f1213} it was in the hundred and third year of Abraham, that is, when Isaac was three years old, which agrees with the Apocrypha:

“But she bowing herself toward him, laughing the cruel tyrant to scorn, spake in her country language on this manner; O my son, have pity upon me that bare thee nine months in my womb, and gave thee such three years, and nourished thee, and brought thee up unto this age, and endured the troubles of education.” (2 Maccabees 7:27)

According to Jerom ^{f1214}, it was the opinion of some of the Hebrews that he was five years old; and at this age Bishop Usher ^{f1215} places the weaning of him; for to make him ten or twelve years of age, as some of the Rabbins do ^{f1216}, when this was done, is very unlikely. Philo the Jew ^{f1217} makes him to be seven years of age at this time:

and Abraham made a great feast the [same] day that Isaac was weaned; because he had now escaped the dangers of infancy, and had gone through or got over those disorders infants are exposed unto, and had his health confirmed, and there was great likelihood of his living and becoming a man, since now he could eat and digest more solid and substantial food; and this was great joy to Abraham, which he expressed by making a grand and sumptuous entertainment for his family, and for his neighbours, whom he might invite upon this occasion. Jarchi says, the great men of that age were at it, even Heber and Abimelech. The Jews very impertinently produce this passage, to show the obligation they lie under to make a feast at the circumcision of their infants ^{f1218}; for this was not at Isaac’s circumcision, but at his weaning.

Ver. 9. *And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian,* etc.] That is, Ishmael, who is not expressed by name, but described by being a son of Hagar, a servant of Sarah’s, and an Egyptian woman; all which seems to be observed by way of slight, both to Hagar and her son;

which she had born unto Abraham; not unto Sarah, as she proposed to herself, when she gave her maid to Abraham, (^{<1147>}Genesis 16:2). This son of Abraham she saw

mocking; either at the entertainment made at the weaning of Isaac; or rather at Isaac himself, laughing at his name, and treating him with contempt as his younger brother, and boasting that he was the firstborn, and that the inheritance belonged to him; and threatening what he would do to him, should he hereafter offer to dispute it with him, under pretence of the promise of God that he should be Abraham's heir, and at which promise also he may be supposed to mock: and that this contention was about the inheritance seems plain from the words of Sarah in (^{<1210>}Genesis 21:10); and in it Ishmael might not only rise to high words, but come to blows, and beat his brother; for it is observed the word used sometimes so signifies, (^{<1024>}2 Samuel 2:14-17); wherefore the apostle might truly call it a persecution, (^{<4029>}Galatians 4:29); and as even cruel mockings are, (^{<3135>}Hebrews 11:35). As for the various senses the Jewish commentators put upon this, there does not seem to be any foundation for them, as that Ishmael was committing idolatry, and endeavouring to draw his brother into it; or was talking in an indecent and lascivious manner, in order to corrupt his mind; or that he was intending and attempting to take away his life, by shooting an arrow at him, and pretending it was but in jest and in play; (see Gill on "^{<4029>}Galatians 4:29").

Ver. 10. *Wherefore she said unto Abraham, cast out this bondwoman and her son*, etc.] Hagar, Sarah's handmaid and bondservant, and her son Ishmael; by this it appears that Hagar was concerned in this affair, and set her son on to mock Isaac, at least she encouraged him in it, buoying him up with his being the firstborn, and having a right to the inheritance; wherefore Sarah saw plainly that there would be no peace nor comfort for her and her son, unless Hagar and her son were turned out of doors, for which she moves Abraham; and this not merely in a passion, but by divine direction and influence, as is evident from God's approbation of it:

for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, [even] with Isaac; which he would seem to be, if continued, and would think himself so, and there would be continual bickerings about it; wherefore, to put it out of all doubt who was heir, she desires that he and his mother both might be cast out of the house, which would be a clear determination of this matter. Sarah may seem to take upon her too much, to be so

peremptory, as to declare who should, and who should not be heir, which more properly belonged to Abraham, whom she called her lord, (^{<0182>}Genesis 18:12); but what will sufficiently free her from any charge of this kind is the revelation of the divine will, and the promise of God that so it should be; namely, that the covenant God had so often renewed with Abraham should be established with Isaac, and not with Ishmael, (^{<0179>}Genesis 17:19-21). Now what was the design of God, in guiding Sarah to make such a motion as this to Abraham, is taught us by the Apostle Paul, who makes these two women to be types and figures of the two covenants, and their sons of those that are under them, (see ^{<0182>}Galatians 4:22-31).

Ver. 11. *And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight*, etc.] The motion that Sarah made to turn out of his house Hagar and Ishmael was not agreeable to him, but the reverse; it seemed an ill thing to him; it was greatly displeasing to him, and he was unwilling to come into it:

because of his son; his son Ishmael; not grieved and uneasy for what he had done; not for committing idolatry, as the Targum of Jonathan suggests, or for mocking at Isaac; but for what was proposed to be done to him, the ejection of him from his house, because of the great love he had for him, and the great concern he had for his education, and that he might enjoy the blessing promised him, he, was loath to have him cast out of his family: no concern is expressed for Hagar, though both by what God said to Abraham, and by the provision he made for her, he had a regard unto her; but his chief concern was for his son, who perhaps had a greater share in his natural affections than as yet Isaac had; nor did express so much reluctance when he was bid to him up, as he did at this time, that being at the command of God, this at the instance of his wife, and which he supposed only proceeded from passion and resentment: the Hebrew writers say ^{f1219}, that of all the evils that came upon Abraham this was the hardest and most grievous in his sight.

Ver. 12. *And God said unto Abraham*, etc.] Either by an articulate voice, or by an impulse on his mind, suggesting to him what he should do, being no doubt in great perplexity how to conduct between his wife and his son, but God determines the case for him, and makes him easy:

let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of the bondwoman: that is, let not the motion displease thee, which Sarah has made, to turn out the bondwoman and her son; let not thine affection to the

one and to the other hinder compliance with it; do not look upon it as an ill thing, or as an hard thing; it is but what is right and proper to be done, and leave the bondwoman and her son to me; I will take care of them, be under no concern for them and their welfare:

in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken to her voice; the Targum of Jonathan adds, for she is a prophetess: and indeed in this affair she spoke under a spirit of prophecy, according to the will of God; at least what she said became a divine oracle, and is called the Scripture, (^{<RB0>}Galatians 4:30); for the word “all” here must be restrained to what she had said concerning Hagar and Ishmael, and their ejection, and not to be extended to everything she had said, or should say to Abraham, to which he was always to be attentive: whereas on the other hand, it became her, as a wife, to hearken and be obedient to the voice of her husband: but in this particular Abraham is bid to listen to her, and do accordingly, for the following reason,

for in Isaac shall thy seed be called; he, and those that descended from him, should be called and reckoned the seed of Abraham more especially; and Abraham’s seed in his life should inherit the land of Canaan, given to him and his seed for an inheritance: and this is a good reason why the bondwoman and her son should be cast out, that they or their offspring might not inherit the land with Isaac, or his descendants; and particularly from Abraham in his line, and not in the line of Ishmael, should the Messiah spring, that seed in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed; and therefore a separation was necessary, that this might abundantly appear.

Ver. 13. *And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation*, etc.] A great nation, as is promised, (^{<0172>}Genesis 17:20); and such the Ishmaelites and Saracens have been, and the Turks now are, the descendants of Ishmael. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, a people of thieves, or a thieving people; as were the Saracens, and who are thought to have that name from the Arabic word “sarac”^{f1220}, to thieve; though they would have it derived from Sarah: but it is not agreeable to the promise of God to Abraham, that when for his comfort he is told that his son Ishmael and his descendants should become a great nation, that they should be described as a company of thieves and robbers; and especially when the reason of the promise is given,

because he [is] thy seed; or thy son; here the word “seed” is again used of a single individual; (see ^{<0025>}Genesis 4:25 ^{<RB6>}Galatians 3:16).

Ver. 14. *And Abraham rose up early in the morning*, etc.] It was in the night the Lord spoke to him, and bid him hearken to the voice of Sarah; and, as soon as it was morning, he arose, and was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; for, though the thing he was directed to was disagreeable to flesh and blood, and contrary to his natural affection, yet, it being the will of God, he readily complied with it:

and took bread and a bottle of water; a loaf of bread very probably, and a leathern or wooden bottle of water, as Aben Ezra supposes it to be; for there is no need to say that these are put for all necessities, and a liberal provision that might be made by Abraham; but it is to be taken strictly, according to the letter and history, as a matter of fact, since it could be no more than Hagar could carry, and did carry upon her shoulder: and, though Abraham could have sent cattle laden with provisions, and servants to attend them, yet he did not, which his natural affection and liberal disposition might dictate to him; but, as he was to hearken in this affair to whatsoever Sarah said, and act accordingly, perhaps this was all she would grant; or it might be so ordered by the providence of God, as a chastisement for their ill behaviour, and that they might know the difference between being in Abraham's house and out of it; and that there might be an opportunity given to show favour to them for Abraham's sake, who might probably direct them to some place where to go; and, till they came there, this might be a sufficient supply, when he gave them reason to expect more from him; but they got into the wilderness, wandered about and lost their way, and so became destitute of provisions; and this may be an emblem of the low, mean, and starving condition such are in who are under the law, and seek for happiness by the works of it:

and gave [it] unto Hagar, putting [it] on her shoulder; that is, the bread and the water, which might be put in one parcel or bundle, or in a basket, and so laid and carried on her shoulder: the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“and bound it to her loins, to show that she was an handmaid:”

and the child; not that the child was “on her shoulder”, which is quite improbable; for, since he was thirteen years of age when he was circumcised, he must be fourteen when Isaac was born; and if Isaac was two years old when weaned, Ishmael must be sixteen; and if he was three years of age, he must be seventeen; and if five years, he must be nineteen: some of the Jewish writers say^{f1221}, he was twenty seven years of age when he went out of his father's house; but they seem to come nearest the truth

that make this event to be when he was at the age of seventeen ^{f1222}, and when he must be too big to be carried on his mother's shoulder: but the sense is, that Abraham, when he put the provision on her shoulder, gave Ishmael to her, delivered him into her hand, to be taken care of by her; and very probably she led him in her hand:

and sent her away out of his house to some place assigned for her; the Targum of Jonathan adds, with a bill of divorce, dismissing her not only from his house, but as his wife; and so the Jewish writers ^{f1223} generally understand it: but there is no reason to believe there was any such custom before the law of Moses: nay, they go further, and say, that he dismissed her from himself, and from Isaac his son, and from this world, and from the world to come:

and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, in the wilderness which was near to Beersheba; the place where it is probable Abraham now lived, and where Isaac was born, and the above affair was transacted, which was afterwards called by this name; for this is said by way of anticipation, (see ^{<123>}Genesis 21:31). Beersheba is said ^{f1224} to be twelve miles from Gerar, and twenty miles from Hebron, to the south ^{f1225}.

Ver. 15. *And the water was spent in the bottle*, etc.] It was all drank up by them, being thirsty, having wandered about some time in a wilderness, where they could not replenish their bottle: the Jewish writers say ^{f1226} that when Hagar came into the wilderness, she began to wander after the idols of the house of Pharaoh her father, and immediately the water ceased from the bottle, or was drank up by Ishmael, being seized with a burning fever:

and she cast the child under one of the shrubs; not from off her shoulder, but out of her hand or bosom; being faint through thirst, he was not able to walk, and she, being weary in dragging him along in her hand, perhaps sat down and held him in her lap, and laid him in her bosom; but, imagining he was near his end, she laid him under one of the shrubs in the wilderness, to screen him from the scorching sun, and there left him; the Greek version is, "under one of the fir trees", and so says Josephus ^{f1227}: some Jewish writers ^{f1228} call them juniper trees; and some make this to be Ishmael's own act, and say, that, being fatigued with thirst, he went and threw himself under the nettles of the wilderness ^{f1229}, (see ^{<810>}Job 30:7).

Ver. 16. *And she went and sat her down over against [him], a good way off*, etc.] Not being able to bear the sight of her child in his agonies, and, as she apprehended, ready to expire, she went from the place where she had laid him, and sat down under one of the shrubs or trees to shade herself, right over against that where her child was, though at some distance, which is next expressed:

as it were a bowshot; about as far off from him as an arrow can be shot, or is usually shot out of a bow; according to the Jews this was about half a mile, for they say ^{f1230} two bowshots make a mile; here she sat waiting what would be the issue, whether life or death, which last she expected:

for she said, let me not see the death of the child; she could not bear to hear his dying groans, and see him in his dying agonies:

and she sat over against [him], and lift up her voice and wept; on account of her desolate and forlorn condition, being in a wilderness, where she could get no water, and her child, as she thought, dying with thirst: the Septuagint version is, “and the child cried and wept”; and certain it is, from (⁻⁰⁰²¹⁷Genesis 21:17), that the child did lift up its voice and cry, but that is not expressed in the text; it is quite clear in the original that it was Hagar and not her son that is said to weep, since the verb is feminine.

Ver. 17. *And God heard the voice of the lad*, etc.] By which it appears that he cried also; but whether it was in prayer to God, or through the distress and misery he was in, is not certain; and, be it which it will, his cries came up into the ears of the Lord, and he had compassion on him, and supplied his wants, and delivered him out of his miserable condition:

and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven; not a created angel, but the eternal one, the Son of God, the Angel of the covenant, who appeared in the visible heavens, and called to Hagar from thence with an articulate voice, and so loud that she could hear him:

and said unto her, what aileth thee, Hagar? or, what has befallen thee? what is the matter with thee? why criest, why weepest thou? this he said, not as being ignorant of her case, but in order to relieve and comfort her:

fear not; distrust not the power and providence of God in taking care of thee and thy son; do not be afraid of the death of the child:

for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he [is]; though in a wilderness, and under one of the shrubs in it: God is everywhere, and he can hear the cries of men be they where they will, or in ever so desolate a condition: by this Hagar would know that her son was alive, that he had been crying, and God had heard his cry; he that regards the prayer of the destitute, (^{<19>}^{<27>}Psalm 102:17), heard the cry of Ishmael under a shrub.

Ver. 18. *Arise, lift up the lad*, etc.] She had set herself down at some distance, and now she is bid to rise up and go to the place where she had left her son, and raise him up from the ground, on which he lay along:

and hold him in thine hand: or take hold on him with thine hand, and hold him up with it, he being so weak that he could not sit up without being supported:

for I will make him a great nation: which is a renewal of a promise before made both to her and to Abraham, (^{<0160>}Genesis 16:10 17:20 21:13); and by this Hagar is assured that he would recover and live, and become a man and the father of children, who in time would become a great nation; (see Gill on “^{<0160>}Genesis 16:10”), (see Gill on “^{<0170>}Genesis 17:20”), (see Gill on “^{<0213>}Genesis 21:13”), this shows that the Angel of God here speaking is God himself, or a divine Person, since none but he could make him a great nation.

Ver. 19. *And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water*, etc.] Which she saw not before; not that she was really blind and had her eyes opened, or her sight restored, but they might be holden or restrained by the providence of God, that she should not see it before; or, through inattention and distraction of mind, might not observe it; or her eyes might be swelled with weeping and crying, that she saw it not; though it is not improbable that this well was not in being before, but was immediately produced by the power of God, who when he pleases can open mountains in the midst of the valleys, and make the wilderness a pool of water, (^{<2418>}Isaiah 41:18): the Jewish writers ^{f1231} say, it was created between the two evenings, that is, on the evening of the seventh day of the creation. Happy are those whose eyes are opened, by the Spirit and grace of God, to see the well of living water, the fountain and fulness of grace that is in Christ, where thirsty souls may come and drink and take their fill.

And she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad to drink; with which he was refreshed and recovered from his fainting, and was restored to health again.

Ver. 20. *And God was with the lad,* etc.] To confirm his health, to provide for him the necessities of life, to protect him from danger in the wilderness where he was, and to prosper and succeed him in temporal things; all which is owing to the providential goodness of God:

and he grew; increased in bodily stature, and arrived to manhood; or, “he became great”, in riches and in substance, as Ben Melech interprets it:

and dwelt in the wilderness; of Beersheba, where he now was, or of Paran after mentioned, a fit place for a wild man to dwell in, as it was said he should be; and by this means the oracle was fulfilled, (^{<0162>}Genesis 16:12):

and became an archer; skilful in the use of the bow and arrow, both for hunting and slaying of wild beasts, on whose flesh he lived, and for lighting with men, against whom his hand would be: the Jewish writers ^{f1232} say he was born with a bow, and brought up with one, and that he shot an arrow at his brother Isaac, with an intention to kill him, while he was in Abraham’s house; but it does not appear that he had any knowledge or use of the bow until he was in the wilderness and was grown up, by which he lived and defended himself; and so his posterity the Kedarenes, who sprung from his son Kedar, were famous for archery, (^{<2917>}Isaiah 21:17); and the Ituraeans, from Jetur, another of his sons, (^{<0255>}Genesis 25:15), were remarkable for their bows, of which Virgil ^{f1233} speaks; and so the Arabians that live in the deserts and round about them, called Nabathees, from Nabaioth, another son of Ishmael, are now extraordinary marksmen for bows and arrows, and to sling darts which are made of cane ^{f1234}: the Saracens got their living not by the plough, but chiefly by the bow, and were all of them warriors, and lived upon wild flesh, and as rapacious as kites ^{f1235}; and now the troops of the governor of Mecca, whereabout Ishmael, by the Arabs, is supposed to live, which are only infantry, are called Al-Harrabah, that is, archers, or dart men ^{f1236}.

Ver. 21. *And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran,* etc.] So called from Paran, a city in Arabia Petraea; it reached from the wilderness of Shur to Mount Sinai: the account Adrichomius ^{f1237} gives of it is this; Paran or

“Pharan is a wilderness, very large, desolate, impassable, and without water, containing, from Mount Sinai to Kadeshbarnea, a

journey of eleven days; its land can neither be ploughed nor sown, is wholly dry, barren, and uncultivated; uninhabitable to men, destitute of villages, houses, and cottages; where neither men are seen, nor beasts nor birds; yea, neither trees nor any grass, only rocks and high rough stony mountains; it is taken sometimes for the first part of the desert of Arabia, near Mount Sinai, and sometimes for the last part, towards the land of promise; sometimes it is called the desert of Sin, and sometimes the desert of Sinai, from the mount; but this name Pharan seems to be the most general of the names of this very long desert.”

this is the wilderness the Israelites wandered in thirty eight years; what this writer says of it must be understood only of some parts of it, otherwise Ishmael could not have lived in it:

and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt: her own country, for she was an Egyptian, (~~Gen~~^{Gen} Genesis 16:1); and where they dwelt was not far from it: according to the Jewish writers, he had two wives; the first he divorced, and then married the Egyptian; his first wife, they say ^{f1238}, he sent for, and took out of the plains of Moab, whose name was Aishah, and the other Phatimah; so the Targum of Jonathan here,

“and he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran, and took to wife Adisha (or Aisha), whom he divorced, and then his mother took him Phatimah to wife, out of the land of Egypt:”

the names of Ishmael’s wives seem to be taken from the Arabic writers; for Aishah, or Ayesha, was the name of a daughter of Abubeker, and one of the wives of Mahomet, and Phatimah the name of one of his daughters.

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass at that time*, etc.] Not when Ishmael was grown up and married, but when Isaac was weaned and Ishmael was expelled:

that Abimelech, and Phichol, the chief captain of his host, spake unto Abraham; Abimelech was king of Gerar, the same that is spoken of in the preceding chapter, and Phichol was the general of his army; these two great personages came together and paid Abraham a visit, and had some conversation with him, who was still in Gerar, or however in some part of that country not far from it:

saying, God [is] with thee in all that thou doest; greatly prospered him in the things of the world, for of them only could they make a judgment; they saw that he increased in worldly substance, and that his family was increased, and that he succeeded in everything in which he engaged; and, being jealous of his growing greatness and power, were desirous of securing an interest in him and in his favour.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore swear unto me here by God*, etc.] By the true and living God, by whom only an oath is to be taken, who was Abraham's God, and whom Abimelech seems to have known and to have been a worshipper of; and therefore moves for an oath to be taken by him, which he knew would be sacred and binding to Abraham, could he prevail upon him to swear:

that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son; perhaps he had heard that God had promised to give the whole land of Canaan to him and his posterity, and among the rest his kingdom, which was a part of it; and, seeing him grow great and powerful, he could not tell how soon it might be ere he was put in the possession of it, whether in his own time, or his son's, or his grandson's; and therefore desires Abraham that he would swear to do no hurt to them whenever it should be;

[but] according to the kindness I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned; that, as he had given him full liberty to sojourn in any part of his kingdom where he pleased, so, when the whole country should come into his possession, that he, or his son, or his grandson, in whatsoever time it should be, might quietly enjoy their own land, and all the inhabitants of it; at least that they might not be driven out of it, but sojourn in it as he had done.

Ver. 24. *And Abraham said, I will swear.*] Sensible of the many favours he had received from Abimelech in times past, and was still indulged with, he very readily agreed to his proposal; and the rather, as he knew by the vision between the pieces, that it would be four hundred years before his posterity should be put into the possession of the land of Canaan; and therefore could take an oath that neither he, nor his son, nor his grandson, should be injured or dispossessed.

Ver. 25. *And Abraham reproved Abimelech because of a well of water*, etc.] Before he swore and entered into covenant with him, he thought it advisable to inform him of an affair that had happened concerning a well of

water, which in those hot and dry countries, as the southern parts of the land of Canaan were, was an affair of great importance; and to make complaint of the ill usage of Abimelech's servants with respect to it, and to reason with him about it, that the thing might be adjusted to mutual satisfaction, and so a firm basis and foundation be laid for the continuance of friendship for the future; which was wisely done before their league and covenant was ratified: this it seems was a well

which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away: that is, had by force taken the use of it to themselves for their cattle, and had deprived Abraham of it, though it was of his own digging; and perhaps there might be more than one, and the singular may be put for the plural; and so the Septuagint version has it, "the wells": (see ¹²³⁵Genesis 26:15,18).

Ver. 26. *And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing*, etc.] He pleads ignorance; he knew nothing of it before, nor now which of his servants had done it; intimating, that if he could know who it was, he should severely reprimand him for it:

neither didst thou tell me: signifying that he was to blame he did not complain of it sooner; and at least he had no reason to blame him, since he had never informed him before of it, and therefore could not expect to be redressed:

neither yet heard [of it] but today: he had not heard of it from others, as the Targum of Jonathan rightly adds, by way of explanation, but that very day, and very probably not till the moment he had it from Abraham himself.

Ver. 27. *And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them unto Abimelech*, etc.] In gratitude for former favours he had received from him, in token of the friendship that subsisted between them, and for the confirmation of it; and to show that he was fully satisfied with Abimelech's answer to his complaint, as well as willing to enter into covenant by sacrifice, when such creatures were divided, and the covenanters passed between the pieces, for so it follows:

and both of them made a covenant; or, "cut or struck a covenant"^{f1239}; cut the sacrifice in pieces and passed between them, in token of the compact and agreement they entered into with each other; signifying that whoever broke it deserved to be cut in pieces as those creatures were.

Ver. 28. *And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.*] Separate from the sheep and oxen he gave to Abimelech, and from those that were used in making the covenant.

Ver. 29. *And Abimelech said unto Abraham,* etc.] Observing what he had done, and not knowing the design of it:

what [mean] these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? he understood what the sheep and oxen were for, that they were presents to him, at least some of them, and the rest were for the solemnizing and ratifying the covenant between them; but what these were for he could not devise.

Ver. 30. *And he said,* etc.] That is, Abraham replied to Abimelech:

for these seven ewe lambs shall thou take of my hand; as a present from him, to be retained as his own:

that they may be a witness to me that I have digged this well: these were to be a testimony that the well that had been taken away from Abraham was one that he had dug, and was his property, and which Abimelech acknowledged by his acceptance of these seven lambs; and very probably Abraham received a note from the hand of Abimelech, owning his reception of the seven lambs, and his title to the well, which these were a witness of.

Ver. 31. *Wherefore he called that place Beersheba,* etc.] Either Abraham or Abimelech, or both, called it so; or it may be read impersonally, “therefore the place was called Beersheba”^{f1240}, for two reasons, one implied, the other expressed; one was, because of the seven lambs before mentioned; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and therefore he called the well the well of seven lambs;”

“Beer” signifying a well, and “sheba” seven; the other, and which is more certain, being expressed, is as follows;

because there they swore both of them; by the living God, to keep the covenant inviolably they had made between them.

Ver. 32. *Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba,* etc.] Which took its name from the oath annexed to the covenant there made; and which is

observed for the sake of what follows, to show that when they finished their agreement, and the ceremony of it,

then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol, the chief captain of his host; from the place where they had been conversing and covenanting with Abraham:

and they returned into the land of the Philistines; from Beersheba, which was in the extreme border of it, unto Gerar, which lay in the midst of it, and was the capital city in it; otherwise both places were in Palestine, or the land of the Philistines, a people that came out of Egypt originally, and settled here: in Jerom's ^{f1241} time Beersheba was a large village, twenty miles from Hebron to the south.

Ver. 33. *And [Abraham] planted a grove in Beersheba*, etc.] The Jewish writers ^{f1242} are divided about the use of this grove, as Jarchi relates; one says it was for a paradise or orchard, to produce fruits out of it for travellers and for entertainment; another says it was for an inn to entertain strangers in; it rather was for a shade, to shelter from the sun in those sultry and hot countries; and perhaps for a religious use, and to be an oratory, as the following words seem to suggest: in the midst of it very likely Abraham built an altar, and sacrificed to the Lord; hence might come the superstitious use of groves among the Heathens; and, when they came to be abused to idolatrous purposes, they were forbidden by the law of Moses, which before were lawful. And, though the name of Abraham is not in the text, there is no doubt but he is designed, and was the planter of the grove, and which is expressed in the Septuagint version, as it is supplied by us. What sort of trees this grove consisted of cannot with certainty be said, very probably the oak. R. Jonah ^{f1243} thinks it may be the tree which in Arabic they call "ethel", and is a tree like that which is called tamarisk in general it signifies any tree, and especially large trees ^{f1244};

and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God; who, is from everlasting to everlasting, or "the God of the world" ^{f1245}, the Creator and upholder of it, and the preserver of all creatures in it; him Abraham invoked in this place, prayed unto him, and gave him thanks for all the mercies he had received from him.

Ver. 34. *And Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.*] Even many years, days being sometimes put for years; having entered into covenant with Abimelech, the king of the country, and settled a good correspondence with him, and having his friendship and good will, which

commanded respect from his subjects, Abraham sojourned very quietly and comfortably for many years, chiefly at Beersheba; the Jewish writers say ^{f1246} he sojourned here twenty six years.

CHAPTER 22

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 22

In this chapter we have an account of an order given by God to Abraham to sacrifice his son, (^{f1201}Genesis 22:1,2); of his readiness to obey the will of God, he immediately preparing everything for that purpose, (^{f1203}Genesis 22:3-10), of the order being reversed, and another sacrifice substituted in its room, which occasioned the giving a new name to the place where it was done, (^{f1201}Genesis 22:11-14); upon which the promise of special blessings, of a numerous offspring, and of the seed in whom all nations should be blessed, is renewed, (^{f1205}Genesis 22:15-18); after this Abraham returns to Beersheba, where he is informed of the increase of his brother Nahor's family, (^{f1209}Genesis 22:19-24).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass after these things*, etc.] Recorded in the preceding chapter: according to the Talmudists ^{f1247}, the following affair was transacted quickly after the weaning of Isaac, when he was about five years old, which is the opinion of some, as Aben Ezra on (^{f1204}Genesis 22:4); makes mention of; but that is an age when it can hardly be thought he should be able to carry such a load of wood as was sufficient to make a fire to consume a burnt offering, (^{f1206}Genesis 22:6); the age of thirteen, which he fixes upon, is more likely: Josephus ^{f1248} says, that Isaac was twenty five years of age; and in this year of his age Bishop Usher ^{f1249} places this transaction, twenty years after the weaning of him, in A. M. 2133, and before Christ 1871; and near to this is the computation of a Jewish chronologer ^{f1250}, who makes Isaac to be at this time twenty six years of age; but some make him much older: according to the Targum of Jonathan, he was at this time thirty six years old; and it is the more generally received opinion of the Jewish writers ^{f1251} that he was and with whom the Arabic writers ^{f1252} agree: so that this affair, after related, was thirty years after the weaning of Isaac and the expulsion of Ishmael, supposing Isaac to be then five years old. But, however this be, what came to pass was after many promises of a son had been given him, and those fulfilled; and after many blessings had been bestowed upon him; and when he seemed to be well settled in the land of the Philistines, having entered

into an alliance with the king of the country; his family in peace, and his son Isaac, the son of the promise, grown up and a hopeful youth; the first appearance of which seemed to threaten the destruction of all his comforts, hopes, and expectations; and it was so,

that God did tempt Abraham; not to sin, as Satan does, for God tempts no man, nor can he be tempted in this sense; and, had Abraham slain his son, it would have been no sin in him, it being by the order of God, who is the Lord of life, and the sovereign disposer of it; but he tempted him, that is, he tried him, to prove him, and to know his faith in him, his fear of him, his love to him, and cheerful obedience to his commands; not in order to know these himself, which he was not ignorant of, but to make them known to others, and that Abraham's faith might be strengthened yet more and more, as in the issue it was. The Jewish writers^{f1253} observe, that Abraham was tempted ten times, and that this was the tenth and last temptation:

and said unto him, Abraham: calling him by his name he well knew, and by that name he had given him, to signify that he should be the father of many nations, (^{Q17B}Genesis 17:5); and yet was going to require of him to slay his only son, and offer him a sacrifice to him:

and he said, behold, [here] I [am]; signifying that he heard his voice, and was ready to obey his commands, be they what they would.

Ver. 2. *And he said, take now thy son*, etc.] Directly, immediately; not thine ox, nor thy sheep, nor thy ram, nor thy lamb, nor thy servant, but thy son:

thine only [son] Isaac; for, though Ishmael was his son, he was a son by his maid, by his concubine, and not by his wife; Isaac was his only legitimate son, his only son by his lawful wife Sarah; the only son of the promise, his only son, in whom his seed was to be called:

whom thou lovest; on whom his affections were strongly set, being a lovely youth, a dutiful son, and the child of promise; on whom all his hope and expectation of a numerous offspring promised him was built, and in whose line the Messiah was to spring from him; even Isaac, which stands last in the original text: so that, if what had been said was not sufficient to describe him, he is expressed by name, and the description is gradually given, and the name of his son reserved to the last, that he might be by degrees prepared to receive the shocking order; every word is emphatic and striking, and enough to pierce any tender heart, and especially when

told what was to be done to him. The Jews ^{f1254} represent God and Abraham in a discourse together upon this head: God said, take now thy son; says Abraham, I have two sons; take thine only son; says he, they are both only sons to their mothers; take him whom thou lovest; I love them both, replied he; then take Isaac; thus ended the debate:

and get thee into the land of Moriah; so called by anticipation, from a mountain of that name in it; the Septuagint render it, “the high land”, the hill country of the land of Canaan, particularly that part of it where Jerusalem afterwards stood, which was surrounded with hills: hence Aquila, another Greek interpreter, renders it, “conspicuous”, as hills and mountains are, and a mountainous country is; Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, “a land of worship”, of religious worship; for in this country afterwards the people of God dwelt, the city of the living God was built, and in it the temple for divine service, and that upon Mount Moriah; and the Targum of Jerusalem has it here,

“to Mount Moriah;”

the Jews are divided about the reason of this name, some deriving it from a word ^{f1255} which signifies to “teach”, and think it is so called, because doctrine or instruction came forth from thence to Israel; others from a word ^{f1256} which signifies “fear”, and so had its name because fear or terror went from thence to the nations of the world ^{f1257}; but its derivation is from another word ^{f1258}, which signifies to “see”, and which is confirmed by what is said (^{<0214>}Genesis 22:14):

and offer him there for a burnt offering; this was dreadful work he was called to, and must be exceeding trying to him as a man, and much more as a parent, and a professor of the true religion, to commit such an action; for by this order he was to cut the throat of his son, then to rip him up, and cut up his quarters, and then to lay every piece in order upon the wood, and then burn all to ashes; and this he was to do as a religious action, with deliberation, seriousness, and devotion:

upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of; for there were several of them adjoining to, or pretty near each other, which afterwards went by different names, as Mount Sion, (^{<0148>}Deuteronomy 4:48); the hill Acra; Mount Calvary, (^{<0233>}Luke 23:33); and Mount Moriah, (^{<0401>}2 Chronicles 3:1); supposed to be the mount intended; and so Aben Ezra says it was the place where the temple was built, and where was the threshing floor of

Araunah, (~~48E~~ 2 Chronicles 3:1). Some learned men are of opinion, that the account which Sanchoniatho ^{f1259} gives of Cronus or Saturn sacrificing his own son, refers to this affair of Abraham's; his words are,

“there being a pestilence and a mortality, Cronus offered up his only son a whole burnt offering to his father Ouranus;”

which Porphyry ^{f1260}, from the same historian, thus relates; Cronus, whom the Phoenicians call Israel, (a grandson of Abraham's, thought, through mistake, to be put for Abraham himself,) having an only son of a nymph of that country called Anobret, (which according to Bochart ^{f1261} signifies one that conceived by grace, (see ~~811E~~ Hebrews 11:11);) whom therefore they called Jeoud (the same with Jehid here, an only once); so an only one is called by the Phoenicians; when the country was in great danger through war, this son, dressed in a royal habit, he offered up on an altar he had prepared. But others ^{f1262} are of a different sentiment, and cannot perceive any likeness between the two cases: however, Isaac may well be thought, in the whole of this, to be a type of the Messiah, the true and proper Son of God, his only begotten Son, the dear Son of his love, in whom all the promises are yea and amen; whom God out of his great love to men gave to be an offering and a sacrifice for their sins, and who suffered near Jerusalem, on Mount Calvary, which very probably was a part of Mount Moriah; and which, with other mountains joining in their root, though having different tops, went by that common name.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham rose up early in the morning*, etc.] For it seems it was in a dream or vision of the night that the above orders were given; and as soon as it was morning he rose and prepared to execute them with all readiness, and without any hesitation and delay:

and saddled his ass; for his journey, not to carry the wood and provision on, which probably were carried by his servants, but to ride on; and this Jarchi thinks he did himself, and the words in their precise sense suggest this; but it does not necessarily follow, because he may be said to do what he ordered his servant to do; of the Jews' fabulous account of this ass, (see ~~809E~~ Zechariah 9:9):

and took two of his young men with him; the Targum of Jonathan says, these were Ishmael his son, and Eliezer his servant; and so other Jewish writers ^{f1263}, who tell us, that just at this time Ishmael came out of the

wilderness to visit his father, and he took him with him; but for this there is no foundation: they were two of his servants, of whom he had many:

and Isaac his son: who was the principal person to be taken, since he was to be the sacrifice: whether Abraham acquainted Sarah with the affairs and she consented to it, cannot be said with certainty; it is plain Isaac knew not what his father's design was; and though Sarah and the whole family might know, by the preparation made, he was going to offer a sacrifice, yet they knew not where, nor what it was to be;

and clave the wood for the burnt offering; not knowing whether he should find wood sufficient on the mountain, where he was to go; and that he might not be unprovided when he came there, takes this method, which shows his full intention to obey the divine command:

and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him; that is, he mounted his ass, and rode towards the place God had spoken of to him, and who had directed him which way to steer his course.

Ver. 4. *Then on the third day*, etc.] After he had received the command from God, and from his setting out on his journey; for he had now travelled two days, Mount Moriah being forty miles from Beersheba, where Abraham dwelt^{f1264}; or, as others compute it, forty: Hebron^{f1265} was twenty miles from Beersheba, and Jerusalem twenty two from Hebron; and to travel twenty miles a day on foot, as Isaac and the servants seem to have done, there being but one ass among them, was far enough in those hot countries. Now all this while Abraham had time to reconsider things in his mind, and deliberate thoroughly what he was going about; and by proceeding in it, after he had such leisure to revolve things in his mind, it appears that he was satisfied it was not an illusion, but an oracle of God he was going to obey; and that he did not do this rashly and hastily, and that his faith and obedience were sufficiently tried, and found genuine. The Jews^{f1266} take great notice of this third day, and compare the passage with (~~2ND~~ Hosea 6:2); and which they interpret of the third day of the resurrection; and the deliverance of Isaac on this third day was doubtless typical of Christ's resurrection from the dead on the third day; for from the time that Abraham had the command to offer up his son, he was reckoned no other by him than as one dead, from whence he received him in a figure on this third day, (~~3RD~~ Hebrews 11:19):

Abraham lift up his eyes, and saw the place afar off; where he was to offer his Son. Baal Hatturim says, the word “place”, by gematry, signifies Jerusalem: it seems by this, that as God had signified to Abraham that he would tell him of the place, and show it to him, where he was to sacrifice, so that he gave him a signal by which he might know it, which some of the Jewish writers ^{f1267} say was a cloud upon the mount; with which agrees the Targum of Jonathan,

“and Abraham lift up his eyes and saw the cloud of glory smoking upon the mountain, and he knew it afar off.”

And others say ^{f1268}, he saw the glory of the divine Majesty standing upon the mount, in a pillar of fire, reaching from earth to heaven; and they further observe, that the place where he was, when he saw this, was Zophim, a place not far from Jerusalem; and from hence, when the city and temple were built, a full view might be taken of them ^{f1269}, from whence it had its name.

Ver. 5. *And Abraham said unto the young men, abide you here with the ass*, etc.] At the place from whence he had his first sight of Mount Moriah: he chose not to take his two servants with him, lest when they saw him binding his son, and going about to sacrifice him, they should lay hold upon him, and restrain him from doing it; and to prevent this he takes this precaution, which shows how fully intent he was to yield obedience to the divine precept:

and I and the lad will go yonder and worship; pointing to the place where the signal was, but whether they saw it or no is not certain: the Jews say ^{f1270} Isaac did see it, but they did not; however, Abraham made them to understand that he was going to one of the mountains which were in sight, and there worship God by offering sacrifice to him. Isaac is here called a “lad”; of what age he was at this time, (see Gill on “^{<027>}Genesis 22:2”); and he might be at the largest number of years there mentioned, and yet be so called, since Joshua the son of Nun has this appellation when he was fifty six years of age, (^{<031>}Exodus 33:11):

and come again to you, both he and Isaac; this he said under a spirit of prophecy, as Jarchi thinks, or in the faith of Isaac’s resurrection from the dead, (^{<8119>}Hebrews 11:19).

Ver. 6. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering*, etc.] Which Josephus ^{f1271} says was laid upon the ass, and carried by that; and if so, he

took it from thence: but it is probable it was carried by his two servants, since it was not more than Isaac himself afterwards carried, as in the next clause:

and laid [it] upon Isaac his son: who was a grown man, and able to carry it: in this also he was a type of Christ, on whom the wood of his cross was laid, and which he bore when he went to be crucified, (~~8917~~ John 19:17); and this wood may be also a figure of our sins laid on him by his Father, and which he bore in his body on the tree, (~~1024~~ 1 Peter 2:24); and which were like wood to fire, fuel for the wrath of God, which came down upon him for them:

and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; a vessel in one hand, in which fire was to kindle the wood with, and a knife in the other hand to slay the sacrifice with; the one to slay his son with, and the other to burn him with; and to carry these for such purposes must be very trying. This is the first time we read in Scripture of fire for use, or of a knife. Some say the first inventor of fire was Prometheus, others Phoroneus^{f1272}, from whence he seems to have his name; but according to Sanchoniatho^{f1273}, the immediate posterity of Cain first invented it, whose names were light, fire, and flame; and these, he says, found out the way of generating fire, by rubbing pieces of wood against each other, and taught men the use of it. “Knife”, in the Hebrew language, has its name from eating and consuming, as Ben Melech observes; some render it a “sword”^{f1274}, but wrongly, and which has led the painter into a mistake, to represent Abraham with a sword in his hand to slay his son:

and they went both of them together; from the place where they left the young men, to the place where the sacrifice was to be offered.

Ver. 7. *And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father,* etc.] As they were walking together:

and said, my father; a cutting word to Abraham, who knew what he was going to do with him, so contrary to the relation and affection of a parent:

and he said, here [am] I, my son; what hast thou to say to me? I am ready to answer thee; he owns the relation he stood in unto him, a sense of which he had not put off, and curbs his affections, which must be inwardly moving towards him, and showed great strength of faith to grapple with such a trying exercise:

and he said, behold the fire and the wood; the fire which his father had his hand, and the wood which was upon his own, shoulders:

but where [is] the lamb for a burnt offering? he perceived by the preparation made, by the fire and the wood, that it was to be a burnt offering which they were going to offer; but there being no creature provided for the sacrifice, he puts this question, by which it appears that as yet he was quite ignorant of the true design of this journey, and little thought that he was to be the sacrifice: however, from what he said, it plain he had been used to sacrifices, and had been trained up in them, and had seen them performed, and knew the nature of them, and what were requisite unto them.

Ver. 8. *And Abraham said, my son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering*, etc.] In which answer Abraham may have respect to the Messiah, the Lamb of God, (^{<4012>}John 1:29,36), whom he had provided in council and covenant before the world was; and who in promise, and type, and figure, was slain from the foundation of the world, (^{<6638>}Revelation 13:8); and whom in due time God would send into the world, (^{<6086>}John 10:36), and make him an offering for sin, (^{<2530>}Isaiah 53:10), and accept of him in the room and stead of his people: and this was a provision that could only be made by the Lord, and was the produce of his infinite wisdom, and the fruit of his grace, favour, and good will and of which Abraham had a clear sight and strong persuasion, (see ^{<886>}John 8:56); though as the words may be considered as a more direct answer to Isaac's question, which related to the sacrifice now about to be offered, they may be regarded as a prophecy of Abraham's, and of his faith in it, that God would, as in fact he did, provide a lamb or ram in the room of that he was called to offer; or he may mean Isaac himself, whom he was bid to take and offer, and so was a lamb of God's providing; though he did not choose directly to say this, but puts him off with such an answer, suggesting that it was best for him to leave it with God, who, as he had called them to such service, would supply them with a proper sacrifice; and in speaking in this manner he might give room for Isaac to suspect what was intended, and so by degrees bring him to the knowledge of it. Some Jewish writers^{f1275} say, that Abraham to this answer added in express terms,

“my son, thou art the lamb:”

so they went both of them together; they proceeded on in their journey until they came to the place they were directed to go. The Targum of Jonathan says,

“they went both of them with a perfect heart as one;”

the Jerusalem Targum is,

“with a quiet, easy, and composed mind or heart;”

and Jarchi,

“with a like heart;”

all intimating that Isaac was thoroughly acquainted with what was to be done, that he was to be the sacrifice, and that he heartily agreed to it, and that he and his father were of one mind in it, and that he went with the same will to be offered up, as his father did to offer him; and indeed the expression being repeated from (^{f1276}Genesis 22:6), seems to suggest something remarkable and worthy of attention.

Ver. 9. *And they came to the place which God had told him of*, etc.] Mount Moriah. Maimonides^{f1276} says,

“it is a tradition in or by the hands of all, that this is the place where David and Solomon built an altar in the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and where Abraham built an altar, and bound Isaac on it; and where Noah built one when he came out of the ark, and is the altar on which Cain and Abel offered; and where the first man offered when he was created, and from whence he was created.”

And so the Targum of Jonathan, and other Jewish writers^{f1277}. The Mahometans say^{f1278}, that Meena or Muna, a place about two or three miles from Mecca, is the place where Abraham went to offer up his son Isaac, and therefore in this place they sacrifice their sheep.

And Abraham built an altar there; of the earth, and turf upon it he found on the mount, erected an altar for sacrifice, even for the sacrifice of his own son: he had built many before, but none for such a purpose as this, and yet went about it readily, and finished it. But if there was one before, Abraham could not with any propriety be said to build it, at most only to repair it; but there is no doubt to be made of it that he built it anew, and perhaps there never was an altar here before:

and laid on the wood in order: for the sacrifice to be put upon it:

and bound Isaac his son: with his hands and feet behind him, as Jarchi says; not lest he should flee from him, and make his escape, as Aben Ezra suggests, but as it was the usual manner to bind sacrifices when offered; and especially this was so ordered, that Isaac might be a type of the Messiah, who was bound by the Jews, (~~4812~~ John 18:12 ~~4170~~ Matthew 27:2); as well as he was bound and fastened to the cross:

and laid him on the altar upon the wood; it is highly probable with his own consent; for if he was twenty five, and as some say thirty seven years of age, he was able to have resisted his father, and had he been reluctant could have cleared himself from the hands of his aged parent: but it is very likely, that previous to this Abraham opened the whole affair to him, urged the divine command, persuaded him to submit to it; and perhaps might suggest to him what he himself had faith in, that God would either revoke the precept, or prevent by some providence or another the fatal blow, or raise him again from the dead; however, that obedience to the will of God should be yielded, since disobedience might be attended with sad consequences to them both; and with such like things the mind of Isaac might be reconciled to this affair, and he willingly submitted to it; in which he also was a type of Christ, who acquiesced in the will of his Father, freely surrendered himself into the hands of justice, and meekly and willingly gave himself an offering for his people.

Ver. 10. *And Abraham stretched forth his hand*, etc.] All things being ready for execution, the altar built, the wood laid on it, the sacrifice bound and laid on that, nothing remained but to cut the throat of the sacrifice; and in order to that, the instrument for it laying by him, he put forth his hand, one would think in a trembling manner, for it is enough to make one tremble to think of it:

and took the knife to slay his son; with a full intention to do it, which was carrying his obedience to the divine will to the last extremity, and shows he was sincere in it, and really designed to complete it; and this was taken by the Lord as if it was actually done. He had his knife in his hand, and was near the throat of his son, and just ready to give the fatal thrust; in another moment, as it were, it would have been all over; but in the nick of time God appeared and prevented it, as follows:

Ver. 11. *And the Angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven,* etc.]

Not a created angel, but the eternal one, the Son of God, who perhaps appeared in an human form, and spoke with an articulate voice, as he frequently did; for that this was a divine Person is clear from his swearing by himself, and renewing the promise unto Abraham, (¹²²⁶Genesis 22:16-18):

and said, Abraham, Abraham; the repeating his name denotes haste to prevent the slaughter of his son, which was just upon the point of doing, and in which Abraham was not dilatory, but ready to make quick dispatch; and therefore with the greater eagerness and vehemency the angel calls him by name, and doubles it, to raise a quick and immediate attention to him, which it did:

and he said, here [am] I: ready to hearken to what shall be said, and to obey what should be ordered, (see Gill on “¹²²⁷Genesis 22:1”).

Ver. 12. *And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad,* etc.] Which he was just going to stretch out, with his knife in it, to slay him; and though the Lord had bid him take his son, and offer him for a burnt offering, to try his faith, fear, love, and obedience, yet he meant not that he should actually slay him, but would prevent it when it came to the crisis; for he approves not of, nor delights in human sacrifices; and that this might not be dawn into an example, it was prevented; though the Gentiles, under the influence of Satan, in imitation of this, have practised it:

neither do thou anything unto him; by lacerating his flesh, letting out any of his blood, or wounding him ever so slightly in any part:

for now I know that thou fearest God; with a truly childlike filial fear; with such a reverence of him that has fervent love, and strong affection, joined with it; with a fear that includes the whole of internal religious worship, awe of the divine Being, submission to his will, faith in him, and love to him, and obedience springing from thence. And this is said, not as though he was ignorant before how things would issue; for he knew from all eternity what Abraham would be, and what he would do, having determined to bestow that grace upon him, and work it in him, which would influence and enable him to act the part he did; he knew full well beforehand what would be the consequence of such a trial of him; but this is said after the manner of men, who know things with certainty when they come to pass, and appear plain and evident: or this may be understood of a

knowledge of approbation, that the Lord now knew, and approved of the faith, fear, love, and obedience of Abraham, which were so conspicuous in this affair, (see ^{<9006>}Psalm 1:6); Saadiah Gaon ^{f1279} interprets it, “I have made known”, that is, to others; God by trying Abraham made it manifest to others, to all the world, to all that should hear of or read this account of things, that he was a man that feared God, loved him, believed in him, and obeyed him, of which this instance is a full and convincing proof:

seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son] from me: but as soon as he had the order to offer him up, prepared for it, took a three days’ journey, and all things along with him for the sacrifice; when he came to the place, built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound his son, and laid him on it, took the knife, and was going to put it to his throat; so that the Lord looked upon the thing as if it was really done: it was a plain case that he did not, and would not have withheld his son, but would have freely offered him a sacrifice unto God at his command; and that he loved the Lord more than he did his son, and had a greater regard to the command of God than to the life of his son, and preferred the one to the other. And thus God spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, (^{<8182>}Romans 8:32).

Ver. 13. *And Abraham lifted up his eyes*, etc.] They were before fixed upon his son lying upon the altar, and intent upon that part he was going to thrust his knife into; but hearing a voice from heaven above him, he lift up his eyes thitherward:

and looked, and, behold, behind [him] a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; the ram making a noise and rustling among the bushes behind the place where Abraham was, he turned himself, and looked and saw it: the Targum of Onkelos introduces the clause thus, “after these things”; and so the Arabic version: after Abraham had heard the voice of the angel, and had lift up his eyes to heaven, he was directed to look behind him; and both that and the Targum of Jonathan paraphrase it,

“and he saw and beheld one ram;”

and so the Septuagint, Syriac and Samaritan versions, reading **dj a** instead of **rj a**. This ram was caught and held by his horns in a thicket of briars, brambles, and thorns, or in the thick branches of the shrubs or bushes which grew upon the mount; and the horns of a ram being crooked, are easily implicated in such thickets, but not easily loosed. From whence this

ram came is not known; it can hardly be thought to come from Abraham's fold, or to be his property, since he was three days' journey distant from home; very likely it had strayed from neighbouring flocks, and was by the providence of God directed hither at a seasonable time. The Jewish writers ^{f1280} say, it was from the creation of the world; and there is no absurdity or improbability to suppose it was immediately created by the power of God, and in an extraordinary manner provided; and was a type of our Lord Jesus, who was foreordained of God before the foundation of the world, and came into the world in an uncommon way, being born of a virgin, and that in the fulness of time, and seasonably, and in due time died for the sins of men. The ram has its name from "strength", in the Hebrew language, and was an emblem of a great personage, (²⁰⁸³ Daniel 8:3); and may denote the strength and dignity of Christ as a divine Person; being caught in a thicket, may be an emblem of the decrees of God, in which he was appointed to be the Saviour; or the covenant agreement and transactions with his Father, in which he voluntarily involved himself, and by which he was held; or the sins of his people, which were laid upon him by imputation, were wreathed about him, and justice finding him implicated with them, required satisfaction, and had it; or the hands of wicked men, sons of Belial, comparable to thorns, by whom he was taken; or the sorrows of death and hell that encompassed him, and the curses of a righteous law which lay upon him; and perhaps he never more resembled this ram caught in a thicket, than when a platted crown of thorns was put upon his head, and he wore it;

and Abraham went and took the ram; without regarding whose property it was, since God, the owner and proprietor of all, had provided it for him, and brought it to him at a very seasonable time, and directed him to take it:

and offered him for a burnt offering in the stead of his son; in which also was a type of Christ, who was made an offering for sin, and a sacrifice to God of a sweet smelling savour; and its being a burnt offering denotes the sufferings of Christ, and the severity of them; and which were in the room and stead of his people, of God's Isaac, of spiritual seed of Abraham, of the children of God of the promise, of all his beloved ones; who therefore are let go, justice being satisfied with what Christ has done and suffered, it being all one as if they had suffered themselves; as here in the type, the ram having, its throat cut, its blood shed, its skin flayed, and the whole burnt to ashes, were as if Isaac himself had been thus dealt with, as Jarchi observes.

Alexander Polyhistor^{f1281}, an Heathen writer, has, in agreement with the sacred history, given a narrative of this affair in a few words,

“God (he says) commanded Abraham to offer up his son Isaac to him for a burnt offering, and taking the lad with him to a mountain, laid and kindled an heap of wood, and put Isaac upon it; and when he was about to slay him, was forbidden by an angel, who presented a ram to him for sacrifice, and then Abraham removed his son from the pile, and offered up the ram.”

Ver. 14. *And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh*, etc.] Which may be rendered either “the Lord hath seen”, as the Septuagint, or “has provided”, the future being put for the past, as Abendana observes, and so it is called, in answer to what Abraham had said, (^{<0218>}Genesis 22:8); “God will provide”: now he had provided, and, as a memorial of it, gives the place this name; or “he will see or provide”^{f1282}; as he has provided for me, so he will for all those that trust in him; as he has provided a ram in the room of Isaac, so he has provided, and will send his only Son in the fulness of time to be a sacrifice for the sins of his people:

as it is said [to] this day, in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen; from this time to the times of Moses, and so on in after ages, even until now, it has been used as a proverbial saying, that as God appeared to Abraham, and for his son, in the mount, just as he was going to sacrifice him, and delivered him, so the Lord will appear for his people in all ages, in a time of difficulty and distress, and when at the utmost extremity, who call upon him, and trust in him. This may also refer to the presence of God in this mount, when the temple should be built on it, as it was, (^{<0218>}2 Chronicles 3:1); and to the appearance of Christ in it, who was often seen here: some choose to render the words, “in the mount the Lord shall be seen”^{f1283}; “God manifest in the flesh”, (^{<0216>}1 Timothy 3:16), the “Immanuel”, “God with us”, (^{<0123>}Matthew 1:23), who was frequently in the temple built on this mount, and often seen there in his state of humiliation on earth.

Ver. 15. *And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time.*] The Angel having restrained him from slaying his son, and having provided another sacrifice, which he offered, calls to him again; having something more to say to him, which was to renew the covenant he had made with him, and confirm it by an oath.

Ver. 16. *And said, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord*, etc.] Which Aben Ezra observes is a great oath, and abides for ever; for because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, his own nature, perfections, and life, (^{<3063>}Hebrews 6:13); hence it appears, that the Angel that called to Abraham was a divine Person, the true Jehovah:

for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only [son]; that is, from the Lord, as in (^{<0022>}Genesis 22:12); and is here repeated as being a most marvellous thing, a wonderful instance of faith in God, and fear of him, and of love and obedience to him; for, with respect to the will of Abraham, and as far as he was suffered to go, it was as much done as it was possible for him to do, and was looked upon as if actually done: yet this is not observed as meritorious of what follows; the promise of which had been made before, but is now repeated to show what notice God took of, and how well pleased he was with what had been done; and therefore renews the promise, which of his own grace and good will he had made, for the strengthening of Abraham's faith, and to encourage others to obey the Lord in whatsoever he commands them.

Ver. 17. *That in blessing I will bless thee*, etc.] With temporal and spiritual blessings; with the Spirit and all his graces; with Christ and redemption, justification, and salvation by him; and with eternal life, as the gift of God, through him:

and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which [is] upon the sea shore: both his natural seed, descending from him in the line of Isaac, and his spiritual seed, both among Jews and Gentiles, that tread in his steps; (see ^{<0035>}Genesis 13:15, 16 15:5):

and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: “gate” for “gates”, where courts of judicature were held, and which are the security of cities and put for them, and which also include the whole country round about: so that this phrase is expressive of an entire jurisdiction and dominion over them; and was literally fulfilled in the times of Joshua, David, and Solomon; and spiritually in Christ, Abraham's principal seed, when he destroyed Satan and his principalities and powers; overcame the world; made an end of sin and abolished death; and delivered his people out the hands of all their enemies; and in all Abraham's spiritual seed, who are made more than conquerors over them, through Christ that has loved them.

Ver. 18. *And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, etc.]

That is, in his one and principal seed, the Messiah, that should spring from him, (^{<4816>}Galatians 3:16), in whom all the elect of God, of all nations under the heavens, are blessed with all spiritual blessings, with peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life, with grace here and glory hereafter; (see Gill on "^{<0118>}Genesis 12:3"); or, "shall bless themselves"^{f1284} in him; or, "account themselves blessed"; apply to him for blessings, claim their interest in them, and glory in them, and make their boast of them:

because thou hast obeyed my voice; in taking his son and offering him up unto him, as much as he was permitted to do; and thus honouring God by his obedience to him, he of his grace and goodness honours him with the promise of being the father of multitudes, both in a literal and spiritual sense, and with being the ancestor of the Messiah, in whom all the blessings of grace and goodness meet.

Ver. 19. *So Abraham returned to his young men*, etc.] He had left at a certain place with the ass, while he and Isaac went to the mount to worship; and who stayed there till he came to them, according to his order, (^{<0225>}Genesis 22:5); no mention is made of Isaac, but there is no doubt that he returned with Abraham, since we hear of him afterwards in his house; for as to what the Targum of Jonathan says, it cannot be depended on, that the angels took Isaac and brought him to the school of Shem the great, and there he was three years:

and they rose up, and went together to Beersheba; that is, when Abraham and Isaac came to the place where the young men were, they got up and proceeded on in their journey along with them to Beersheba, from whence Abraham came, and where he had for some time lived:

and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba; there he continued for some time afterwards, and but for a time, for in the next chapter we hear of him at Hebron, (^{<0232>}Genesis 23:2).

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, after these things*, etc.] Abraham's taking his son Isaac to the land of Moriah, building an altar on one of the mountains there, and laying him on it with an intention to sacrifice him, and offering of a ram in his stead, and the return of them both to Beersheba:

that it was told Abraham; by some person very probably who was lately come from those parts where the following persons lived; though Jarchi suggests this was told him by the Lord himself, and while he was thinking

of taking a wife for Isaac of the daughters at Aner, or Eshcol, or Mamre; and to prevent which the following narration was given him:

saying, behold Milcah, she hath also borne children unto thy brother Nahor; as Sarah, supposed to be the same with Iscah, a daughter of Haran, had borne a son to him, and whom he had received again as from the dead; so Milcah, another daughter of Harsh, had borne children to his brother Nahor, whom he had left in Ur of the Chaldees, when he departed from thence, and who afterwards came and dwelt in Haran of Mesopotamia; (see ^{<0112>}Genesis 11:27,29).

Ver. 21. *Huz his firstborn, and Buz his brother*, etc.] The first of these gave name to the land of Uz, where Job dwelt, and who seems to be a descendant of this man, (^{<0006>}Job 1:1); and from whom sprung the Ausitae of Ptolemy ^{f1285}, who dwelt near Babylon and by the Euphrates. The latter, was the father of the Buzites, of which family Elihu was, that interposed between Job and his friends, (^{<0010>}Job 32:2):

and Kemuel the father of Aram; not that Aram from whom the Syrians are denominated Arameans, he was the son of Shem, (^{<0112>}Genesis 10:22), but one who perhaps was so called from dwelling among them, as Jacob is, called a Syrian, (^{<0016>}Deuteronomy 26:5), or he had this name given him in memory and honour of the more ancient Aram: from this Kemuel might come the Camelites, of which there were two sorts mentioned by Strabo ^{f1286}, and who dwelt to the right of the river Euphrates, about three days' journey from it.

Ver. 22. *And Chesed*, etc.] From whom it is generally thought sprung the Chaldees, who are commonly called Chasdim; but mention is made of the Chaldees before this man was born, unless they are called so by anticipation; (see Gill on "^{<0112>}Genesis 10:22"):

and Hazo, and Pildash, and Jidlaph, and Bethuel; of these men and their posterity we hear no more, excepting: the last, for whose sake the rest are mentioned. Hazo or Chazo settled in Elymais, a country belonging to Persia, where is now a city called Chuz after his name, and from whence the whole country is called Chuzistan; and the inhabitants of it are by the Assyrians called Huzoye or Huzaeans ^{f1287}; the same which Strabo ^{f1288} makes mention of under the name of Cossaeans, who are described as a warlike people, inhabiting a barren and mountainous country, and given to spoil and robbery; and are mentioned by him along with Elymaeans,

Medes, and Persians. Some Arabic writers say the Persians are from Pars, the son of Pahla; and Dr. Hyde^{f1289} queries whether Pahla is not the same with Paldas, that is, Pildash, another of the sons of Nahor.

Ver. 23. *And Bethuel begat Rebekah*, etc.] Who was to be and was the wife of Isaac; and, for the sake of her genealogy, the above account is given, as Aben Ezra observes, and so Jarchi; and this is observed to pave the way for the history of the chapter; for no notice is taken of any other of Bethuel's children but her, not even of Laban her brother:

these eight Milcah did bear, to Nahor, Abraham's brother; this is observed, and the exact number given, as well as their names, to distinguish them from other children of Nahor he had by another woman, as follows:

Ver. 24. *And his concubine, whose name [was] Reumah*, etc.] Not an harlot, but a secondary wife, who was under the proper and lawful wife, and a sort of a head servant in the family, and chiefly kept for the procreation of children; which was not thought either unlawful or dishonourable in those times such as was Hagar in Abraham's family:

she bare also Tebah, and Gaham, and Thahash, and Maachah, of whom we have no account elsewhere; only it may be observed, that here Maachah is the name of a man, which sometimes is given to a woman, (~~<1153>~~1 Kings 15:13).

CHAPTER 23

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 23

This chapter treats of the age, death, and funeral of Sarah, and the place of her interment: of her age, (^{<01201>}Genesis 23:1); of her death, (^{<01212>}Genesis 23:2); of the motion Abraham made to the sons of Heth, to obtain a burial place among them, (^{<01218>}Genesis 23:3,4); of the answer of them to him, giving him leave to bury in any of their sepulchres, (^{<01215>}Genesis 23:5,6); of a second motion of his to them, to use their interest with Ephron the Hittite, to let him have the cave of Machpelah for the above purpose, (^{<01217>}Genesis 23:7-9); of Ephron's consent unto it, (^{<01230>}Genesis 23:10,11); of the purchase Abraham made of it for four hundred shekels of silver, (^{<01232>}Genesis 23:12-16); and of its being secured unto him, which he interred Sarah his wife, (^{<01237>}Genesis 23:17-20).

Ver. 1. *And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old*, etc.]

This following immediately upon the account of the offering up of Isaac, led many of the Jewish writers to conclude, that Isaac was when thirty seven years of age, as he must be when Sarah his mother was one hundred and twenty seven, for he was born when she was ninety years of age; but this seems not to be observed on that account, but to give the sum of her age at her death, since it follows:

[these were] the years of the life of Sarah; who, as it is remarked by many interpreters, is the only woman the years of whose life are reckoned up in Scripture.

Ver. 2. *And Sarah died in Kirjatharba*, etc.] Which was so called, either, as Jarchi says, from the four Anakims or giants that dwelt here, (^{<06153>}Joshua 15:13); or else, as the same writer observes, from the four couple buried here, Adam and Eve, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah; but then it must be so called by anticipation; rather, as Aben Ezra thinks, it had its name from Arba, a great man among the Anakims, and the father of Anak, (^{<06445>}Joshua 14:15); though some take it to be a Tetrapolls, a city consisting of four parts; but be it as it will, here Abraham and Sarah

were at the time of her death; when they removed from Beersheba hither is not said:

the same [is] Hebron, in the land of Canaan; so it was afterwards called: here Abraham and Sarah had lived many years ago, (see ^{<0138>}Genesis 13:18); and hither they returned, and here they ended their days and were buried:

and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her; Aben Ezra observes, that, when Sarah died, Abraham was in another place, and therefore is said to come to mourn for her; and the Targum of Jonathan is,

“and Abraham came from the mount of worship (Moriah), and found that she was dead, and he sat down to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.”

Others ^{f1290} report, that, upon hearing of the offering up of Isaac, she swooned away and died. But the meaning is, that he came from his own tent to Sarah’s, (see ^{<0247>}Genesis 24:67), where her corpse was, to indulge his passion of grief and sorrow for her; which, in a moderate way, was lawful, and what natural affection and conjugal relation obliged him to. The Hebrews ^{f1291} observe, that, in the word for “weep”, one of the letters is lesser than usual, and which they think denotes, that his weeping for her was not excessive, but little; but both phrases put together seem to denote that his sorrow was very great; and the one perhaps may refer to his private, and the other to his public mourning for her, according to the custom of those times.

Ver. 3. *And Abraham stood up from before his dead*, etc.] The corpse of Sarah, by which he sat pensive and mourning, perhaps upon the ground, as was the custom of mourners, (^{<8013>}Job 1:13); where having sat awhile, he rose up and went out of the tent, to provide for the funeral of his wife as became him:

and spake unto the sons of Heth; the descendants of Heth the son of Canaan, (see ^{<0105>}Genesis 10:15); who were at this time the inhabitants and proprietors of that part of the land where Abraham now was: saying; as follows:

Ver. 4. *I [am] a stranger and a sojourner with you*, etc.] Not a native of the place, only dwelt as a sojourner among them for a time; but had not so

much as a foot of ground he could call his own, and consequently had no place to inter his dead:

give me a possession of a buryingplace with you; not that he desired it as a free gift, but that he might be allowed to make a purchase of a piece of ground to bury his dead in; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“sell me a possession,” etc.

(~~Gen 23:9~~ Genesis 23:9); and this he was the rather desirous of, not only because it was according to the rules of humanity, and the general custom of all nations, to provide for the burial of their dead; but he was willing to have such a place in the land of Canaan for this purpose, to strengthen his faith and the faith of his posterity, and to animate their hope and expectation of being one day put into the possession of it; hence the patriarchs in later times, as Jacob and Joseph, were desirous of having their bones laid there:

that I may bury my dead out of my sight; for, though Sarah was a very lovely person in her life, and greatly desirable by Abraham, yet death had changed her countenance and was turning her into corruption, which rendered her unpleasant, and began to make her loathsome; so that there was a necessity of removing her out of his sight, who before had been so very agreeable to him; and this is the case of the dearest relation and friend at death.

Ver. 5. *And the children of Heth answered Abraham*, etc.] In a very civil and respectful manner:

saying unto him, as follows:

Ver. 6. *Hear us, my lord*, etc.] One of them spake in the name of the rest, who calls Abraham not “our lord”, but “my lord”; addressing him very honourably, and desires he would hear what he had to say on the behalf of others with himself; “hear us”, representing not the body of the common people, but the princes among them, the heads of their families:

thou [art] a mighty prince amongst us; though he was pleased to call himself a stranger and a sojourner, yet they had an high opinion of him, as a person of great wealth and substance, and of great power and authority; and who lived like a prince, and was a potent one, having a large train of servants under him: or, “a prince of God”^{f1292}, as it may be rendered; one raised up to grandeur and dignity by him; with whom he was, find in whose

sight he had favour, and was very grateful and acceptable; and by whom he was highly honoured, and had in great esteem as a friend of his:

in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; as they had many, every family a distinct sepulchre for itself, they made offer of them to him, to bury his dead in the choicest of them, the most grand and magnificent, or in which of them soever he pleased; which was very kind, generous, and respectful:

none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead; there is not a man among us but what has such a regard for thee, that he will not deny thee the use of his sepulchre to bury thy dead in; and therefore need not scruple to make use of any that may be judged most proper and convenient: no doubt the speaker full well knew the mind of those in whose name he addressed Abraham.

Ver. 7. *And Abraham stood up*, etc.] For, having made his speech to the children of Heth, he sat down waiting for an answer; or rather perhaps they obliged him to sit down, out of reverence to so great a personage; and when they had done speaking, he rose up:

and bowed himself to the people of the land; the principal of them, in token of the grateful sense he had of the honour they had done him, and of the great civility with which they had used him:

[even] to the children of Heth; this seems to be added to distinguish them from the common people, and as an explanation of the preceding clause; (see Gill on “^{4023B}Genesis 23:3”).

Ver. 8. *And he communed with them*, etc.] Entered into a discourse and conversation with them upon the above subject:

saying, if it be your mind that I should bury my dead out of my sight; that is, in some place belonging to them, otherwise they could have no objection to the burying of his wife anywhere else: if now what they had said were not spoken in a complaisant way, but it was their real mind and will, and they were sincere and hearty in it, and very desirous of obliging him with a place among them for the interment of his dead; then he had this favour to ask of them:

hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar; a principal man among the Hittites, who had a field and a cave in it, near where Abraham

dwelt, and very convenient for him, and for this purpose of his now under consideration: this man seems to be present at this time, as appears from (^{<0230>}Genesis 23:10); but Abraham did not think fit to address him himself, lest he should not so well and so easily succeed; and therefore entreats the princes of Heth to unite in a request to Ephron for the favour after mentioned, which he supposed they would not be backward to, if they were hearty in this affair; and, if Ephron was present, as he seems to be, it was a very handsome, honourable, and modest address to him through his brethren, which he could not with any politeness well withstand. The request follows:

Ver. 9. *That he may, give me the cave of Machpelah, which he hath, which [is] in the end of his field,* etc.] The Targum of Jonathan renders it, “the double cave”, and so do the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; and, according to Aben Ezra and Ben Melech, it was so called because there was a cave within a cave in it; and, as Jarchi thinks, because it was a house and chamber over it ^{f1293} or, as he adds, because it was fit for couples, for two corpses to be laid in it; and the Jews say ^{f1294}, here Adam and Eve were buried, which made Abraham so desirous of having it for a buryingplace: but it seems rather to be the proper name of a place, and indeed of a tract of land, in which the field and the cave in the corner of it lay, and which all belonged to Ephron; for both the field and the cave in it are distinguished from Machpelah, in which they were, and that from them, (^{<0237>}Genesis 23:17); and it is highly probable, that this cave was never made use of before for such a purpose as it was now sought for, since Abraham did not think fit to accept of the offer made him of any of their sepulchres; and chose rather that his dead should not lie with them, but in a separate place, though among them, they being Heathens and idolaters, and unacquainted with the resurrection of the dead, and would have no part in the first resurrection, which Abraham believed and hoped for;

for as much money as it is worth he shall give it me, for a possession of a buryingplace amongst you; or, “for full money” ^{f1295}, that which is full weight, for money was paid by weight in those times, as appears from (^{<0236>}Genesis 23:16); or for the full price and value of it: for, as Abraham did not desire to have it as a free gift, so neither at an under price; he was very willing to give the full worth of it; he did not ask it with any covetous view, or to encroach upon them.

Ver. 10. *And Ephron dwelt among the children of Heth*, etc.] Or “sat”^{f1296} among them, in the present assembly of them; and, according to Jarchi, as their president for the time on this occasion; but if so, Abraham would have directed his speech to him: however, he was upon the spot, as appears from what follows,

and Ephron the Hittite answered Abraham in the audience of the children of Heth; he rose up in the assembly upon the mention of his name, and in the hearing of the rest of the princes gave an answer himself to Abraham’s request:

[even] of all that went in at the gates of his city; the city of Kirjatharba, afterwards called Hebron, (^{4023D}Genesis 23:2), where he was born, or however where he now lived; and perhaps it, or the greater part of it, was his possession and property: it was now at one of the gates of this city, where the assembly of the princes was held; it being usual to hold assemblies on any business, or courts of judicature, in such places, they being public, where multitudes resorted, or were continually passing and repassing, and so had the opportunity of hearing, and of being witnesses:

saying; as follows:

Ver. 11. *Nay, my lord, hear me*, etc.] Or not so, my lord, as Aben Ezra paraphrases it; not that he denied his request entirely, or refused him the cave at any rate, but that he should not buy it of him, he would give it to him, and therefore he desires he would hear what he had to say further:

the field give I thee, and the cave that [is] therein I give it thee; which was more than Abraham asked to purchase; he only desired to have the cave, which lay in one corner of the field, but Ephron proposes both to give him the cave, and the field also:

in the presence of the sons of my people give I it thee; both field and cave; three times he says, “I give it thee”, to show that he freely gave it, and that Abraham was welcome to it, and for the confirmation of the grant:

bury thy dead; in the cave, at once, immediately, without any more ado.

Ver. 12. *And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land*.] Showing hereby great respect, and giving much honour both to them and Ephron; and signifying that he had something to say, and desired audience of them, and humbly submitted to them what he should say.

Ver. 13. *And he spake unto Ephron in the audience of the people of the land*, etc.] He addressed himself to Ephron who spoke last, with an audible voice, so that all could hear him:

saying, but if thou [wilt give it], I pray thee, hear me; the words are very concise, and in the original text are only “if thou”, and differently supplied; by some, “if thou art he”^{f1297}, Ephron, whom it is supposed Abraham knew not by face, or that he was present; which is not likely, since Abraham had lived in those parts now so as to be well known himself, and must know his neighbours; and had lived formerly here, and could not but know so great a prince as Ephron, whose city he dwelt in. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“if thou art willing to do me a kindness, hear me;”

it will be taken as a favour to admit me to speak once more, and to grant what shall be desired. Others read the words thus,

“if thou wilt hear me, or I pray thee hear me, or if thou, if (I say) thou wilt hear me”^{f1298};

then follows his proposal,

I will give thee the money for the field; Abraham did not choose to receive it as a free gift, but to make a purchase of it, that it might be sure to him and his posterity; for though Ephron was now in this generous mood, he might change his mind, or hereafter upbraid Abraham with it, should he fall out with him, or his posterity might claim it again, and dispute his right to it:

take [it] of me: the purchase money, the full worth of the field:

and I will bury my dead there, or “then will I bury”, etc.^{f1299}; and not before.

Ver. 14. *And Ephron answered Abraham, saying unto him.*] The following words:

Ver. 15. *My lord, hearken unto me*, etc.] Since it is your mind to buy the field, and not receive it as a gift, then hear what I have to say as to the value of it:

the land [is worth] four hundred shekels of silver; which, reckoning a shekel at two shillings and sixpence, comes to fifty pounds of our money;

what [is] that betwixt thee and me? between two persons so rich, the sum was trifling and inconsiderable, whether the one paid it, and the other received it, or not; or between two such friends it was not worth speaking of, it was no matter whether it was paid or not: or else the sense is, between us both it is honestly worth so much; it is a good bargain, and must be owned to be so, what is it? the sum is so small, and it is so clearly the worth of it, that there needs no more to be said about it:

bury therefore thy dead: in it, and give thyself no more trouble and concern about it.

Ver. 16. *And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron,* etc.] He agreed at once to give him the sum proposed, judging it to be a moderate price between man and man, and he was satisfied with it, and well content to pay him the money:

and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver: for in those times money had no mark or stamp upon it to show its value, and therefore was not told by pieces, but weighed, by which its full worth was known; and that Ephron might have his whole and just demand, the silver was weighed to him:

which he had named, in the audience of the sons of Heth; who were witnesses of the bargain, of the price set by Ephron, and of the payment of it by Abraham:

four hundred shekels of silver: the sum before mentioned, (^{<40235>}Genesis 23:15):

current [money] with the merchant; such as was used by merchants in buying and selling; such as they would receive, who knew the value of it, and were careful not to take any that was bad; wherefore such as would pass, with them would go anywhere, was current money; how all this is consistent with what Stephen says; (see Gill on ^{<44716>}Acts 7:16”).

Ver. 17. *And the field of Ephron, which [was] in Machpelah,* etc.] This clearly shows that Machpelah is the proper name of a place or tract of ground, and not an appellative, or to be rendered the double cave, since a field could never be said to be in a cave: and yet some have been so stupid, as Vatablus observes, as to render the words,

“the field of Ephron, which was in the double cave,”

whereas, on the contrary, the cave was in that field; and so the Vulgate version, to better sense, though not agreeably to the Hebrew text,

“the field of Ephron, in which was the double cave:”

which [was] before Mamre; or over against it, the place where Abraham dwelt, which was in Hebron, (^{<0138}Genesis 13:18 18:1);

the field, and the cave which [was] therein, and all the trees that [were] in the field, that [were] in all the borders round about, were made sure; or “rose”, or “stood up”^{f1300}. Jarchi thinks the reason of this phrase, or way of speaking, is, because this field, with all belonging to it, came into the hands of a greater person; out of the hands of a private man into the hands of a king; and so Abraham indeed is called by some Heathen writers^{f1301}; but Aben Ezra and Ben Melech much better interpret it,

“it was confirmed and stood;”

that is, it was ensured to him, and remained with him, even that, and all upon it and in it, throughout the whole circumference of it.

Ver. 18. *Unto Abraham for a possession*, etc.] To be enjoyed by him and his for ever, as his own property, being purchased by his money:

in the presence of the children of Heth; they being witnesses of the bargain, and of the payment of the money by Abraham, and of the surrender of the field unto him, for his own use:

before all that went in at the gates of his city; not of Abraham’s city, for he had none, but of Ephron’s city, which was Hebron, (see ^{<0230}Genesis 23:10); these are either the same with the children of Heth, and so the clause is added by way of explanation, and including all the inhabitants of the place; or else different from them, they intending the princes of the people that composed the assembly Abraham addressed, and these the common people, the inhabitants of the place. Aben Ezra takes them to be the travellers that passed and repassed through the gates of the city: however, the design of the expression is to show in what a public manner this affair was transacted, and that the field was made as firm and as sure to Abraham as it could well be, no writings on such occasion being used so early.

Ver. 19. *And after this*, etc.] After this affair was over, the bargain struck, the money paid, and possession secured:

Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre; and here he himself was buried, and also Isaac and Rebekah, and Jacob and Leah, (~~1029~~ Genesis 25:9,10 49:29,30 50:13). Benjamin of Tudela ^{f1302} says, in his time (who lived in the latter end of the twelfth century), in the field of Machpelah was a city or town, and in it a large temple called Saint Abraham, where were shown the sepulchres of the six persons before mentioned, and inscriptions over each of them, showing whose they were; and that at the end of the field was the house of Abraham, and before the house a fountain, and no other was suffered to be built there in honour to Abraham:

the same [is] Hebron in the land of Canaan; that is, Mamre is the same place which afterwards was called Hebron, a city in the land of Canaan, in the tribe of Judah, about twenty two miles from Jerusalem to the south, and was one of the cities of refuge. Hebron has the title of Hhaleah, i.e. the chosen or beloved, among the Arabs, where the (Maggarel Mamra) cave of Mamre or Machpelah is still shown, and is always lighted up with lamps, and held in extraordinary veneration by the Mahometans ^{f1303}.

Ver. 20. *And the field, and the cave that is therein, was made sure to Abraham for a possession of a buryingplace, by the sons of Heth.*] Who were witnesses of the transaction between Abraham and Ephron; and this was further made sure by Sarah's being buried in it, which was taking possession of it, for the use for which it was bought; and was a pledge and earnest of the future possession of the land of Canaan by the seed of Abraham: this was the first piece of ground in it possessed by Abraham and his seed; and it being called the possession of a buryingplace, shows that there is no contradiction between this and what Stephen says, (~~405~~ Acts 7:5); he had a possession to bury in, but not to live upon; not any ground of his own to till and sow, or build upon.

CHAPTER 24

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 24

This chapter shows Abraham's concern to get a suitable wife for his son Isaac, for which purpose he commits the affair into the hands of his eldest servant, and makes him swear that he will not take one from among the Canaanites, but out of his own country, and from among his own kindred, (^{<0240>}Genesis 24:1-4); which his servant agreed to, after having the nature of his charge, and of the oath, explained to him, (^{<0245>}Genesis 24:5-9); upon which he departed to Mesopotamia, and coming to the city of Nahor, and to a well near it, he prayed for success, and desired direction by a token, which was granted him, (^{<0240>}Genesis 24:10-22); and inquiring of the damsel, who answered to the token, whose daughter she was, and whether they had room for him and his in their house; and an agreeable answer being returned, he gave thanks to God that had directed him, and had so far made his journey prosperous, (^{<0243>}Genesis 24:23-27); the damsel acquainting her parents whom and what she met with at the well, a brother of her steps out, and invites the servant in, and makes him welcome, (^{<0248>}Genesis 24:28-33); but before he would eat anything, he tells his errand he was come upon, at the instance of his master; how, he had prayed for direction, and was heard, and for which he had given thanks, (^{<0248>}Genesis 24:34-48); and then treats with the relations of the damsel about her marriage to his master's son, to which they agreed, (^{<0249>}Genesis 24:49-51); and after having blessed God, and given his presents he brought with him to the damsel, and her family, and ate and drank with them, was for departing the next morning, (^{<0252>}Genesis 24:52-54); but the friends of the damsel being desirous of her stay with them some few days, and he urgent to be gone, the affair was referred to her, and she agreed to go with him directly, (^{<0255>}Genesis 24:55-58); upon which they dismissed her with their blessing, (^{<0259>}Genesis 24:59,60); who being met by Isaac in the way, was received and introduced into his mother's tent, and married by him, (^{<0261>}Genesis 24:61-67).

Ver. 1. *And Abraham was old, [and] well stricken in age*, etc.] Being now one hundred and forty years of age, for as he was an hundred years old

when Isaac was born, and Isaac was forty years of age when he married Rebekah, which was at this time, Abraham must be of the age mentioned, (see ⁻⁰²⁰⁵Genesis 21:5 25:20);

and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things; with all kind of blessings, with temporal and spiritual blessings; the former seems chiefly designed here, because of what follows; God had blessed him, as Aben Ezra observes, with long life, and riches, and honour, and children, things desirable by men.

Ver. 2. *And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house*, etc.] To Eliezer his servant, according to the Targum of Jonathan, and as is generally thought; and who may well be called an old servant, and his oldest servant, since he must have lived with him fifty years and upwards; one may trace him near sixty years in Abraham's family, and it is highly probable he lived much longer; he was his servant when he had the vision between the pieces, (⁻⁰¹⁸²Genesis 15:2); and then he was the steward of his house, and bid fair to be his heir; which was some time before Hagar was given to Abraham; and Ishmael his son by Hagar was fourteen years of age when Isaac was born, and he was now forty years old, which make fifty five years, or thereabout. Bishop Usher places the vision of the pieces in A. M. 2092, and the marriage of Isaac in 2148, some fifty six years from each other; and so long Eliezer, if he is the servant here meant, must have been in Abraham's family, and how much longer cannot with certainty be said:

that ruled over all that he had; had the care and management of his house, and the affairs of it under him; this agrees with the character of Eliezer in (⁻⁰¹⁸²Genesis 15:2):

put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: as a token of his subjection to him as a servant, and of his readiness, willingness, and fidelity to execute any commands he should lay upon him, and in order to take an oath, as appears by what follows; for it seems this rite was used in swearing, and is still used in India, as Aben Ezra affirms; and some say among the Ethiopians. The Jewish writers are pretty much of opinion that respect is had to the covenant of circumcision, by which Abraham made his servant to swear, which is not likely: rather respect is had to his seed, the promised Messiah, that should spring from his thigh, by whom the adjuration was made, as follows: though Dr. Clayton ^{f1304} thinks this is no other than an equivalent term for approaching in an humble servile manner, and means no more than "come near me", and I will make thee swear; and that, as a

respectable method of approach with the Egyptian, as Herodotus^{f1305} relates, was by bowing the body reciprocally when they met, and saluted one another, and by carrying their hands to each other's knee; so some such like ceremony as embracing the knee, and putting the hand under or round the thigh, might be used by servants when they approached their masters; but it should be observed, that this same rite or ceremony was required of Joseph, governor of Egypt, by his father Jacob; (see ^{<0472>}Genesis 47:29).

Ver. 3. *And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of earth*, etc.] The Maker and possessor of heaven and earth, by whom Abraham used to swear whenever he did, and by whom only men should swear, (see ^{<0142>}Genesis 14:22). The Targum of Jonathan is,

“I will make thee swear by the name of the Word of the Lord God,”

which strengthens the sense given of the rite before observed:

that thou wilt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell; these being not only idolaters, and very wicked people, degenerated yet more and more, but were the seed of the accursed Canaan; and who in process of time would be dispossessed of the land, and be destroyed. Now though Isaac was forty years of age, and one would think at an age sufficient to have chosen a wife for himself; but as Abraham knew that he had a great respect for this servant, and would be influenced by him in such a choice, and especially as this affair was now about to be committed to his care, and no doubt with the consent of Isaac, therefore he thus charges and adjures him.

Ver. 4. *But thou shalt go unto my country*, etc.] Not Canaan, which though his by promise, yet not in possession, but Mesopotamia, as appears from (^{<0240>}Genesis 24:10); which taken largely included the Chaldea, (see ^{<0402>}Acts 7:2), the country where Abraham was born, and from whence he came:

and to my kindred; the family of Nahor his brother, which now dwelt at Haran in Mesopotamia, called the city of Nahor, (^{<0240>}Genesis 24:10); (see ^{<0234>}Genesis 29:4,5); of the increase of whose family Abraham had heard a few years ago, (^{<0223>}Genesis 22:20-24):

and take a wife to my son Isaac; from among them, who though they were not clear of superstition and idolatry, yet they worshipped the true God with their “idols”; and a woman taken out of such a family, and removed at a distance from it, it might be reasonably concluded would be brought off of those things, and adhere to the pure and undefiled religion; and the rather this family was chosen, not only because related to Abraham, but because it had sprung from Shem, who was blessed of God, and whose God the Lord was; nearness of kin was no objection and hinderance to such a marriage, the laws relating to marriage not being given till the time of Moses.

Ver. 5. *And the servant said unto him*, etc.] Before he would take the oath, being cautious of it, and desirous of knowing how far it reached, and what it would or would not oblige him to, which was prudently done:

peradventure the woman will not be to follow me into this land; supposing this should be the case, as it is not unlikely that the woman would object to coming along with him to the land of Canaan, and insist upon Isaac’s coming into her country, and dwelling there, what must then be done?

must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? that is, must I agree with the woman on these terms, and promise that Isaac shall come and dwell with her in Mesopotamia? Now there was good reason for the servant’s putting this question, since he was neither ignorant of the call of Abraham out of that land, no more to return to it, nor of the promise of the land of Canaan to him and his posterity: and as for bringing Isaac “again”, where he never had been in person, this may be accounted for by his being in the loins of Abraham when he was there, and came from thence, as Levi is said to be in his loins when he paid tithes to Melchizedek, and to pay them in him, (^{<800>}Hebrews 7:9,10); and in like manner he might be said to be brought again, or return to Abraham’s country, should he ever go there, as all the seed of Abraham are said in the fourth generation to come to Canaan again, though they had none of them been in person there before, (^{<0156>}Genesis 15:16); besides, as Drusius observes, to bring again, or return, signifies sometimes only to bring on, or to go to some certain place, (see ^{<800>}Ruth 1:10,22); however, the justness of the expression is confirmed by Abraham’s answer in the next words.

Ver. 6. *And Abraham said unto him*, etc.] Not blaming him for putting such a question, nor charging him with impertinence, but plainly seeing the

propriety of it: and in order to clear up this matter to him, gives the following instructions,

beware thou, that thou bring not my son thither again; for the command to come out of the land of Chaldea, never to return more, and to come into the land of Canaan, and there abide, respected both Abraham and his posterity; and besides, it was dangerous for Isaac to go into a family, where, though there was some knowledge of the true God, yet there was much superstition and idolatry in it, as appears by various hints in the sequel of this history, lest he should be corrupted, and degenerate from the true religion.

Ver. 7. *The Lord God of heaven, which took from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred*, etc.] Jarchi distinguishes between his father's house, and the land of his kindred; the former he takes to be Haran, in which he seems to be right; for his father and his family came with him from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran, and there stayed, from whence Abraham was taken and separated from them; by the latter he understands Ur of the Chaldees, interpreting the phrase of the land in which he was born, as Onkelos and Jonathan, and the Septuagint version render it: but the same is meant as before, for Haran was the land of his kindred, where Terah his father died, and Nahor his brother and family lived; from whence he was taken and removed into the land of Canaan, by the call, direction, and providence of the Lord God, who made the heavens, and dwells therein:

which spake unto me, and that swore unto me; made a promise to him, and confirmed it with an oath, (⁽¹¹⁵¹⁸⁾Genesis 15:18 22:16,17):

saying, unto thy seed will I give this land; the land of Canaan; and therefore his son, in whom his seed was to be called, must not be removed from hence, and settled in another country:

he shall send his angel before thee; Aben Ezra takes this to be a prayer or wish, "may he send his angel before thee"; for if it was a prophecy, he adds, why did he say "if the woman will not be willing?" but from (⁽¹²⁴¹⁰⁾Genesis 24:10); and from what follows, that the servant should take a wife to his son from thence, and the encouragement he had for his faith in it, and from what God had done for him, and said unto him, it seems as if he was fully assured in his own mind of the event: this angel may be either understood of a created angel, such being frequently made use of in the affairs of Providence, directing and succeeding men, or of the uncreated

Angel, the Son of God, since the servant attributes his direction and success wholly to the Lord.

Ver. 8. *And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee*, etc.] Or “but” if^{f1306}, which is said by Abraham, not as doubting she would be willing, of which he was satisfied, being persuaded that that God that had made him willing to leave his own country, and his father’s house, would make her willing to do the like, and come and settle with his son in the land that God had given him; but this, and what follows, he said to make the mind of his servant easy, who had some doubt about it, or however was desirous of knowing how he must act should that be the case; and what it was he was to take an oath to do, and how far, and how far not, that would oblige him:

then thou shalt be clear from this my oath; which he enjoined his servant to take; the sense is, when he had done all he could to get the consent of the damsel, and her friends, to go with him and marry his master’s son; and after all she could not be prevailed upon to come with him, then he was free from his oath, having done all that that obliged him to, and he not attempting to take one from any other quarter:

only bring not my son thither again; neither agree with the damsel and her parents, that he shall come to them, nor persuade him to comply with such terms.

Ver. 9. *And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master*, etc.] Or “then” or “therefore the servant”, etc.^{f1307} being satisfied of the nature and extent of his oath, and thoroughly understanding how he was to act upon it, readily took it by using this rite, (see Gill on “~~Q242~~Genesis 24:2”);

and sware to him concerning that matter; of taking a wife to his son, engaging to do everything he had directed and enjoined him relative to it.

Ver. 10. *And the servant took ten camels, of the camels of his master, and departed*, etc.] Camels were much in use in the eastern countries; where, as Pliny^{f1308} says, they were brought up among their herds of cattle, and their riches much consisted in them. Arabia abounded with them; Job had three thousand of them, (~~R00B~~ Job 1:3); how many Abraham had is not said, only ten of them his servant took, being sufficient for his present purpose, and which he took with his master’s leave, and by his order. These creatures are very strong and fit for carrying great burdens, even a thousand pound weight, as is affirmed; and for riding, especially such as have two humps on

their backs, for some have but one; and for long journeys, being very swift, and will travel without water many days, and so very proper to take on such journeys in hot and desert countries, (see Gill on “~~CR104~~ Leviticus 11:4”);

for all the goods of his master [were] in his hand; which agrees with what is before said, that he was the steward of his house, and ruled over all that he had; this in our version, and others, is put in a parenthesis, and given as a reason why the servant took, as it may seem of himself, so many camels as he did, and then set forward on his journey: though it may be rendered, “and of all the goods of his master in his hand”; that is, he took some of the choicest and most valuable things his master had, and carried them along with him as presents to the damsel and her friends; to which sense the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions interpret the words, as well as some others, and which may receive confirmation from (~~CR122~~ Genesis 24:22), Jarchi thinks that Abraham’s servant carried a schedule of all his master’s goods and substance, which he had under his hand given to his son, whereby it would appear how rich he was, and how good a match Isaac would be to the woman, and which might the more incline her and her friends to listen to the proposal. Other Jewish writers ^{f1309} say, it was his testament or will that he carried:

and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia; or Aram Naharaim, Syria of the rivers, which lay between the two rivers Tigris and Euphrates, called therefore by the Greeks Mesopotamia; the three Targums render it Aram or Syria, which is by Euphrates:

unto the city of Nahor; this was the brother of Abraham, and his city was Haran, whither he came, either with his father, or with Abraham, out of Ur of the Chaldees, or followed them thither, and where he and his family stayed and settled. From Hebron, where Abraham now was, to Haran, is reckoned a journey of seventeen days; the distance between them, according to Ptolemy, as Drusius observes, were eight degrees, which make one hundred and twenty German miles; the journey Abraham’s servant took is computed to be four hundred and sixty eight miles ^{f1310}.

Ver. 11. *And he made his camels to kneel down*, etc.] Which these creatures are used to do when they are loaded and unloaded, and also when they take rest, and it was for the sake of the latter they were now made to kneel. It seems that this is what is not natural to them, but what they are learned to do: it is said ^{f1311},

“as soon as a camel is born they tie his four feet under his belly, put a carpet over his back, and stones upon the borders of it, that he may not be able to rise for twenty days together; thus they teach him the habit of bending his knees to rest himself, or when he is to be loaded or unloaded.”

This was done

without the city; the city of Nahor, Haran, near to which the servant was now come: and it was

by a well of water: which place was chosen for the refreshment of his camels, as well as of himself and his men. Rauwolff^{f1312} says, that near Haran, now called Orpha,

“there is a plentiful well still to this day (1575), called Abraham’s well, the water of which hath a more whitish troubledness than others. I have (says he) drank of it several times, out of the conduit that runs from thence into the middle the great camp, and it hath a peculiar pleasantness, and a pleasant sweetness in its taste.”

The time of Abraham’s servant coming hither was

at the time of the evening, [even] the time that women go out to draw [water]; which was the custom for women to do, for the necessary uses of their families; as it was especially in the eastern countries: and the Arabian women to this time, after they have been hard at work all day, weaving, or grinding, or making bread, at evening they set out with a pitcher or a goat’s skin, and, tying their sucking children behind them, trudge it in this manner two or three miles to fetch water^{f1313}.

Ver. 12. *And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham*, etc.] He does not call the Lord his God, though no doubt he was, since he appears throughout the whole to be a good man; but the God of Abraham, because God had often manifested and renewed his covenant with Abraham in an eminent manner, and had bestowed many favours upon him, and admitted him to much nearness and communion with him; and it was not on his own account, but on his master’s business he now was:

I pray thee, send me good speed this day; or “cause [something] to happen before me this day”^{f1314}; some extraordinary event, which depends not upon the will, or skill, or contrivance of men, but upon the pleasure of

God; and which, with respect to second causes, men call hap or chance, but with respect to God, is according to his determinate counsel and will. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“prepare now a decent wife before me this day.”

But the servant’s meaning is, that something might turn up in providence that would lead on to such an event:

and shew kindness unto my master Abraham; which he would be ready to acknowledge as a favour, an instance of kindness and mercy, and not merit.

Ver. 13. *Behold, I stand [here] by the well of water*, etc.] Wishing, hoping, and expecting that something would turn out that would direct and instruct what further to do, and that would lead on to the business he came about:

and the daughters of the men of the city came out to draw water; which was the usual custom in those parts about that time. So Homer speaks ^{f1315} of meeting a girl before the city *ὕδρευουση*, drawing or fetching water. And this was a principal reason why Abraham’s servant stopped at the well, not only to refresh himself, his men, and his cattle, but in hopes he should meet with the damsel there he was come for; or at least should hear of her, or meet with some one or another that would direct him to her; or something would fall out there that would be a means in Providence of bringing about what he was sent to do.

Ver. 14. *And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink*, etc.] The pitcher of water she should have upon her shoulder, after she had drawn it out of the well:

and she shall say, drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; not only very readily and courteously invite him to drink himself but also propose to draw water for his camels too:

[let the same be] she [that] thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; to be his wife; he desired this might be the token by which he might know who the person was God had appointed, and whom he approved of as a proper wife for Isaac, and whom he pointed at in his Providence most clearly to be the person he had designed for him; and this was a very agreeable sign and token; for hereby he would know that she was a careful and industrious person, willing to set her hand to business when necessary;

that she was humane and courteous to strangers; humble and condescending, and willing to do the meanest offices for the good of others; and such a wife as this he sought for, and knew would be a good one, and greatly acceptable to his master and to his son:

and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness to my master; by directing to so good a wife for his son, and prospering the journey of his servant according to his wishes.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, before he had done speaking,* etc.] In his heart, (^{Q245}Genesis 24:45); for his prayer was mental; while the last words were dropping from him, that very moment, as the Targum of Jonathan; so soon were his prayers heard and answered, (^{Q2624}Isaiah 65:24);

that behold Rebekah came out; out of Haran, the city of Nahor:

who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother; a daughter of Bethuel, which Bethuel was the eighth and last son of Milcah, and who was the daughter of Haran and the wife of Nahor, both brothers to Abraham: this is the genealogy of Rebekah, and for the sake of her is the account of Nahor's family given, (^{Q220}Genesis 22:20-24):

with her pitcher upon her shoulder; to fetch water from the well for the use of the family; which, though the daughter of a wealthy person, she did not disdain to do; an instance of diligence and humility this.

Ver. 16. *And the damsel [was] very fair to look upon,* etc.] Of a good countenance and beautiful aspect: a virgin,

neither had any man known her; not only was reckoned a virgin, but was really one, pure and incorrupt:

and she went down to the well and filled her pitcher, and came up; by which it appears the well lay low, there was a descent unto it, and an ascent from it. Rebekah was very diligent and speedy in doing her work, she did not stay to look at strangers, or hold an idle conversation with other damsels that came thither on the same account; but, having filled her pitcher, was making the best of her way home.

Ver. 17. *And the servant ran to meet her,* etc.] He did not stop her as she went to the well, but stayed till she had been there and filled her pitcher, and then he made all the haste he could to meet her, in order to have the

sign and token answered he had requested, which could not be done until she returned:

and said, let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher; or taste a little of it, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; or suffer me to swallow a little of it; for it was not so much to quench his thirst that he asked for this, for he could have got, and perhaps had had water out of the well before this time, or however could easily have supplied himself; but this was done to try whether she was the person, and whether her conduct and carriage would answer the token. Josephus ^{f1316} says, he asked other virgins and they refused him, for which churlishness Rebekah rebuked them, and gave him water liberally.

Ver. 18. *And she said, drink, my lord*, etc.] Signifying at once that he was welcome to drink what he would, giving him a very honourable title, observing that he had a pretty large retinue with him of men and camels; so that she took him for some considerable personage:

and she hasted, and let down her pitcher upon her hand; from off her shoulder, and let it rest upon her hand or arm:

and gave him drink; let him drink what he would of it.

Ver. 19. *And when she had done giving him drink*, etc.] Whatever he pleased to have:

she said, I will draw [water] for thy camels also, until they have done drinking; she proposed to go back to the well, and did, and fill her pitcher, and repeat it as often as was necessary, until the camels had enough; and this now was the sign or token the servant had desired might be, by which he would know who was the person intended for the wife of his master's son; and this was granted him, which shows that it was not a rash and ill thing which he asked, but what was agreeable to the will of God, and to which he was directed by an impulse of his.

Ver. 20. *And she hasted and emptied her pitcher into the trough*, etc.] The place out of which cattle drank water, being put there for that purpose, which was of wood or of stones made hollow; into this Rebekah poured out what was left in her pitcher after the servant had drank:

and ran again to the well to draw [water]; and which must be repeated several times to have enough for all the camels, for it follows:

and drew for all his camels; and there were ten of them; and these, being thirsty after so long a journey, required a great deal of water to satisfy them; therefore Rebekah must take a vast deal of pains and labour to draw water for them all until they had enough.

Ver. 21. *And the man wondering at her*, etc.] At her affability and courteousness to a stranger; at her humility and condescension to take upon her such a service; at her readiness, diligence, and laboriousness in it; and the quick dispatch she made; and at her expressions and conduct being so exactly agreeable to the token he desired to have; and at the providence of God in bringing him to this place so seasonably; and at the damsel, that she should come just at this time, and every way answer his expectations and desires:

held his peace, to wit; or to know, to think and consider further with himself,

whether, or “if”

the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not; or if not; he was musing and saying within himself, surely God had made his journey prosperous; or if not, how was it that such strange surprising circumstances should occur? or what else must be done by him? or what methods must be taken for the future.

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking*, etc.] Having had enough to abate their thirst and satisfy them, by means of Rebekah’s drawing water for them:

that the man took a golden earring; out of his pocket, or out of a box or parcel that was upon the camels; it is in the margin of our Bibles, “a jewel for the forehead”; or, as some render it, a “nose jewel”^{f1317}; and so in (^{<0247>}Genesis 24:47), “an earring upon her face”, or “nose”; and this was a jewel that hung from the forehead upon a lace or ribbon between the eyes down upon the nose; and such the daughters of Sion wore in later times, (^{<0212>}Isaiah 3:21); (see ^{<0212>}Ezekiel 16:12); and nose jewels are still in use with the Levant Arabs, as Dr. Shaw^{f1318} relates. Rauwolff^{f1319}, who travelled through Mesopotamia and the parts adjacent in 1574, says of the women in those parts that are of greater substance, and have a mind to be richer and finer in their dress, that they wear silver and gold rings in one of their nostrils, wherein are set garnets, turquoise, rubies, and pearls: and in

Egypt they wear nose jewels^{f1320} and small gold rings in their right nostrils, with a piece of coral set in them^{f1321} and this earring or jewel was

of half a shekel weight; which was eighty barley corns, for a whole shekel weighed one hundred and sixty. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“the weight of a drachma, which was the half of a didrachma or common shekel:”

and two bracelets for her hands, of ten [shekels] weight of gold; a shekel of gold, according to Calmet^{f1322}, was worth eighteen shillings and three pence of English money, so that ten of them amount to nine pounds two shillings and six pence; according to Waserus^{f1323}, these made twenty Hungarian pieces of gold, which were worth upwards of ninety pounds of Swiss money. A handsome present this was, and suitable to a virgin. Jarchi and Jonathan allegorize the two bracelets of the two tables of the law, and the ten shekels of the ten commands on them.

Ver. 23. *And said*, etc.] After he had given her the earring and the bracelets, he put the following question, according to Jarchi, and so our version seems to intimate the same; but, as it is related in (~~10247~~ Genesis 24:47); the question was put before those were given, therefore some render the words, “and he had said”, or, “and after he had said”^{f1324}, namely, what follows; though, as Schmidt observes, the matter is easily reconciled, and both accounts stand clear and plain, if it be only remarked, that he took out the earring and bracelets before he put the question, but it was after it that he gave her them, or put them upon her:

whose daughter [art] thou? the reason of this question is, because by her answer to it he would know whether she was of the family related to Abraham or not; from whom only, according to his oath, he was to take a wife for Isaac, and which would in a good measure satisfy him as to what he had been musing about, whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not:

tell me, I pray thee, is there room [in] thy father's house for us to lodge in? by her answer to this he would know whether her family was wealthy, and so fit to be in connection with his master's; and besides, if she appeared to be the person he hoped she was, he was desirous of lodging in her father's house, that he might have the better opportunity of managing the affair he was come about.

Ver. 24. *And she said unto him, I [am] the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah*, etc.] Which Milcah was the daughter of Haran, Abraham's elder brother, and, as thought by many, sister to Sarah, Abraham's wife, (see ^{<0112>}Genesis 11:29):

which she bare unto Nahor; Abraham's brother; so that her father was Nahor's son, not by his concubine Reumah, but by his lawful wife Milcah, which sets Rebekah's descent in a true light, (see ^{<0221>}Genesis 22:20-24); whether she told her own name is not certain, it may be, since the servant bade it, (^{<0245>}Genesis 24:45).

Ver. 25. *She said moreover unto him*, etc.] In answer to the second question:

we have both straw and provender enough; for the camels, straw for their litter, and provender for their food, as hay, barley, etc.

and room to lodge in; for him and his men; this she could venture to say, and invite him to come and take up his quarters in her father's house, without going home to relate the question put to her, and to have leave to give the invitation, knowing full well the generosity, liberality, and hospitable spirit of her father.

Ver. 26. *And the man bowed down his head*, etc.] To show what a deep sense he had of the divine goodness, and in humble acknowledgment of the favours he had received in being thus providentially directed:

and worshipped the Lord; gave thanks unto him, that he had thus far prospered him, hoping and believing that things were in good forwardness, according to his master's mind and will.

Ver. 27. *And he said, blessed [be] the Lord God of my master Abraham*, etc.] (See Gill on ^{<0242>}Genesis 24:12):

who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and truth; or hath not withdrawn his mercy, grace and goodness, truth and faithfulness; for his loving kindness he does not take away from his people, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail; his mercy and grace in making kind and gracious promises continue, and his truth in performing them sooner or later appear, and both in this case; as Abraham believed in the grace and goodness of God, that he would send his angel and direct his servant, and make his way prosperous, here was now an appearance of his truth and faithfulness, in

making good the promise or prophecy on which Abraham's faith was built, (see ^{<0247>}Genesis 24:7):

I [being] in the way; by the way of the well; in the right way, as Jarchi, in which he was directed; in the way of his duty, following the steps of divine Providence, and observing them. It is good to be in the way which God directs to and prescribes, especially in religious things, where the blessing and presence of God may be expected:

the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren: Nahor, whose granddaughter Rebekah was, was Abraham's brother, and Bethuel her father might be called so, as Lot was, who stood in the same relation to Abraham as he did, (^{<0146>}Genesis 14:16); and, though the servant was not as yet come to the house where they lived, he had met with one of the family, and had got an invitation to it, and was on his way thither and near it.

Ver. 28. *And the damsel ran*, etc.] Having invited him to come and lodge at her father's house, that he might not be brought in abruptly, she ran before to acquaint the family of what had passed:

and told [them] of her mother's house these things; she did not go to her father to inform him of it; some think he was dead, as Josephus ^{f1325}, but the contrary appears from (^{<0250>}Genesis 24:50); rather the reason was, because her mother had an house, a tent, or an apartment to herself, as women in those times and places used to have, (see ^{<0257>}Genesis 24:67); and because daughters are generally more free to converse with their mothers and impart things to them than to their fathers, which may be the true reason of Rebekah's conduct.

Ver. 29. *And Rebekah had a brother, and his name [was] Laban*, etc.] Perhaps he was her only brother, or however the elder brother, the principal in the family, her father Bethuel being old:

and Laban ran out: out of his house, and out of the city of Haran:

unto the man unto the well; this was after Rebekah had got home, and had related to the family whom she had met with at the well, and what had passed between them, as follows:

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass, when he saw the earring, and bracelets upon his sister's hands*, etc.] From whence he concluded that he was a rich and generous man she had met with, and might hope to receive a gift also upon

giving him an invitation to his house; or however might judge he should be no loser by receiving him kindly and entertaining him generously; therefore it was that he made haste, and ran to him to bring him in; for that Laban was of a covetous disposition, appears from the whole story of him:

and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, thus spake the man unto me; inquiring whose daughter she was, and whether there was any room in her father's house for him and those that were with him to lodge in:

that he came unto the man; made haste and ran till he came to him:

and, behold, he stood by the camels at the wall; he did not follow Rebekah, but kept still at the well, expecting somebody would come out of the house and give him an invitation into it, upon Rebekah's representation of him.

Ver. 31. *And he said, come in, thou blessed of the Lord*, etc.] Both with temporal and spiritual blessings; he concluded he was blessed with the former by the presents he had made to his sister, and by the men that attended him, and the number of camels that were with him; and with the latter by his devotion, his worshipping of God, and thankfulness to him, which Rebekah had observed and related: some Jewish writers say^{f1326}, he thought he was Abraham, and therefore gave him this title and this invitation to come into the house:

wherefore standest thou without? this he said either as reproving him that he did not follow his sister upon her invitation, or rather as pressing him to make no more delay:

for I have prepared the house: swept it clean, or ordered it to be so, as the word^{f1327} signifies; had fitted and furnished it with everything convenient for him and those with him: Jonathan and Jarchi interpret it of purging the house from idols and strange worship, which he knew would be offensive to Abraham, or any that belonged to him; but the former sense is best:

and room for the camels; he had ordered the stable to be cleansed also, and everything provided there fit for the camels; so that some time elapsed between Rebekah's return home and Laban's coming to the well, though no doubt everything was done with as much dispatch as possible.

Ver. 32. *And the man came into the house*, etc.] Upon the pressing instance made unto him; for so it may be rendered, “wherefore the man came”, etc. ^{f1328}

and he ungirded his camels; took off their bridles, which hindered them from eating, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi; or loosed their girths and took off their burdens, that they might have rest: this may be interpreted either of the servant and of his men by his order doing this, it being the first thing that travellers do when they come to an inn to take care of their cattle; or rather of Laban, as what follows must be interpreted of him:

and gave straw and provender for the camels; straw for their litter, and provender to eat; this Laban did, or ordered to be done: the Targum of Jonathan expresses his name, and no doubt he is intended, for who should give these but he?

and water to wash his feet, and the men’s feet that [were] with him: which was usually done to strangers and travellers in those hot countries, (see ¹¹⁸⁴Genesis 18:4). The Vulgate Latin version is, “and water to wash the feet of the camels”; which, though it is possible might be done, yet is without any foundation in the text.

Ver. 33. *And there was set [meat] before them to eat*, etc.] By the order of Bethuel or Laban, or both; or, “afterwards was set” ^{f1329}; that is after care had been taken the camels, then food being provided was set before the men to refresh them:

but he said, I will not eat until I have told mine errand; or, “spoke my words” ^{f1330}; delivered the message he was sent with, and declared the business he came about; which shows him to be a diligent faithful servant, who had his master’s interest at heart, and preferred it to his necessary food:

and he said; either Bethuel or Laban, for both were present, to whom the servant directed his discourse, (¹²⁴⁷Genesis 24:47,50); perhaps Laban spoke in the name of his father, and bid him

speak on; go on with his discourse until he had said all he had to say, signifying that they were ready to give attention to him.

Ver. 34. *And he said, I [am] Abraham’s servant*.] Not Abraham himself, this undeceived Laban, if he so thought, but a servant of his; which was

enough to introduce his discourse, his master being a near relation of theirs, and well known to them by name, if not in person.

Ver. 35. *And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly*, etc.] With temporal blessings, after enumerated, which are of God, and are here ascribed to him, the Father, fountain, author, and giver of all such mercies:

and he is become great; in the world, and highly honoured and esteemed among men:

and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and menservants and maidservants, and camels and asses; though many of them were obtained in the diligent use of means, yet with the blessing of God; and others were the gifts of princes to him, as of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and Abimelech king of Gerar; yet, as it was the Lord that put it into their hearts to be so liberal to him, they are here called his gifts; (see ^{<0126>}Genesis 12:16 13:2 20:14).

Ver. 36. *And Sarah, my master's wife*, etc.] Who must be well known to this family, by name at least, being, as is generally supposed, the sister of Milcah, Nahor's wife, and Bethuel's mother; the same

bare a son to my master when she was old; even when ninety years of age, (^{<0177>}Genesis 17:17); this is mentioned because it was an extraordinary thing, and an instance of divine power and of the favour of God; and this son of their old age must be very dear unto Abraham, as it follows:

and unto him hath he given all that he hath; by his will: Jarchi says, the servant had now the schedule of all in his hands, which he showed; but this is mere conjecture.

Ver. 37. *And my master made me swear*, etc.] (See Gill on "^{<0248>}Genesis 24:3"). In (^{<0257>}Genesis 24:37-41), the servant relates the oath his master made him take, and the charge he gave him, much in the same language as in (^{<0248>}Genesis 24:3-8).

Ver. 38. *But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son*. (See Gill on "^{<0249>}Genesis 24:4").

Ver. 39. *And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me*. (See Gill on "^{<0245>}Genesis 24:5").

Ver. 40. *And he said unto me, the Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee.* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁷Genesis 24:7”).

Ver. 41. *Then shalt thou be clear from [this] my oath, etc.]* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁸Genesis 24:8”).

Ver. 42. *And I came this day unto the well, etc.]* Hither he was come at length by several days’ journey; not on the same day he came from Abraham, as the Jewish writers say ^{f1331}, by means of a miracle:

and said, O Lord God of my master Abraham; being come to the well, he prayed as follows:

if now thou do prosper the way which I go; his meaning is, that if it was the pleasure of God that he should succeed in what he was come about, that he would let him know it by a token; and in (⁰²⁴²Genesis 24:42-48) he relates the token he desired, which was granted him, and his success, as before recorded, from (⁰²²¹Genesis 24:21-27).

Ver. 43. *Behold, I stand by the well of water, and it shall come to pass, etc.]* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁴Genesis 24:14”).

Ver. 44. *And she say to me, both drink thou, and I will also draw for thy camels, etc.]* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁴Genesis 24:14”).

Ver. 45. *And before I had done speaking in mine heart, behold, Rebekah came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder, etc.]* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁵Genesis 24:15”).

and she went down unto the well, and drew [water]: (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁶Genesis 24:16”).

and I said unto her, Let me drink, I pray thee. (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁷Genesis 24:17”).

Ver. 46. *And she made haste, and let down her pitcher from her [shoulder], etc.]* (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁸Genesis 24:18”).

And said, drink, and I will give thy camels drink also. (See Gill on “⁰²⁴⁹Genesis 24:19”).

so I drank, and she made the camels drink also. (See Gill on “⁰²⁵⁰Genesis 24:20”).

Ver. 47. *And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter [art] thou? etc.]* (See Gill on “⁻⁰¹²³Genesis 24:23”).

And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bare unto him: (See Gill on “⁻⁰¹²⁴Genesis 24:24”).

and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands. (See Gill on “⁻⁰¹²²Genesis 24:22”).

Ver. 48. *And I bowed down my head, and worshipped the Lord,* etc.] (See Gill on “⁻⁰¹²⁵Genesis 24:26”).

And blessed the Lord God of my master Abraham, which had led me in the right way to take my master’s brother’s daughter unto his son. (See Gill on “⁻⁰¹²⁷Genesis 24:27”).

Ver. 49. *And now, if you deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me,* etc.] The servant directs himself to more than one, to the whole family, especially to Laban and Bethuel; if you will do my master a kindness, and grant him the favour he requests, that a damsel of this family may be given for a wife to his son; and, if you are hearty and sincere in granting this, tell me at once:

and if not, tell me: if you do not choose to gratify my master, and are not hearty in this matter, let me know:

that I may turn to the right hand or to the left; look out elsewhere among the daughters of some of the other sons of Nahor; for he had seven more which Milcah bare to him besides Bethuel, as well as four others by a concubine, (⁻⁰¹²¹Genesis 22:20-24); though some of the Jewish writers ^{f1332} by “the right hand” understand the daughters of Ishmael, that dwelt to the right, and by “the left [hand]” the daughters of Lot, who were to the left, which is not likely: it seems to be only a proverbial expression, that, if they did not choose to attend to his proposal in his master’s name, he must take some other method, as he might be directed; he knew not for the present which way, whether he should steer his course to the right or left, but some way he must take. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it,

“to the south or to the north;”

because when a man stands with his face to the east, the south is on his right hand, and the north on his left.

Ver. 50. *Then Laban and Bethuel answered*, etc.] The order of the words in the original is, “then answered Laban and Bethuel”; the word for “answered” is in the singular number, from whence it may be concluded, that Laban gave the answer in the name of Bethuel, he consenting to it, who might be an old man, and left the management of his family affairs to his son, who, Aben Ezra thinks, excelled his father in wisdom and honour; but Jarchi represents him as a wicked and impudent man, who took upon him to speak before his father: but some have thought that this Bethuel was not old Bethuel, the father of Rebekah, but young Bethuel his son, the younger brother of Laban and Rebekah, their father Bethuel being dead, as Josephus says, before observed; and this seems to be countenanced by (~~Gen~~ Genesis 24:59,60), where they are represented as blessing Rebekah, and calling her their sister:

and said, the thing proceedeth from the Lord: that Rebekah should be given to Isaac, as the Targum of Jonathan adds: this matter appears to be according to his will and pleasure, he seems to have appointed it in his decree, and to be bringing it about by his providence; for these men, though they were in part idolaters yet had some good notions of the true God, and of his government of the world, and of his ordering all things in it according to the counsel of his will:

we cannot speak unto thee good or bad; cannot deny the request; the thing was so plain that they had not anything to object to it.

Ver. 51. *Behold, Rebekah [is] before thee*, etc.] Not only was present, but she was delivered to him, or his request was granted:

take [her], and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife; not that they meant he should go away directly with her; for they afterwards solicit her stay with them some time; but they agreed that he should bare her and conduct her to Isaac, to be taken by him for his wife:

as the Lord hath spoken; for so they understood the token given to the servant to know her by, as the determination of God.

Ver. 52. *And it came to pass, that when Abraham's servant heard these words*, etc.] That Laban and Bethuel said; and no doubt but the mother of Rebekah, and she herself consented that she should be the wife of Isaac, believing it was agreeable to the will of God:

he worshipped the Lord, [bowing himself] to the earth; in the most humble manner he prostrated himself before the Lord, acknowledging his kindness, and goodness, his faithfulness and truth, his power and his providence in this affair.

Ver. 53. *And the servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold,* etc.] Ornaments for women, which he had brought along with him for presents, and which were a proof of the riches of his master, and of his generosity and liberality, who had furnished him with such a profusion of rich things to bestow on the person that should be got for his son's wife:

and raiment, and gave [them] to Rebekah; costly suits of clothes such as in those times were given to persons at their marriage, or in order to it; and which custom still continues among the Arabs, who, as Dr. Shaw says ^{f1333}, have the marriage contract previously made between the parents, wherein is express mention made not only of the "saddock", as they call that particular sum which the bridegroom settles on the bride; but of the several changes of raiment, and the quantity of jewels, and the number of slaves that the bride is to be attended with when she first waits upon her husband; a gold and silver "sarmah", he says ^{f1334}, which is a thin flexible plate of gold or silver, of a triangular shape, artfully cut through and engraven in imitation of lace; one or two sets of earrings bracelets and shekels, a gold chain to hang over their breasts, with half a dozen vests, some of brocades, others of rich silk, were usually the wedding clothes of a lady of fashion. And so in Barbary, the man buys his bride a suit of apparel, earrings, bracelets, a chest, etc. and gives the father a considerable sum of money, according to the qualities and circumstances of the parties ^{f1335}:

and he gave also to her brother, and to her mother, precious things; things of worth and value, which were part of the good things he brought with him from Abraham, (⁽¹²⁴⁰⁾Genesis 24:10); the word being sometimes used for fruit, Jarchi interprets it of various kinds of the fruits ^{f1336} of the land of Israel; but it is not likely that these should be carried by him on so long a journey; much better Aben Ezra understands by them honourable and costly raiment; and it is observed by some ^{f1337}, that the word in general signifies everything valuable and excellent, as gold, silver, etc. no mention being made of her father, only of her brother Laban, and of her mother, seems to confirm the notion of Josephus that he was dead; or however he concerned himself no further in this affair than to give his consent to the

marriage, and left everything else to his wife and son to take care of, and therefore the presents are only made to them.

Ver. 54. *And they did eat and drink, he, and the men that [were] with him,* etc.] Every thing being settled with respect to the affair he came about, he then sat down at table, and ate of the provisions set before him; he and the men that came along with him; and refreshed themselves:

and tarried all night; lodged there all night;

and they rose up in the morning; the servant and his men:

and he said, send me away to my master; either to Abraham, who was waiting to hear what success his servant would have; or to Isaac, who also was solicitous about the matter: the sense is, that he desired leave to go away, and begged he might not be detained any longer, having now done the business he came about; still showing himself a diligent faithful servant, heartily and sincerely attached to his master's interest, and not consulting his own ease and pleasure, which might have been indulged by staying longer in a family, where he would have been entertained in a sumptuous manner.

Ver. 55. *And her brother and her mother said,* etc.] Here her brother Laban is set before his mother, as above before his father, being the chief speaker and the principal manager of business:

let the damsel abide with us [a few] days, at the least ten; which was but a reasonable request; and if no more time is intended, it is much the servant should object, and not readily agree to it; but in the margin it is, "a full year" or "ten months"; and so Onkelos and Jonathan, and other Jewish writers^{f1338}, who say it was customary for a virgin to have twelve months allowed her to furnish herself with ornaments; and therefore if a full year could not be admitted of, it is requested that at least ten months would be granted: this by many is thought to be unreasonable, that a servant should be desired to stay so long from his master, and especially it would not be asked, when it was perceived he was in such haste to be gone directly; but when it is observed that it was the usual custom of those times for virgins espoused to continue in their father's house a considerable time before the marriage was consummated, and that Rebekah was going into a distant country, and very likely she and her friends would never see each other, the motion will not appear so very extravagant:

after that she shall go; when that time is elapsed, but cannot think of it before.

Ver. 56. *And he said unto them, hinder me not*, etc.] Do not detain me, let me set forward on my journey:

seeing, the Lord hath prospered my way; succeeded him in what he came about; and by his being succeeded so well, and so soon, it seemed to be the mind of the Lord that he should hasten his journey homeward:

send me away, that I may go to my master; and carry him the good news of his success, and attend his domestic affairs, over which he was set.

Ver. 57. *And they said, we will call the damsel*, etc.] Who perhaps through modesty had withdrawn herself to her own apartment, while the man and her friends were discoursing on this subject:

and inquire at her mouth; what she says to it, whether willing to go directly or not; the matter in question was referred to her, and left to her decision.

Ver. 58. *And they called Rebekah*, etc.] Or ordered her to be called by one of the servants:

and said unto her, wilt thou go with this man? that is, directly; the question was not about her marriage of Isaac, that was agreed upon, and she had doubtless given her consent, and which she tacitly did by accepting of the presents, but about taking the journey immediately:

and she said, I will go; the note of Jarchi is,

“of myself, and even if you are not willing,”

which seems to make her answer rude, as well as resolute; but it must be interpreted consistent with her decent and modest behaviour, and as expressive of her agreeing to go with the man directly, having no manner of objection on her mind to it; but on the contrary found a strong inclination to it, and was determined on it; and perhaps was under a divine impulse, which strongly wrought upon her, and caused her to be so willing to leave her own people, and her father’s house.

Ver. 59. *And they sent away Rebekah their sister*, etc.] Not in a pet or angry humour, but with good will; they agreed she should go, and took their leave in a very honourable and affectionate manner. This is to be

understood of her brother Laban, and of other brethren and sisters she might have; though by the connection of the words with the preceding, they seem to design her brother and mother, who spoke last; and probably all her relations are meant, who call her their sister, because so nearly related to them:

and her nurse: who had been her nurse in former times, as Aben Ezra observes, in her infancy, for whom she had a particular affection, as is often the case; her name was Deborah, as appears from (^{<0358>}Genesis 35:8):

and Abraham's servant, and his men; who were dismissed in an handsome manner by the family.

Ver. 60. *And they blessed Rebekah*, etc.] That is, her parents and her friends, they wished the best and choicest of blessings might descend upon her:

and said unto her, thou [art] our sister; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“hitherto thou hast been our sister,”

as if the relation now ceased, having entered into another; and especially as she was going away from them into a distant country, and might never see her more, it was as if she was no more to them or to be enjoyed by them:

be thou [the mother] of thousands of millions; as she was, the Edomites and Israelites both springing from her:

and let thy seed possess the gate of those that hate them; exercise dominion and authority over their enemies: let them not only be numerous, but powerful and victorious, as both the nations were at times, and especially the latter; and particularly this had its accomplishment in Christ, who sprung from her in the line of Jacob, (^{<0102>}Matthew 1:2 ^{<0134>}Luke 3:34); some respect seems to be had to the promise made to Abraham, (^{<0227>}Genesis 22:17); of which this family might have knowledge from Abraham's servant, who might report not only how great his master was, but what promises were made to him with respect to his posterity.

Ver. 61. *And Rebekah arose, and her damsels*, etc.] Her maids that were given her by her parents to wait upon her, as was usual in those times and countries:

and they rode upon the camels; that Abraham's servant had brought with him:

and followed the man; who rode before and directed the way; the sense is only, that she went along with him:

and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way; took her under his care, and to be the wife of his master's son, at the hands of her friends, and then set forward on his journey.

Ver. 62. *And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi*, etc.] The well at which the angel met with Hagar, when she fled from her mistress, (¹¹⁴⁷Genesis 16:7,14). The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem say, that Isaac came from the school of Shem the great:

for he dwelt in the south country: at Beersheba, to which Abraham, it seems, was returned again; for that they dwelt together as yet, is clear from his mother Sarah's tent, into which he introduced Rebekah, (¹²⁴⁷Genesis 24:67); (see ¹²¹⁹Genesis 22:19).

Ver. 63. *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide*, etc.] Both the time and place were very proper for meditation: the place, "in the field": where he might view the works of nature, and be led to the Creator of them, and the praise of him, and where he might be alone, and nothing to disturb his thoughts: and the time, "at evening"; after the labour, care, and hurry of the day were over, and before repose at night, and when the air was cool and refreshing, and everything was assisting to, and served to compose the mind, and help thought and contemplation. Onkelos and Jonathan render the word "to pray", and the time and place he chose were very fit for that service; and perhaps his thoughts in prayer might be directed to, and greatly employed in desiring success to his father's servant in the business he was gone on his account, and that he might safely and speedily arrive, and if so, his prayers were quickly answered:

and he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels [were] coming; which his servant had took with him in his journey, and was now returning with them, and which Isaac knew full well.

Ver. 64. *And Rebekah lifted up her eyes*, etc.] And looked about:

and when she saw Isaac; whom she suspected him to be, and therefore inquired of the servant, who told her who he was:

she lighted off the camel; or “fell”^{f1339} from it, not accidentally, or through surprise, but willingly, and in honour to Isaac, as was customary; for had she sat on her camel when she met him, it would not have seemed respectful enough to him; though Jarchi thinks she did not get off, but only bowed herself upon the camel, when she came near him.

Ver. 65. *For she [had] said unto the servant*, etc.] As soon as she saw a man walking towards them, who she thought with herself might be Isaac:

what man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? for by the course he steered, she perceived that he was coming towards them, and so concluded it must be one of the family, and probably the person she was to be married to; for otherwise, had he not by his look and motion discovered that he knew the servant, and was coming towards them, she would have took no notice of him

and the servant [had] said, it is my master: meaning not Abraham, but his son, who also was his master:

therefore she took a veil, and covered herself; both out of modesty, and as a token of subjection to him: for the veil was put on when the bride was introduced to the bridegroom, as among the Romans^{f1340} in later times. The Arab women always have veils when they appear in public, so that their faces cannot be seen; and though in the summer months they walk abroad with less caution, yet then, upon the approach of a stranger, they put on their veils^{f1341}.

Ver. 66. *And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.*] By what means he found out the person designed for his wife, and got knowledge of her father’s house, to which he was introduced, and where he was made welcome; and what agreement he had made with the parents and relations of Rebekah to be his wife, whom he had brought with him.

Ver. 67. *And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah’s tent*, etc.] The apartment in which she dwelt when living; for women in those times and places had separate apartments from their husbands; this was done after many other things had passed, not here recorded; a conversation with her, an espousal of her, and an introduction of her to Abraham, with whose consent, no doubt, she had his wife’s apartment allotted to her:

and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; consummated the marriage, first contracted by his servant, then confirmed by himself, and now finished:

and he loved her; as a man ought to love his wife, even as his own body, (^{<4133>}Ephesians 5:28); and she was a person to be beloved, being very fair, and of a goodly countenance, (^{<012416>}Genesis 24:16). The Jews say ^{f1342} she was but fourteen years of age at this time:

and Isaac was comforted after his mother's [death]; which was three years ago, (see Gill on "^{<012501>}Genesis 25:20"); and had made such impressions upon his spirit, that at times he was very sorrowful, and much distressed on that account; but now being blessed with so agreeable a yokefellow, his sorrow for his mother subsided, and he became cheerful and comfortable.

CHAPTER 25

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 25

This chapter contains an account of Abraham's marriage with another woman, and of the children he had by her and of their posterity (^{<0201>}Genesis 25:1-4); of Abraham's disposal of his substance; and his sons, (^{<0205>}Genesis 25:5,6); of the years of his life, his death and burial, (^{<0207>}Genesis 25:7-11); of the children of Ishmael, and of the years of his life, and of his death, (^{<0212>}Genesis 25:12-18); and of the sons of Isaac the fruit of prayer, and of the oracle concerning them before they were born, and of their temper and disposition, conduct and behaviour, (^{<0219>}Genesis 25:19-34).

Ver. 1. *Then again Abraham took a wife*, etc.] Three years after the death of Sarah, and when his son Isaac was married, and he alone, and now one hundred and forty years of age:

and her name [was] Keturah; who she was, or of what family, is not said. An Arabic writer ^{f1343} says she was a daughter of the king of the Turks; another ^{f1344} of them calls her the daughter of King Rama; and another ^{f1345} the daughter of Pactor, king of Rabbah; but there were then no such people in being. Very probably she was one of Abraham's handmaids born in his house, or bought with his money, perhaps the chief and principal of them. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem say she is the same with Hagar, and so, Jarchi; but this is rejected by Aben Ezra, since mention is made of Abraham's concubines, (^{<0206>}Genesis 25:6); whereas it does not appear he ever had any other than Hagar and Keturah, and therefore could not be the same; and besides, the children of Hagar and Keturah are in this chapter reckoned as distinct. Cleodemus ^{f1346}, a Heathen writer, makes mention of Keturah as a wife of Abraham's, by whom he had many children, and names three of them. Sir Walter Raleigh ^{f1347} thinks, that the Kenites, of whom Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was, had their name from Keturah, being a nation of the Midianites that descended from her.

Ver. 2. *And she bare him Zimran*, etc.] That Keturah should bear children who probably, was a young woman, is not strange; but that Abraham,

whose body forty years before this was dead should now have any bore to him, may seem difficult to account for, and only can be attributed to the fresh vigour his body was endued with at the generation of Isaac; and which still continued for the fulfilment of the promise to him of the multiplication of his seed. But if the notion of a late learned bishop ^{f1348} is right, there will be no need to have recourse to any thing extraordinary; which is, that Abraham took Keturah for his concubine, about twenty years after his marriage with Sarah, she being barren, and long before he took Hagar; though not mentioned till after the death of Sarah, that the thread of the history might not be broken in upon; and there are various things which make it probable, as that she is called his concubine, (~~<0102>~~1 Chronicles 1:32), which one would think she should not be, if married to him after the death of Sarah, and when he had no other wife, and seeing before he died he had great grandchildren by her, and the children of her are reckoned down to the third generation; whereas there are only mention of two generations of Hagar, as in (~~<0102>~~Genesis 25:1-4,12-16); and therefore seems to have been taken by him before Hagar, and even when he was in Haran, and the children by her are thought to be the souls gotten there; nor does it seem very probable that he should take a wife after the death of Sarah, when he was one hundred and forty years of age, and was reckoned an old man forty years before this; and Dr. Lightfoot ^{f1349} is of opinion, that Abraham married her long before Isaac's marriage, or Sarah's death; and if this was the case, the difficulty of accounting for Abraham's fitness for generation vanishes. The first son of Keturah, born to him, was called Zimran, from whence came the Zamareni, a people in Arabia Felix mentioned by Pliny ^{f1350}; and hereabout the sons of Keturah settled, being sent by Abraham into the east country, even into Arabia, which lay east of the place where he then was; and very probably Zabram; or it may be rather Zamram, a royal city in the country of the Cineaedocolpites, a part of Arabia Felix, as placed by Ptolemy ^{f1351}, may have its name from this man: five more of Abraham's sons by Keturah follow,

and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah: some think that the first of these is the same with Cahtan, whom the Arabs call the father of their nation; but that Cahtan rather seems to be Joktan the son of Eber, (see ~~<0102>~~Genesis 10:25). Philostorgius ^{f1352} speaks of a nation in his time, called Homerites, who were a people that sprung from Keturah, and inhabited Arabia Felix, and who used circumcision on the eighth day: and Bishop Patrick observes from Theophanes, a chronologer of the ninth

century, that the Homerites, who lived in the interior parts of Arabia, descended from Jectan, which he conjectures should be read Jocshan, though perhaps he is no other than the Joktan before mentioned. From Medan and Midian sprung the Midianites, so often mentioned in Scripture; their posterity seem to be confounded together, for the same people are called Medanites and Midianites, (^{f1372}Genesis 37:28,36); from these men the towns in Arabia might have their names, as the Modiana and Madiana of Ptolemy^{f1353}: as for Ishbak, there is no tracing of his name anywhere, unless, as Bishop Patrick observes, some footsteps of it are to be found in Bacascami, a town of the Zamareni, who descended from his brother Zimran, and in the people Backliltæ, both mentioned by Pliny^{f1354}; though Junius think that Scabiosa Laodicea, in Laodicene of Syria, has its name from him; which seems not likely. The name of Shuah or Shuach may be traced in Socacia, Soaca, and Socheher, cities placed by Ptolemy^{f1355} in Arabia Felix: though some think the posterity of this man are those whom the geographers call Sauchites, Sauchæans, and Saccaæans, who settled in Arabia Deserta, and from whom Bildad the Shuhite, (^{f1356}Job 2:11), descended; which is not improbable. But others have been of opinion, that the town of Suez, which Pliny calls Suaza, had its name from this Shuah, situate at the extremity of the Red sea^{f1356}.

Ver. 3. *And Jokshan begat Sheba and Dedan*, etc.] Bochart^{f1357} is of opinion, that the posterity of this Sheba are the same with the Sabeans who inhabited at the entrance of Arabia Felix, not far from the Nabathæans; and who, by Strabo^{f1358}, are mentioned together as near to Syria, and used to make excursions on their neighbours; and not without some colour of reason thought to be the same that plundered Job of his cattle, (^{f1359}Job 1:15). From Dedan came the Dedanim or Dedanites, spoken of with the Arabians in (^{f1360}Isaiah 21:13); Junius thinks Adada in Palmyrene of Syria had its name from this man, and in which country is the mountain Aladan or Alladadan. Bochart^{f1359} more probably takes Dedan, a city in Idumea, to derive its name from him. There is a village called Adedi in the country of the Cassanites, a people of Arabia Felix, which Ptolemy^{f1360} makes mention of, and seems to have some appearance of this man's name:

and the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim; these names being plural are thought not to be proper names of men, but appellatives, descriptive of their places of abode, or of their business: hence the Targum of Onkelos represents them as such that dwelt in camps, in tents, and in islands; and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call them

merchants, artificers and heads of the people: however, Cleodemus^{f1361} the Heathen historian is wrong in deriving Assyria from Asshurim, whom he calls Ashur; since Assyria and Assyrians are so called from Ashur, the son of Shem, (^{<0002>}Genesis 10:22).

Ver. 4. *And the sons of Midian*, etc.] The fourth son of Abraham by Keturah; he had five sons next mentioned, who were heads of so many tribes or families in Midian: hence we read of five kings of Midian; (^{<0608>}Numbers 31:8); their names follow,

Ephah, and Epher, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah: the two first of these, whom Cleodemus^{f1362} calls Aphra and Apher, and makes them to be sons of Abraham by Keturah, when they were his grandsons, he says, from them the city Aphra, and all Africa, had their names, and that these accompanied Hercules into Lybia, he having married a daughter of Aphra. Ephah is mentioned along with Midian in (^{<2006>}Isaiah 60:6); but of the rest no notice is taken in Scripture. Ptolemy^{f1363} makes mention both of a mountain, and of a village, near Madiana in Arabia Felix, called Hippos, which perhaps had their name from this man. Some trace of Epher is thought to be in Taphuron which Philostorgius says^{f1364} was the metropolis of the Homerites, before mentioned; and Arrianus, as Bishop Patrick observes, expressly says, the metropolis of the Homerites, is called Aphar: to which may be added, that Ptolemy^{f1365} speaks of a people called Tappharites, near the Homerites. Hanoah, the next son, is thought to have some footsteps of his name in Cane, a mart, which Ptolemy^{f1366} places in the country of the Adramites in Arabia Felix, and also in the country of Canauna in Arabia, mentioned by, Pliny^{f1367}: near Cananua is placed, by the same writer, the island Devadae, called by Philostorgius^{f1368} διβους, “Divus”, in which it is supposed there is some trace of the name of Abidah, by an inversion of the two last syllables; and perhaps also in Abissa, which Ptolemy^{f1369} places in the country of the Sachalites in Arabia Felix. As for Eldaah, Bishop Patrick thinks there are no remains of this name, unless in the city of Elana, from whence there was a gulf called Elanites, and a people that lived there Elanitae; but one would think there are some traces of it in the cities Alata, Lattha, and Leaththa, all, according to Ptolemy^{f1370}, in Arabia Felix:

all these [were] the children of Keturah; her children and grandchildren.

Ver. 5. *And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac*.] By his last will and testament; not all out of his own hand, while he lived, at least he reserved

somewhat for himself, and for gifts to his other children; so his servant declared to the parents and friends of Rebekah, (^{<01245>}Genesis 24:35); wherefore some render the words here “had given” ^{f1371}; or the sense is, that he had at that time purposed and promised to give all that he had to Isaac, and now he actually did it.

Ver. 6. *But unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had*, etc.]

These were Hagar and Keturah, though they are both called his wives, (^{<01618>}Genesis 16:3 25:1); yet they were concubines; so Keturah, (^{<1303>}1 Chronicles 1:32); they were, as some render the word, “concubine wives” ^{f1372}; they were half wives or secondary ones: the Jewish writers say that they were espoused, but not by writing, as wives were; they were under the lawful wife, when there were any, and a kind of head servants in the family, and their children did not inherit; now the sons of the concubines of Abraham were Ishmael by Hagar, and the six above mentioned by Keturah: to these

Abraham gave gifts; money, gold and silver, of which he had plenty: the Targum of Jonathan calls them substance and movable goods; by this it appears, that though he had sent Ishmael away without anything, yet he afterwards remembered him, and gave him a portion with the rest of the children of his, concubines:

and sent them away from Isaac his son; that they might not be troublesome to him and his family; and that there, might be no contention among them about inheriting the land of Canaan given to him and his seed: and this Abraham did

while he yet lived; or otherwise after his death a separation would not have been easily made; but his authority had weight with them: and they were sent by him

eastward, into the east country; into Arabia, and the parts thereabout, which lay east from the place where Abraham was; these are the children of the east, mentioned along with the Midianites, who sprung from Keturah, (^{<01018>}Judges 6:3).

Ver. 7. *And these [are] the days of the years of Abraham’s life, which he lived*, etc.] Being about to die, an account is given of his age, which was

an hundred threescore and fifteen years; one hundred and seventy years; so that Isaac was now seventy five years of age, for he was born when

Abraham was an hundred years old, and Jacob and Esau must how be fifteen years of age at this time, since they were born when Isaac was sixty years of age, (^{אֶלְעָזָר}Genesis 25:26); and Ishmael must be eighty nine years old; it may be observed, that as Abraham was seventy five years old when he went from Haran into the land of Canaan, (^{אֶלְעָזָר}Genesis 12:4); he had been just an hundred years a sojourner in this country.

Ver. 8. *Then Abraham gave up the ghost*, etc.] Very readily and cheerfully, without any previous sickness or present pain, but through the decay of nature by reason of old age, in a very easy quiet manner:

and died in a good old age, an old man; for quantity, in those times few arriving to a greater; for quality, not attended with those inconveniences and disadvantages with which old age generally is, and therefore called evil:

and full [of years]; in the original it is only, “and full”; the Targum of Jonathan adds, “of all good”; temporal and spiritual, with which he was filled and satisfied; or he had had enough of life, and was willing to depart, and was full of desires after another and better world:

and was gathered to his people; which is to be understood not of his interment, there being only the body of Sarah in the sepulchre in which he was laid; but of the admission of his soul into the heavenly state upon its separation from the body, when it was at once associated with the spirits of just men made perfect. The Arabic writers ^{f1373} say that he died in the month of Nisan, others say Adar, in the year of the world 3563; but, according to Bishop Usher, he died A. M. 2183, and before Christ 1821.

Ver. 9. *And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah*, etc.] Isaac, though the younger brother, is set first, because he was born of the lawful wife of Abraham, the free woman, whereas Ishmael was born of a concubine and a bondwoman; Isaac was heir not only to Abraham’s temporal estate, but of the promise made concerning the Messiah, (not so Ishmael,) and was on all accounts the greater man. It appears from hence, that, though there had been a quarrel between Ishmael and Isaac, and the latter had been persecuted by the former, yet the difference was now made up, and they were reconciled, at least they agreed in this act of showing their last respect to their father; and that, though Ishmael had been expelled his father’s house, yet he was not at any great distance from him, and there was a correspondence between him and his

father; nor was he forgotten by him, as is clear from (^{<0236>}Genesis 25:6); and he retained a filial affection for him; and Jarchi from hence concludes, that he was a penitent and a good man. The place where these two brothers buried their father was the cave of Machpelah,

in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, which [is] before Mamre; (see ^{<0238>}Genesis 23:8,9,17,19); wherefore very false is the tradition of the Mahometans ^{f1374}, that Abraham's sepulchre is at Mecca, which they, now show, and stands about twelve paces from the temple there, enclosed with iron rails.

Ver. 10. *The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth*, etc.] Of one of them, Ephron, the rest being witnesses of it, (^{<0236>}Genesis 23:16,18,20);

there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife; Sarah had been buried there thirty eight years before, which was the reason why his sons buried, him there; if he died in Beersheba, as seems probable, (see ^{<0242>}Genesis 24:62,67); from thence to Hebron were sixteen miles ^{f1375}; so far was he carried to be interred.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass, after the death of Abraham, that God blessed his son Isaac*, etc.] Yet more and more, both with spiritual and temporal blessings; showing hereby, that, though Abraham was dead, he was not unmindful of his covenant, which should be established with Isaac, (^{<0179>}Genesis 17:19 22:17,18):

and Isaac dwelt by the well Lahairoi; which was near the wilderness of Beersheba and Paran, where Ishmael dwelt; so that they were not far from one another, (see ^{<0164>}Genesis 16:14 21:14,21).

Ver. 12. *Now these [are] the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son*, etc.] Or the genealogy of his posterity; and which is given to show that the Lord was not unmindful of his promise made to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed, (^{<0160>}Genesis 16:10 17:20):

whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham; (see ^{<0161>}Genesis 16:1,15).

Ver. 13. *And these [are] the names of the sons of Ishmael*, etc.] After mentioned: by their names, according to their generations; which were

imposed upon them at their birth, and are recited according to the order in which they were born, as follows:

the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth: mentioned in (^{<2407>}Isaiah 60:7); and from whence a people of the Arabs are called Nabathaeans, and their country Nabathaea. Josephus ^{f1376} says, that all the country from Euphrates to the Red sea is called the Nabatene country. The posterity of this man inhabited part of Arabia Deserta and of Arabia Petraea, even to the entrance of Arabia Felix. Strabo ^{f1377} reckons the Nabataeans among the Arabians, and calls Petra the metropolis of Arabia Petraea, Petra Nabataea, and Petra of the Arabian Nabataeans, who he says dwelt about Syria, and often made excursions into it; and observes, that their country is populous and abounds with pastures; hence the rams of Nebaioth, mentioned in (^{<2407>}Isaiah 60:7); Pliny also ^{f1378} places them in Arabia, and says they inhabit the town called Petra, and that they border upon Syria.

And Kedar is the second son of Ishmael; and the posterity of this man and their country are reckoned in Arabia by Isaiah, (^{<2213>}Isaiah 21:13,16,17); and they are so well known to be Arabians, that the Arabic language is most frequently, in Jewish writings, called the language of Kedar. These are the people whom Pliny ^{f1379} names Cedrei, and mentions them along with the Nabathaeans, as near unto them, and indeed they dwelt in the same country, Arabia Petraea, and in tents, living by pasturage, hence they are sometimes called Scenites; and mention is made of the tents of Kedar in (^{<2405>}Song of Solomon 1:5); these are the Scenite Arabs, called Saracens by Ammianus Marcellinus ^{f1380}. Two other sons of Ishmael follow:

and Adbeel and Mibsam; of whom no mention is made elsewhere, nor are there any traces of their names, unless the Agubeni, placed by Ptolemy ^{f1381} near Arabia Felix.

Ver. 14. *And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa.*] Of Mishma and Massa, and of their posterity, there is not anything said elsewhere, unless the Masani, Ptolemy ^{f1382} places near Arabia Felix, came from Massa. Dumah seems to be the same Isaiah speaks of in (^{<0211>}Genesis 21:11); and in Arabia Deserta, where some of Ishmael's posterity settled, is a place called Dumaetha, by Ptolemy ^{f1383}, which perhaps had its name from this son of his. The Targum of Jonathan translates these three names,

“hearing, silence, and patience;”

which the Jews use as a proverb, when they would signify that there are some things to be heard and not spoken of, and to be patiently borne. If Ishmael had in view to teach such lessons by the names he gave his children, he will seem to be a better man than he is usually thought to be.

Ver. 15. *Hadar and Tema*, etc.] From the first of these the city Adra in Arabia Petraea, and from the other the city Themma in Arabia Deserta, both mentioned by Ptolemy^{f1384}, may be thought to have their names; or the city Adari and the Athritae in Arabia Felix^{f1385}; and the inhabitants of the land of Tema are mentioned as Arabians, (^{<2913>}Isaiah 21:13,14); and Pliny^{f1386} speaks of a people called Thimaneans, whom he says the ancients joined to the Nabathaeans: the troops of Tema mentioned in Job were of this people, (^{<8069>}Job 6:19); and Eliphaz the Temanite, (^{<8021>}Job 2:11), is thought by some not to be the descendant of Teman the grandson of Esau, but to be of this man's people and country. The three last sons follow:

Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah; the two first of these are reckoned among the Hagarites, as the Ishmaelites were sometimes called, (^{<1359>}1 Chronicles 5:19); from Jetur came the Itureans, whom Pliny^{f1387} places in Coelesyria; and their country Iturea is reckoned by Strabo^{f1388} along with Arabia; and the Ithyreans with Virgil^{f1389} are famous for their bows, as Ishmael and his posterity were for archery in all ages, and still are, (see Gill on "^{<0123>}Genesis 21:20"). As for the posterity of Naphish and Kedomah, we have no account elsewhere, nor any traces of their names, unless those of the latter should be meant by the men of the east, or the men of Kedem, (^{<2408>}Jeremiah 49:28), which is not improbable, since they are mentioned with the posterity of Kedar the second son of Ishmael; and the Nubaeans by Lebanon may be from Naphish.

Ver. 16. *These [are] the sons of Ishmael*, etc.] The twelve before mentioned, (^{<0123>}Genesis 25:13-15):

these [are] their names, by their towns and by their castles; their towns and their castles being called after their names, some of which we are able to trace at this distance, as the above notes show:

twelve princes according to their nations; these were princes, or heads of tribes, and there were twelve of them, and continued so, (see ^{<0172>}Genesis 17:20); where is the prophecy, and here an accomplishment of it.

Ver. 17. *And these [are] the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years*, etc.] one hundred and thirty seven years old. So

that he lived forty eight years after the death of Abraham, (^{<0258>}Genesis 25:8); and, though he did not live to be so old as he, yet it was a considerable age he attained unto, (see Gill on “^{<0257>}Genesis 25:7”):

and he gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people; some of the same expressions being used of him as of his father, (^{<0258>}Genesis 25:8), have led some to conclude that he was a penitent and died a good man, and was gathered to the same people; but these phrases are used both of good and bad men.

Ver. 18. *And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur,* etc.] That is, the posterity of Ishmael, whose country reached from one place to the other; not from India to Chaluza, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem; but the extent is that vast desert of Arabia, which eastward was called the wilderness of Havilah, and westward the wilderness of Shur; so that they inhabited it from east to west:

that [is] before Egypt, as thou goest to Assyria; which last place was over against Egypt, and bordered on that part where lies the way to the land of Assyria:

[and] he died in the presence of all his brethren; they being present when he died, or in peace with them, in all prosperity along with them: but since his death is spoken of before, and here the situation of his posterity, the words may be read, “it fell ^{f1390} in the presence of his brethren”; his lot, or the habitation of his posterity fell by lot between his brethren the Egyptians on one side of him, and the Israelites on the other; or between the sons of Keturah on the east, and the posterity of Isaac on the west.

Ver. 19. *And these [are] the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son,* etc.] Moses, having given the genealogy of Ishmael and his posterity, returns to Isaac, the other son of Abraham, with whom and his children the following part of his history is chiefly, if not altogether concerned:

Abraham begat Isaac; for the further confirmation of his being his proper legitimate son this clause is added.

Ver. 20. *And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife,* etc.] Which was three years after the death of his mother; Isaac was born when she was ninety, and therefore must be thirty seven when she died. The Jews say Rebekah was but fourteen, though it is highly probable she was older; who is described as

the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian, of Padanaram; so called to distinguish it from other Arams, as Aram of Damascus, etc. this seems to be the same with Aram Naharaim, or Mesopotamia, which lay between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris; for Padan, as Jarchi observes from the Targum, signifies two; but rather, as he, and Aben Ezra, and others say, Padan in the Arabic language signifies a field; it here intends the field or country of Syria, as in (^{<3872>}Hosea 12:12). Haran, in Syria or Mesopotamia, was the place where Bethuel and Laban lived, (see ^{<0285>}Genesis 28:5,10 29:4). Some traces of Padan in Mesopotamia are thought to be in the cities of Aphphadana and Aphadana, which are placed by Ptolemy^{f1391} in that country. Moreover, Rebekah is also said to be

the sister to Laban the Syrian, the son of Bethuel, who are both called Syrians, because they now lived in Syria: otherwise they were originally Chaldees, being descended from Nahor the brother of Abraham, who both were of Ur of the Chaldees; so Jacob is called a Syrian, because he lived long in the same place, (^{<0335>}Deuteronomy 26:5).

Ver. 21. *And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife*, etc.] Was very earnest and constant in his supplications for her, as the word signifies, as is observed by Jarchi; or, “before his wife”^{f1392}, she being present, and joining with him in his prayers: the reason was,

because she [was] barren; which appeared by the length of time they had been married, which was near twenty years, (see ^{<0235>}Genesis 25:26). The Jewish writers^{f1393} say, that, after twenty years, Isaac took her and went with her to Mount Moriah, to the place where he was bound, and prayed that she might conceive; putting the Lord in mind of the promise he there made of the multiplication of Abraham’s seed, (^{<0227>}Genesis 22:17,18):

and the Lord was entreated of him; he granted him his request; for, though God has purposed and promised to do many things for his people, yet he will be sought unto by them to do them for them:

and Rebekah his wife conceived; two sons at once, as it follows.

Ver. 22. *And the children struggled together within her*, etc.] When she was quick with child: this was some time before her delivery, and was not a common and ordinary motion felt by women in such circumstances, but an extraordinary one; the two children in her strove with each other, as if it was for mastery, or who should get out first before the proper time; which not only gave her great uneasiness of mind, but pain of body: this was an

emblem of the future difference between those two children, Esau and Jacob, and of the contentions that would be between their respective offspring, and of the enmity and war between good and bad men in all ages, and of the conflict between flesh and spirit in all good men:

and she said, if [it be] so, why [am] I thus? that is, either if it be so with me as is not with others in the like condition; for, as Aben Ezra suggests, she had inquired of other women, whether it had ever been so with them, and they replied, no: then, says she, how comes it to pass that it should be different with me from others? or, if those children by struggling should kill one another, or be abortive and kill me, why should I have been so desirous of conception? or prayed for it, as Jarchi observes? or, if so it is, and this will be the case, “why am I thus” ^{f1394}? this unhappy woman, to be in such circumstances, to endure so much pain, and to no purpose? why have I conceived and carried my burden so long, and at last cannot be delivered, or bring forth a live child? all my prayers and pains have been in vain:

and she went to inquire of the Lord; to the school of Shem the great, say the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, and so Jarchi: the Arabic writers say ^{f1395}, she inquired of Melchizedek; and, according to Aben Ezra, of some prophet, or of Abraham, who lived fifteen years after this event: and indeed, if she inquired of any particular person of note for religion, and as a prophet, there is none so likely as he, who was the friend of God, and had great intimacy with him, and to whom he revealed his secrets. But perhaps no more is meant by it, than that she went either to some proper and private place, and prayed unto the Lord that he would show her the reason of what had happened unto her; or to some public place of worship, and where prayer was wont to be made, and where she inquired by means of such as were engaged therein concerning this matter; (see ~~Psalm~~ Psalm 73:17).

Ver. 23. *And the Lord said unto her,* etc.] Either by one or other of the above persons she acquainted with this affair, and entreated to seek the Lord for her; or by an impulse upon her own mind:

two nations [are] in thy womb; or two persons, from whom two nations will spring, the Edomites and Israelites, the one from Esau, the other from Jacob:

and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; different in their bodies, complexions, manner of life, religion, as well as place of abode:

and [the one] people shall be stronger than [the other] people: the Edomites, the posterity of Esau, were a very potent people, and had a succession of dukes and kings, before the Israelites, the posterity of Jacob, made any figure in the world, and while they were slaves in Egypt, (see ~~<1371>~~Genesis 36:1-43); though in later times the Israelites became the stronger:

and the elder, or “greater”,

shall serve the younger, or “lesser”: the offspring of Esau, the eldest, should become tributary to the posterity of Jacob, the younger; which was verified in the times of David, when the Edomites were subdued by him, (~~<1084>~~2 Samuel 8:14); and still more in the times of Hyrcanus, when the Edomites or Idumeans became one people with the Jews, and embraced their religion ^{f1396}, rather than to be dispossessed of their country; and will have a further accomplishment in the latter day, when the prophecies in (Obadiah 1:18-21) shall be fulfilled. Of the use which the Apostle Paul makes of this passage, (see Gill on “~~<601>~~Romans 9:11-12”).

Ver. 24. *And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled*, etc.] The nine months were up from the time of her conception; or, as the Targum of Jonathan, when the two hundred and seventy days she went with child were completed:

behold, [there were] twins in her womb; as was perceived by the midwife; a double mercy was granted, more given than asked for; probably only one child was asked for, but two given.

Ver. 25. *And the first came out red*, etc.] Either his body, or rather the hair it was covered with, red; which was a sign, as Jarchi observes, that he would be a shedder of blood, fierce and cruel as were he and his posterity:

all over like an hairy garment; his body was all over full of hair, which stood as thick as a garment made of hair, and was a sign of the roughness of his disposition, as well as of the strength of his body:

and they called his name Esau; his parents, and those present at his birth, all that saw him thus covered with hair; for he had his name not from the colour of his body or hair; for the word does not signify “red”, but comes from a word which signifies “to make”, he being a “maker”: that made his way out before his brother, or an active man as afterwards, or because of

his hair was “made” or born more like a man than a child; and so the Targum adds,

“because he was wholly perfect, with the hair of his head and beard, and with his teeth and grinders:”

but chiefly because of his hairiness, for Esau in the Arabic language signifies “covered” ^{f1397}, as he was with hair: some say, a word in that language signifies a hairy garment made of camel’s hair ^{f1398}.

Ver. 26. *And after that came his brother out*, etc.] Out of his mother’s womb, either by his own strength, or by the help of the midwife:

and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; to pluck him back and get out first; and this was not casual, but was so ordered in Providence, and had a meaning and mystery in it:

and his name was called Jacob; by his parents and others, and that for the above reason, because he took his brother by the heel, which his name has the signification of, and Esau has respect to in (⁴⁰²³⁶Genesis 27:36):

and Isaac [was] threescore years old when she bare them; and so it was twenty years after he had been married to her; so long was his faith tried and exercised about the promised seed that was to spring from him.

Ver. 27. *And the boys grew*, etc.] In stature, became strong and fit for business, and betook themselves to different employments:

and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field: whose business lay in tilling and sowing it, which his father Isaac followed sometimes; or rather he chose to range about the field and hunt after beasts and birds, in which he was very expert, and contrived traps and snares to catch them in; and this course of life was most agreeable to his temper and disposition, being active, fierce, and cruel; according to the Targum of Jonathan, he was also a hunter and slayer of men, Nimrod and Henoch his son:

and Jacob was a plain man; an honest plain hearted man, whose heart and tongue went together; a quiet man, that gave no disturbance to others; a godly man, sincere, upright, and perfect, that had the truth of grace and holiness in him, as well as the perfect righteousness of his Redeemer on him:

dwelling in tents; keeping at home and attending the business of the family, as we afterwards find him boiling pottage, (^{<01253>}Genesis 25:29); or rather this denotes his pastoral life, being a shepherd, he dwelt in tents, which could be removed from place to place for the convenience of pasturage: Jarchi's note is,

“in the tent of Shem and in the tent of Eber;”

agreeably to the Targum of Jonathan,

“a minister in the school of Shem, seeking doctrine from the Lord;”

a student there, where he resided awhile, in order to be instructed in the doctrines of truth and righteousness.

Ver. 28. *And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of [his] venison*, etc.] Better than Jacob, not only because he was his firstborn, but because he brought him of the flesh of creatures, which he took in hunting, and being dressed, were savoury food to him: it is in the original, “because venison (or what he hunted) [was] in his mouth”^{f1399}, into which he put it, and was very grateful to his taste:

but Rebekah loved Jacob; more than Esau, being more at home with her, and of a milder disposition; and more especially being a good man, a partaker of the grace of God, and to whom she knew by the oracle the blessing and promise belonged.

Ver. 29. *And Jacob sod pottage*, etc.] Or boiled broth; this he did at a certain time, for this was not his usual employment; the Targum of Jonathan says, it was on the day in which Abraham died; and whereas this pottage was made of lentiles, as appears from (^{<01253>}Genesis 25:34); this the Jewish writers^{f1400} say was the food of mourners; and so this circumstance furnishes out a reason for Jacob's boiling pottage of lentiles at this time: and hence also they^{f1401} gather, that Jacob and Esau were now fifteen years of age; for Abraham was an hundred years old when Isaac was born, and Isaac was sixty at the birth of his sons; and Abraham lived to be one hundred and seventy five, and therefore Esau and Jacob must be fifteen years old when he died:

and Esau came from the field, and be [was] faint: for want of food, and weary with hunting, and perhaps more so, having toiled and got nothing.

Ver. 30. *And Esau said to Jacob, feed me, I pray thee, with that same red [pottage], etc.]* Or, “with that same red^{f1402}, red”; not knowing what it was, or what it was made of, and therefore only calls it by its colour; and the word being doubled, may denote that it was very red; or he, being in haste and greedy of it through hunger, repeats it in a quick and short way: this pottage was made of lentiles, as we learn from (~~Gen~~^{Gen} Genesis 25:34); which sort of food was much in use with the Egyptians, Egypt abounding with lentiles; and particularly Alexandria was famous for them, from whence they were carried into other countries, as Austin^{f1403} relates. The lentiles of Pelusium, a city in Egypt, are made mention of by Virgil^{f1404} and Martial^{f1405}, for which that place was famous; where, as Servius says^{f1406}, lentiles were first found, or where they grew the best; and, in the Misnah^{f1407}, an Egyptian lentil is spoken of, as neither large nor small, but middling. Pliny^{f1408} speaks of two sorts of it in Egypt, and says he found it in some authors, that eating of these makes men even tempered, good humoured, and patient; and observes^{f1409}, that they delight in red earth, or where there is much ruddle, or red ochre, from whence they may receive a red tincture; and the pottage made of them is of such a colour. And Dr. Shaw^{f1410} says, that lentiles dissolve easily into a mass, and make a pottage or soup of a chocolate colour, much used in the eastern countries: and, as Scheuchzer observes^{f1411}, coffee is of the bean kind, and not unlike a lentil, and makes a red decoction. The colour of it took with Esau, as well as it was sweet and savoury, as Athenaeus^{f1412} reports; and especially, he being faint and hungry, desires his brother to give him some of it, and even to feed him with it:

for I [am] faint; so faint that he could not feed himself, or however wanted immediate sustenance, and could not wait till other food he had used to live upon was dressed:

therefore was his name called Edom; not from his red hair, but from this red pottage; for Edom signifies “red”, and is the same with the names Pyrrhus and Rufus.

Ver. 31. *And Jacob said, sell me this day thy birthright.]* Which had many privileges annexed to it, as honour and authority in the family next to parents; a double portion of inheritance; some say the exercise of priesthood, but that is questioned; the parental blessing, and especially in this the promises of the Messiah, and of inheritance of the land of Canaan, and which was typical of the heavenly inheritance: all which Rebekah knew

by the divine oracle were designed for Jacob, and which no doubt she had acquainted him with, and advised him to deal with his brother about parting with his birthright as he had opportunity; and very likely they had talked together about it before in a distant manner, and Esau had shown some indifference to his right, and made no great account of it; and now, an opportunity offering to get him in the mind to part with it, he takes it, and moves for a sale of it immediately, at once, without any more delay, and even before he had his pottage; thus taking the advantage of his brother's necessity: or, sell it me "as the day"^{f1413}, let the bargain be as clear as the day, as Jarchi interprets it; let it be made in plain and full terms, that there may be no dispute about it hereafter, or any revocation of it: but the former sense seems best, as appears from (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:33), where the same way of speaking is used.

Ver. 32. *And Esau said, behold, I [am] at the point to die*, etc.] Or, "going to die"^{f1414}, going the way of all flesh; which he might say on account of the common frailty and mortality of man, and the brevity of life at most, or by reason of the danger of life he was always exposed to in hunting of wild beasts, as Aben Ezra suggests; or rather, because of his present hunger and faintness, which, unless immediately relieved, must issue in death. Dr. Lightfoot^{f1415} thinks it was now the time of the famine spoken of in the following chapter, (^{<0261>}Genesis 26:1):

and what profit shall this birthright do to me? a dying man, or when dead? In such a case, all the privileges of it in course would devolve on Jacob; and as for the promises of the Messiah, and of the land of Canaan, made to Abraham and his seed, these seemed to be at a great distance, and if he lived ever so long might never enjoy them; and therefore judged it most advisable to consult his present interest, and have something in hand, than to trust to futurity; and, by thus saying, he signified an entire willingness to part with his birthright on the terms proposed.

Ver. 33. *And Jacob said, swear unto me this day*, etc.] For the more sure and certain confirmation of the bargain; and by this oath oblige himself to let him peaceably enjoy the birthright, nor seek to revoke it, or dispute it with him, or disturb him in the possession of it:

and he sware unto him; that he would abide by the bargain, and never give him any trouble on that account; and hereby he made it over to Jacob as firm as it could be; God himself being appealed to as a witness of it, whose

will it was that Jacob should have the birthright, the blessing, and the promises:

and he sold his birthright unto Jacob; with all the privileges and appurtenances of it, and that for one morsel of meat, as in (^{<81216>}Hebrews 12:16).

Ver. 34. *Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles*, etc.] This shows what the pottage was made of, of which (see ^{<01250>}Genesis 25:30); and that Jacob gave to Esau more than he asked and bargained for, bread as well as pottage; but neither of them until the bargain was made and sworn to, and he had got the birthright secured unto him; as cunning as Esau, and as simple and plain as Jacob were, the latter outwitted the former, and was too crafty for him:

and he did eat, and drink, and rose up, and went his way; following his former course of life, without any remorse of conscience, reflection of mind, or repentance for what he had done; for though he afterwards carefully sought the blessing with tears he had parted with, yet not until his father was upon his deathbed, (^{<81217>}Hebrews 12:17 ^{<01234>}Genesis 27:34);

thus Esau despised [his] birthright; by setting it at so mean a price, and by not repenting of it when he had so done; having no regard especially to spiritual blessings, to the Messiah, and to the heavenly inheritance, eternal glory and happiness by Christ: the Jerusalem Targum adds,

“and he despised his part in the world to come, and denied the resurrection of the dead;”

and the Targum of Jonathan on (^{<01259>}Genesis 25:29) says, that

“on that day he committed five transgressions; he performed strange worship (or committed idolatry), he shed innocent blood, he lay with a virgin betrothed, he denied the life of the world to come (or a future state), and despised the birthright;”

which confirms the character the apostle gives of him, that he was a fornicator and a profane person, (^{<81216>}Hebrews 12:16).

CHAPTER 26

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 26

This chapter treats of Isaac's removal to Gerar, occasioned by a famine, (^{<0231>}Genesis 26:1); of the Lord's appearance to him there, advising him to sojourn in that place, and not go down to Egypt; renewing the covenant he had made with Abraham, concerning giving that country to him and his seed, (^{<0232>}Genesis 26:2-6); of what happened unto him at Gerar on account of his wife, (^{<0237>}Genesis 26:7-11); of Isaac's great prosperity and success, which drew the envy of the Philistines upon him, (^{<0232>}Genesis 26:12-15); of his departure from hence to the valley of Gerar, at the instance of Abimelech; and of the contentions between his herdsmen, and those of Gerar, about wells of water, which caused him to remove to Beersheba, (^{<0236>}Genesis 26:16-23); of the Lord's appearance to him there, renewing the above promise to him, where he built an altar, pitched his tent, and his servants dug a well, (^{<0234>}Genesis 26:24,25); of Abimelech's coming to him thither, and making a covenant with him, (^{<0235>}Genesis 26:26-31); which place had its name from the oath then made, and the well there dug, (^{<0232>}Genesis 26:32,33); and lastly, of the marriage of Esau, which was a great grief to Isaac and Rebekah, (^{<0234>}Genesis 26:34,35).

Ver. 1. *And there was a famine in the land*, etc.] In the land of Canaan, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it;

besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham; of which (see ^{<0120>}Genesis 12:10); which was an hundred years before this;

and Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines, unto Gerar; where his father Abraham had sojourned before he was born; and therefore the present king of this place can scarce be thought to be the same Abimelech that was king of it in Abraham's time; but it is highly probable that this Abimelech was the son of the former king, and that this was a common name to the kings of Gerar or the Philistines, as Pharaoh was to the kings of Egypt. Isaac came to this place from Lahairoi, where he had dwelt many years, (see ^{<0242>}Genesis 24:62 25:11); which was at or near Beersheba, and was about eight miles from Gerar ^{f1416}.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord appeared unto him*, etc.] In a vision or dream, when he was at Gerar:

and said, go not down into Egypt; as his father had done in the like case, and where Isaac thought to have gone, and the rather, as that was a fruitful country; and so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and it was in the heart of Isaac to go down into Egypt, and the Lord appeared unto him, etc.”

and charged him not to go thither; partly to try his faith in him, and dependence on his providence for support in this time of famine, and partly lest he should think of continuing there, and be unmindful of the promise of the land of Canaan to Abraham’s seed:

dwelt in the land which I shall tell thee of; even the land of Canaan, which he was now about to give him on account of the promise of it to Abraham and his seed, and to renew it to him and to his seed.

Ver. 3. *Sojourn in this land*, etc.] The land of Canaan, where he now was; either in Gerar, which though in the land of the Philistines was a part of Canaan, the place of his present residence; or in any other part of it he should be directed to: however, by this it appears it was the pleasure of God that he should not go out of that land, and which Abraham his father was careful of, that he should not while he lived; (see ^{<0246}Genesis 24:6,8):

and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee; with his presence; with protection from all enemies; with a supply of all the necessities of life; and with all spiritual blessings, and with eternal life and happiness:

for unto thee, and to thy seed, will I give these countries; inhabited at that time by the Philistines, Canaanites, and the several tribes of them:

and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; concerning the promise of the Messiah from him and his seed, the gift of the land of Canaan to them, and the multiplication of them, (^{<0226}Genesis 22:16-18).

Ver. 4. *And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven*, etc.] Meaning in the line of Jacob especially, if not only; from whom sprung twelve patriarchs, the heads of so many tribes, which in process of time became very numerous, even as the stars of heaven:

and I will give unto thy seed all these countries; which is repeated from (^{<0218>}Genesis 26:3) for the greater confirmation of it:

and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; meaning in the Messiah that should spring from him, (see ^{<0228>}Genesis 22:18).

Ver. 5. *Because that Abraham obeyed my voice*, etc.] In all things, and particularly in offering up his son at his command:

and kept my charge; whatever was given him in charge to observe; this, as Aben Ezra thinks, is the general, of which the particulars follow:

my commandments, my statutes, and my laws; whether moral, ceremonial, or civil and judicial; all and everyone which God enjoined him, he was careful to observe. Here seems to be something wanting, for the words are not to be joined with the preceding, as if Abraham's obedience was the cause of the above promises made to Isaac, or to himself: but this is mentioned rather as an example to Isaac, and to stir him up to do the like, as if it was said, because or seeing that Abraham thy father did so and so, do thou likewise.

Ver. 6. *And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.*] Continued there; in this he was obedient to the command and will of God.

Ver. 7. *And the men of the place asked [him] of his wife*, etc.] The inhabitants of Gerar inquired of Isaac who she was, whether she was his wife or not, or in what relation she stood in to him; this was not a mere civil inquiry, but what arose from the prevalence of lust in them towards her; and yet it was under some restraint, they being not so abandoned to their lusts as to exercise them upon any; not upon a man's wife, the sin of adultery being detestable to them, though that of fornication was made no account of by them:

and he said, she [is] my sister; herein imitating his father Abraham in his infirmity and unbelief, who in the same place had made such an answer to a like question concerning Sarah, (^{<0218>}Genesis 20:1,2); and which if Isaac knew of, as probably he did, one would wonder that he should fall into the same evil, and especially when he had not so much to say to support his assertion as Abraham had; for Rebekah was not so near akin to him as Sarah was to Abraham; and though cousins might be called sisters, yet this was mere dissimulation to call his wife sister, and was done with an intention to deceive, and therefore not justifiable:

for he feared to say, [she is] my wife; which was the real truth; but the fear of men, which brings a snare, led him to this, and from which good men are not always free:

lest, [said he], that is, within himself, in his own mind; and so the Targum of Jonathan, he thought in his heart;

the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; that they might marry her, one or other of them; for, it seems, they had not so great a sense of the sin of murder, as of adultery:

because she [was] fair to look upon; which he feared would be a temptation to them, and stir up their impure desires after her, in order to gratify which he was afraid they would kill him; Rebekah retaining her beauty still, though she had been married in all probability forty years or more, (see ¹²⁴⁶Genesis 24:16).

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time*, etc.]

Perhaps some years: for though it is in the original, “when days were prolonged to him there” ^{f1417}; yet days are sometimes put for years:

that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window; in his own palace, near to which, in all likelihood, were the apartments that Isaac and Rebekah dwelt in; and this he did accidentally, and not out of curiosity, or with any intention to observe or pry into the behaviour and conduct of these two persons one towards the other:

and saw, and, behold, Isaac [was] sporting with Rebekah his wife; laughing and joking with her, which by his motions and gestures, and the airs and freedoms he took, Abimelech could perceive were such as were not usual between brothers and sisters, though honest and lawful between man and wife; such as embracing her in his arms, and frequently kissing her, and the like.

Ver. 9. *And Abimelech called Isaac*, etc.] Sent a messenger to desire him to come to him:

and said, behold, of a surety she [is] thy wife: and then perhaps told him of what he had observed that passed between them; which was a clear proof that they must be man and wife, or he would never have took such liberties with her:

and how saidst thou, she [is] my sister? what reason hadst thou for it? what could induce thee to say so?

and Isaac said unto him; not alleging, as Abraham did, any relation that was between them before marriage:

because I said; that is, within himself, for, he did not speak it out to others:

lest I die for her; for her sake, that another might have and enjoy her; it was fear of losing his life that led him to take such a step, and give out that she was his sister.

Ver. 10. *And Abimelech said, what is this thou hast done unto us?* etc.] By entertaining suspicions and jealousies of us as bad men, and by exposing us to the temptation of committing iniquity; why hast thou dealt thus with us, and what have we done, or is in our character, that thou shouldest act after this manner?

one of the people might lightly have lien with thy wife; it is much one or other had not before this time, not looking upon it criminal to have to do with a single woman, when they would not have meddled with another man's wife, Jarchi interprets this of Abimelech himself; and so the Targum of Jonathan, who perhaps had been thinking of taking her to his bed; and was "within a little"^{f1418}, as the word for "lightly" may be rendered, of accomplishing his design:

and thou shouldest have brought guiltiness upon us: been the occasion of their committing the sin of adultery, which was heinous in the eyes of Heathens, and of bringing on them the punishment due thereunto.

Ver. 11. *And Abimelech charged all [his] people,* etc.] All his subjects throughout his kingdom, and particularly the inhabitants of Gerar, and more especially his courtiers and servants about him:

saying, he that toucheth this man or his wife; that does any injury to one either by words or deeds, or behaves immodestly to the other, or attempts to ravish her; this being sometimes used as a modest expression carnal knowledge of a woman; or that does either of them any harm or hurt in any respect whatever:

shall surely be put to death; this severe edict he published, in order to deter his subjects from using them ill, to which they might be provoked by Isaac's dissimulation, and by his evil suspicions of them.

Ver. 12. *Then, Isaac sowed in that land*, etc.] In the land of Gerar; after matters were settled between him and Abimelech, and he had ordered his servants to do him no hurt, he sowed wheat or barley, or some such grain:

and received in the same year an hundred fold; in which he sowed it, and which many take to be a year of famine; and so it was the more extraordinary, that there should be such a plentiful crop produced on Isaac's ground, when there was such barrenness elsewhere: but it does not seem likely that it should be the same year of famine in which Isaac came to Gerar, since he is said to have been there a "long time", (^{<0238>}Genesis 26:8); before this sowing and plenty upon it were. This increase is far from being incredible; for Pliny ^{f1419}, besides instances he gives of an hundred fold, says, that in a field at Byzacium in Africa one bushel produced one hundred and fifty bushels; and from the same place, the deputy of Augustus there sent him from one grain very few less than four hundred, and to Nero three hundred stalks from, one grain. Herodotus ^{f1420} speaks of a country, near to the place where the Euphrates runs into the Tigris, on which the city Ninus was, which nowhere failed of producing two hundred fold, and the better sort of it even three hundred; (see ^{<0123>}Matthew 13:23):

and the Lord blessed him; and prospered and succeeded all his endeavours; and this was the true reason of the fertility of the land he manured and sowed.

Ver. 13. *And the man waxed great*, etc.] In substance, as well as in honour and glory, among men;

and went forward; in the world, and in the increase of worldly things:

and grew until he became very great: as he must needs be, since Abraham his father left him all that he had, who was very rich in cattle, in gold and silver, and had been increasing ever since; and especially since he came to Gerar, where he was gradually increasing, until he became to be exceeding great indeed, even the greatest man in all the country, yea, greater than King Abimelech himself, as it seems, from (^{<0236>}Genesis 26:16).

Ver. 14. *For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds*, etc.] Many flocks of sheep, and herds of cattle, of oxen, asses and camels, in which the riches of men in those times and countries chiefly lay:

and great store of servants; to look after his flocks and herds, and fields; or "much husbandry" ^{f1421}; Jarchi interprets it much tillage; as, much land,

many farms, fields, and vineyards, and the like; to cultivate which required many servants:

and the Philistines envied him; for his prosperity and success, that his land should bring forth so plentifully, and that he should have such an increase of flocks, and herds, and servants, which made him so very significant great, and honourable.

Ver. 15. *For all the wells which his father's servants had digged, in the days of Abraham his father*, etc.] For the watering of his flocks and herds, (see ^{<0215>}Genesis 21:25):

the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth; that they might be of no use; and this they did through envy to him, and is mentioned as a proof of it.

Ver. 16. *And Abimelech said unto Isaac, go from us*, etc.] Which was either said by way of advice, consulting Isaac's good, and the peace of his own kingdom; or else by way of command, enjoining him to depart, having a secret envy to him himself, or at least was jealous of his growing power and wealth:

for thou art much mightier than we; in riches or goods, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; or in number; his family being greatly increased, his servants numerous, many being born of them in his house; Abraham had three hundred and eighteen trained servants in his house, (^{<0144>}Genesis 14:14); how many Isaac had is not certain; they must be a large number for Abimelech to fear anything from them. Some choose to interpret the words, thou hast increased, or thou hast got much from us, and by us; and therefore it is high time for thee to be gone from us.

Ver. 17. *And Isaac departed thence*, etc.] At once, peaceably and quietly, though to his loss and disadvantage, without taking himself either to argument or arms, in favour of himself; he departed immediately, as soon as he perceived his abode was disagreeable to the king and his people; which gives us a very agreeable idea of the calm and peaceable disposition of Isaac:

and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there; at some distance from the city of Gerar, as Jarchi observes. Josephus ^{f1422} says it was not far from it; but how far is not certain; very probably it was not out of the country, though on the borders of it. Some render it, "the brook of

Gerar”^{f1423}, and interpret it, that he pitched his tent, and dwelt by it; and the word used does signify a brook as well as a valley; and there was a brook of Gerar, which Sozomen^{f1424} makes mention of.

Ver. 18. *And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father*, etc.] This seems to refer to the same wells made mention of in (~~Gen~~Genesis 26:15), since it follows,

for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; these were what Abraham’s servants had dug, when he lived at Gerar, and which the Philistines durst not stop during his life; but when he was dead and particularly out of envy to Isaac his son, whom they observed to prosper much, they stopped them up, that he might have no benefit by them; for otherwise they would scarcely have stopped them, if he had not been upon the spot, but would have made use of them themselves. The opening of them again by Isaac seems to be done, as Jarchi observes, before he removed from Gerar to the valley, though it is here related; unless it can be thought that Abraham dwelt in the valley also, and had dug wells there, which the Philistines stopped up after his death, and Isaac opened when he came there; and if so one would think he should have had no occasion to have dug other new wells, as we find he afterwards did; besides, this seems to be out of the jurisdiction of the Philistines, and not in their power to have stopped them here; it seems therefore most probable that these were Abraham’s wells at Gerar, and not in the valley. Origen^{f1425} makes mention of wonderful wells being dug in the land of the Philistines by righteous men, meaning Abraham and Isaac; and particularly in Askelon which, according to some, is the same with Gerar; (see Gill on “~~Gen~~Genesis 20:1”);

and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them; which he did out of respect to his father, to preserve the memory of his name, as well as to make his title and claim to them the more dear and certain.

Ver. 19. *And Isaac’s servants digged in the valley*, etc.] In the valley of Gerar, as the Septuagint version expresses it:

and found there a well of springing water; or “living water”^{f1426}, which continually flows, as Aben Ezra rightly interprets it: hence this phrase is used of the perpetual and ever living graces of the Spirit of God, (~~John~~John 4:10,11 7:38).

Ver. 20. *And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen*, etc.] About the well which was dug in the valley; and this shows it was near Gerar or at least was upon the border of the country, and so it was a disputable point to whom it belonged:

saying, the water [is] ours; though the well was dug by Isaac's servants, yet they laid claim to the water, pretending it was their ground, being on their borders:

and he called the name of the well Esek: which signifies "contention": the reason of the name follows,

because they strove with him; wrangled, contended, and disputed with him about whose right it was.

Ver. 21. *And they digged another well*, etc.] That is, Isaac's servants:

and strove for that also; the herdsmen of Gerar disputed their right to that also, and strove to get it from them:

and he called the name of it Sitnah; which signifies "hatred", it being out of hatred and malice to him that they gave him so much trouble; from this word Satan has his name, and these men were of a diabolical spirit, envious, spiteful, and malicious.

Ver. 22. *And he removed from thence*, etc.] A little further from their border, to cut off all pretence, and put a stop to all dispute and controversy for the future:

and digged another well; in the place he removed to:

and for that they strove not; it being at such a distance from their border, they could not have the face to claim any right to it:

and he called the name of it Rehoboth; which signifies broad and spacious, places, enlargements:

for now hath the Lord made room for us; for himself, his family, his herds, and flocks, and freed them, from those difficulties under which they laboured, and the straits into which they were brought through the contention of the herdsmen of Gerar:

and we shall be fruitful in the land; his flocks and his herds increase, having good pasturage and watering for them, and so he and his family be in prosperous circumstances.

Ver. 23. *And he went up from thence to Beersheba.*] From the place he last, removed unto Beersheba; the famine being over, he returns to the place where he and his rather formerly lived, (⁽⁴¹²³⁾Genesis 21:33 22:19).

Ver. 24. *And the Lord appeared to him in the same night,* etc.] The first night he came to Beersheba, in a dream or vision, in which the Lord was represented as speaking to him:

and said, I [am] the God of Abraham thy father; though he was dead, he remembered the covenant he made with him, and the promises he made unto him: and besides, though Abraham was dead as to his body, yet alive in his soul; for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, (⁽⁴¹²³⁾Matthew 22:32):

fear not; any future famine, nor want of any good things, nor any enemies, the Philistines his neighbours, who had driven him from their country, and had harassed him from place to place:

for I [am] with thee, and will bless thee; and if God is with his people, they have nothing to fear from men; and if he blesses them, they are blessed, and no curse can light upon them:

and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake; who was a faithful, diligent, servant of his; whose service was, not forgotten by him, but would be rewarded in a way of grace, though not of debt.

Ver. 25. *And he builded an altar there,* etc.] At Beersheba, where his father Abraham had planted a grove before, and very probably had built an altar also, though it might not be now standing, (⁽⁴¹²³⁾Genesis 21:33);

and called upon the name of the Lord; and gave him thanks for all his mercies to him; for the care he had taken of him, and provision he had made for him and his during the time of famine; and for the protection and preservation of him in Gerar; and for his deliverance of him out of the hands of envious, malicious, and unreasonable men; as well as prayed unto him for present and future mercies, for providential care of him and his; and for communications of special grace, and for meetness for eternal glory; all which every good man daily prays to God for:

and pitched his tent there: intending to take up his abode and settle there:

and there Isaac's servants digged a well; in order to find water for the family, and for the flocks and herds; and which was necessary to be done, as they perceived their master designed to fix his habitation here; wells of water being of great moment and consequence in those hot and desert countries, as the above contentions about them abundantly show.

Ver. 26. *Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar*, etc.] After Isaac was settled at Beersheba, and was still increasing in his family and substance, of which Abimelech very probably was informed; and fearing lest he should resent his being sent out of his country by him, and the ill treatment he met with afterwards from the herdmen of Gerar in the valley about the wells, and should employ his riches and power against him, and fall upon him, and take his kingdom from him, he took a journey from Gerar to Beersheba, to pay Isaac a visit, and make a covenant with him: and

Ahuzzath one of his friends; Jarchi and Jonathan take Ahuzzath for an appellative, and interpret it of a collection or company of his friends, which the king took along with him to attend him in his journey: but it seems rather to be the proper name of a man, who was very intimate and familiar with the king, and always kept him company, and so went along with him to Beersheba:

and Phichol the chief captain of his army; his general, as the other was his principal counsellor or prime minister. There was one of this name, and in the same office, in the days of Abraham, and who attended the then present king, who also was called Abimelech on a like account as here, (⁽¹²¹²⁾Genesis 21:22); but as the one affair was at the distance of an hundred years or more from the other, it is probable, that as this Abimelech might be the son of that Abimelech that lived in the times of Abraham, so this Phichol might be the son of him that lived then, and who succeeded his father in his office; though some think that Phichol is the name of an office, and signifies “the mouth of all”, by whom the addresses of the people were made to the king; but this is not likely, since he is described by his office as general of the army; which is very different from the master of the ceremonies, or anything of that kind, and plainly shows it to be the name of a man.

Ver. 27. *And Isaac said unto them, wherefore come ye to me*, etc.] What is the meaning of this visit? what has brought you hither? it cannot be from affection and friendship to me:

seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? the latter he mentions as a proof of the former; they envied his prosperity, and hated him on that account, and therefore expelled him their country, or at least would not suffer him to dwell among them; and still more glaring proofs were given of the hatred of the men of Gerar to him, not only by stopping up his father's wells, but by striving and contending with him about those he dug in the valley after he was gone from them; one of which he called "Sitnah", from their hatred of him.

Ver. 28. *And they said, we saw certainly that the Lord was with thee*, etc.] Not only while he was among them, by the fruitfulness of the land he sowed, by the increase of his family, his flocks and herds, but also since he was gone from them, in the valley of Gerar, and now in Beersheba:

and we said; one to another, assembled in privy council, in which this affair was talked over and debated:

let there now be an oath betwixt us, [even] betwixt us and thee: what was between us and thy father, or between thine ancestors and ours, let it be renewed and confirmed before us; so Onkelos and Jarchi; (see ^{<0123>}Genesis 21:23):

and let us make a covenant with thee; the articles of which follow.

Ver. 29. *That thou wilt do us no hurt*, etc.] Neither to our persons nor properties, to our kingdom and subjects, by invading our land, and seizing on our kingdom, all which was feared from Isaac's growing wealth and power:

as we have not touched thee; not done the least injury to him, to his person, family, and substance, but suffered him to go away with all he had untouched:

and as we have done unto thee, nothing but good; by royal authority, or by the command and direction of the king and his nobles; for as for the stopping up the wells his father's servants had dug, and the controversy that was about those in the vale, and the trouble Isaac had on that account,

these things were not by the order of the king and council, and perhaps without their knowledge:

and have sent thee away in peace; no one being suffered to do any injury to him, or molest him in carrying off everything that belonged unto him:

thou [art] now blessed of the Lord; so it appeared by the prosperity he was attended with, and by the Lord's protection of him, and the constant and continual favours he was bestowing on him; and this induced Abimelech and his nobles to seek to cultivate friendship, and be on good terms with him. De Dieu gives a different sense of these words, and considers them in the form of an oath or imprecation,

“if thou shouldest do us any hurt, seeing we have not touched thee, etc. be thou now accursed of the Lord,”

taking the word used in a contrary sense, as in (~~<1806>~~ Job 1:5,10 2:5,9) (~~<1210>~~ 1 Kings 21:10,13).

Ver. 30. *And he made them a feast*, etc.] Made a feast like a king, for the king and his grandees; he treated them in a generous way, according to their dignity, and agreeable to his own disposition and substance:

and they did eat and drink; freely, cheerfully, and in a friendly manner; for both having spoken their minds, they agreed to bury all former things oblivion, and live in peace and friendship; though this feast was not on account of the covenant made between them, as is observed by some interpreters, but as an hospitable act, and a token of good will; for the covenant and the oath confirming it seem to be made next morning, as follows:

Ver. 31. *And they rose up betimes in the morning*, etc.] Abimelech and his friends, in order to return home, and Isaac to take his leave of them, and both to make the covenant between them in form, and confirm it by an oath, for which the morning was the fitter time; when the mind is quite free and composed, and attentive to what is done, as so solemn a transaction should be performed with the utmost attention and seriousness:

and swore one to another; to live in amity and friendship, and not distress and disturb each other:

and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace; he took his leave of them in a friendly manner, and they departed well pleased with

the reception they had met with, and the success they had had, having agreed on and settled articles of peace to mutual satisfaction.

Ver. 32. *And it came to pass the same day*, etc.] That the above things were transacted:

that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged; they had dug it before Abimelech came to Isaac, but they had not had an opportunity of acquainting him with it until he was gone, and then they came to give him an account of it, what sort of a well it was, and how it answered their expectations and wishes; and which in those countries was a very great blessing, and served very much to recommend a place to dwell in:

and said unto him, we have found water; not only had dug a well, but they had found plenty of water, and that which was good; or otherwise it would not have been worth while to have troubled Isaac with the account of it.

Ver. 33. *And he called it Sheba*, etc.] Which, according to Jerom, signifies “fulness”, as if it had its name from the abundance of water in it; but rather it signifies an “oath”, and was so called from the oath, which he and Abimelech had just took to one another; and these circumstances meeting together, the taking of the oath, and the account of the well,

therefore the name of the city is Beersheba unto this day; that is, the well of the oath: it had been so called by Abraham an hundred years ago or more; but now upon this occasion it was renewed and confirmed, and so continued until the times of Moses, and many ages after.

Ver. 34. *And Esau was forty years old*, etc.] The same age his father was of when he married, (^{Q23D}Genesis 25:20):

when he took to wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite; Josephus ^{f1427} makes her to be the same with Aholibamah; but her father's name was Zibeon, and an Hivite, and must therefore be another person, not only the name being different, but the tribe, (^{Q30D}Genesis 36:2):

and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; whom Aben Ezra takes to be the same with Adah, and so does Josephus; and in this they may be right, since the name of her father, and his nation or tribe, agree, (^{Q30D}Genesis 36:2). The fathers of these two women are represented by Josephus as men of great power and authority among the Canaanites, as

very probably they were. Esau had another wife of the same name with this last, but she was daughter of Ishmael, and sister of Nebajoth, (^{413B}Genesis 36:3); for he had more wives than those; these were his two first, who very probably were not taken together, but one after another, though it may be but at a short distance from each other.

Ver. 35. *Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac, and to Rebekah.*] The marriage of them itself was a trouble to them, it being contrary to their will that any of their children should marry with the Canaanites, and those the worst sort of them, the Hittites; it having been the care of Abraham, the father of Isaac, that his son should not marry with them, and laid a strict injunction on his servant not to take a wife for his son from among them; and which was an example to be followed in later times, and which Esau very likely was not ignorant of: and besides this, the women themselves he took for wives were very disagreeable on all accounts, partly because of their religion, being idolaters, and partly by reason of their temper and behaviour, being proud, haughty, and disobedient; as all the three Targums intimate.

CHAPTER 27

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 27

In this chapter we are informed, that Isaac, being old and dim sighted, sent for Esau to get him venison, that he might eat of it, and bless him before he died, (^{<01270>}Genesis 27:1-4); that Rebekah hearing of this formed a scheme for Jacob to get the blessing before him, which she communicated to Jacob, to which he at first objected, but afterwards complied, (^{<01275>}Genesis 27:5-17); and also how that he succeeded in the attempt, and got the blessing from his brother, (^{<01278>}Genesis 27:18-29); and that this was confirmed to him by his father, even when his mistake was discovered upon Esau's coming, (^{<01273>}Genesis 27:30-33); which occasioned a most bitter cry in Esau, a severe reflection on his brother, and an earnest expostulation with his father for a blessing, which he obtained, (^{<01274>}Genesis 27:34-40); the consequence of this were hatred in Esau to Jacob, and an intention to kill him, which Rebekah hearing of, advised Jacob to flee to her brother Laban, (^{<01274>}Genesis 27:41-45); and to facilitate this, complains to Isaac of Esau's wives, and suggests, that should Jacob marry among the same people, it would add to the distress of their lives; and therefore hints it to him, that it was necessary and proper he should go to her family for a wife, (^{<01276>}Genesis 27:46); and whether Isaac sent him, as the following chapter shows.

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old*, etc.] He is generally thought to be about one hundred and thirty seven years of age at this time, which was just the age of his brother Ishmael when he died, (^{<01256>}Genesis 25:16); and might put him in mind of his own death as near at hand; though if he was no older, he lived after this forty three years, for he lived to be one hundred and eighty years old, (^{<01328>}Genesis 35:28):

and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see; which circumstance is mentioned, not only as a sign of old age, and as common to it, but for the sake of the following history, and as accounting for it, that he should not know Jacob when he blessed him; and this was so ordered in Providence, that by means of it the blessing might be transferred to him, which

otherwise in all probability would not have been done, if Isaac had had his sight:

he called Esau his eldest son; who though he was married, and had been married thirty seven years at this time, yet still lived in his father's house, or near him; for as he was born when his father was sixty years of age, and he married when he himself was forty, and his father must be an hundred, so if Isaac was now one hundred and thirty seven, Esau must have been married thirty seven years; and though he had disobliged his father by his marriage, yet he retained a natural affliction for him; nor had he turned him out of doors, nor had he any thoughts of disinheriting him; but on the contrary intended to bestow the blessing on him as the firstborn, for which reason he is here called "his eldest son":

and said unto him, my son; owning the relation, expressing a tender affection for him, and signifying he had something further to say unto him:

and he said unto him, behold, [here am] I; by which Esau intimated he was ready to hear what his father had to say to him, and was willing to obey him. The Targum of Jonathan says, this was the fourteenth of Nisan, when Isaac called Esau to him.

Ver. 2. *And he said, behold, now I am old*, etc.] (See Gill on "^{Q201}Genesis 27:1"):

I know not the day of my death; how soon it will be; everyone knows he must die, but the day and hour he knows not, neither young nor old; and though young men may promise themselves many days and years, an old man cannot, but must or should live in the constant expectation of death.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore, take, I pray thee, thy weapons*, etc.] Or "thy vessels", or "instruments"^{f1428}, his instruments of hunting: as

thy quiver and thy bow; the former is the vessel or instrument, in which arrows were put and carried, and has its name in the Hebrew language from its being hung at the girdle, though another word is more commonly used for a quiver; and Onkelos and Jarchi interpret this of a sword; and which is not disapproved of by Aben Ezra and Ben Melech, who explain it either a quiver or a sword; and the latter was as necessary for hunting as the former, (see ^{Q241}Genesis 27:40); and such a sword may be meant, as Mr. Fuller observes^{f1429}, which we call a "hanger" (i.e. a small sword often

worn by seamen); and of the bow being an instrument of hunting, not anything need be said:

and go out to the field, and take me [some] venison; this does not necessarily intend what we commonly call so, but anything hunted in the field, as hares, wild goats, etc. and indeed the latter seems to be what Isaac loved, by the preparation Rebekah afterwards made.

Ver. 4. *And make me savoury meat, such as I love*, etc.] For, though he had lost his sight, he had not lost his taste, nor his appetite for savoury food:

and bring [it] to me, that I may eat; this, was enjoined to make trial of his filial affection and duty to him, before he blessed him:

that my soul may bless thee before I die; not only that he might do it with cheerfulness and vivacity, having eaten a comfortable meal, and being refreshed with it, but that having had proof of his son's duty and affection to him, he might confer the blessing on him heartily: this blessing was not an ordinary and common one, but what parents used to bestow upon their children at the time of their death, or a little before it; and good men oftentimes did this under a spirit of prophecy, declaring what would be the case and circumstances of their children in time to come; and particularly the principal part of the blessing of Isaac, which Abraham had entailed upon him by divine direction, and he thought to have entailed on Esau his firstborn, was the promise of the descent of the Messiah from him and his seed, and of the possession of the land of Canaan by them: and this shows that Rebekah had not made known the oracle to Isaac, that the "elder should serve the younger", (⁰¹²⁵³Genesis 25:23): or, if she had, he had forgot, or did not understand it, and might think it respected not the persons of his sons, but their posterity; or however, from a natural affection for Esau his firstborn, and that the blessing and inheritance might go in the common channel, he was desirous he should have it; and he might also be ignorant of Esau's having sold his birthright to Jacob, or that he made no account of it.

Ver. 5. *And Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son*, etc.] She might hear Isaac call to him by one means or another, that he had sent for him, or might see him go into his father's tent, and might stand at the door of it and listen to hear what he said to him; though the Targum of Jonathan says, she heard by the Holy Spirit;

and Esau went to the field to hunt [for] venison, [and] to bring [it]; as his father directed and enjoined him; and thus it was ordered by divine Providence, that there might be time and opportunity for Jacob to get the blessing before his broker.

Ver. 6. *And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son*, etc.] Who was in the tent with her, and for whom she had the strongest affection:

saying, behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother; heard the conversation that passed between them, and particularly what Isaac had given in charge to Esau,

saying, as follows:

Ver. 7. *Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat*, etc.] Fetch him venison out of the field, and dress it in a savoury manner, and bring it to him:

that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death; the phrase “before the Lord” is here added, which yet perhaps might be expressed by Isaac, though before omitted by the historian, and has a very considerable emphasis in it; for this solemn blessing was given not only in the presence of the Lord, and before him as a witness, but by calling upon him, and praying for direction in it, and then pronouncing it in his name and by his authority, he approving of it, so that it was ever after irrevocable.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore, my son, obey my voice*, etc.] Hearken to what I am about to say, and do

according to that which I command thee, in every particular; she required of him filial obedience to all that she enjoined him; which, though not difficult to be performed, she was aware Jacob would make objections to, as he did; and therefore she is so pressing and peremptory in her injunctions, as well knowing it was respecting an affair of the greatest moment and importance.

Ver. 9. *Go now to the flock*, etc.] To the flock he had the care of, and that immediately, for the case required haste:

and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; two young kids that were fat, as Jonathan and Ben Melech interpret it; and, though two may seem to be too much to be dressed for Isaac only; it may be observed, that Rebekah intended only to take out some of the choicest and most tender

and delicate parts of them, and which would best suit her purpose, and which she would make most like to venison; and the rest could be disposed of for the use of the family: and, if it should be questioned whether Rebekah had a right to do this without her husband's leave, the Jewish writers have an answer ready; that, in her dowry or matrimonial contract, Isaac had allowed her to take two kids of the goats every day ^{f1430}:

and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth; such as would pass with him for venison: Jarchi says, that the taste of a kid is like the taste of a young roe or fawn; however, by seasoning, the natural taste might be altered so as not to be distinguished, as we find it was; and such as have the best skill in venison may be imposed upon and deceived by more ways than one, as well as Isaac was.

Ver. 10. *And thou shall bring [it] to thy father*, etc.] For venison; and as if he was Esau that brought it:

that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death; to whom she knew by the divine oracle the blessing belonged, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:23), as well as by virtue of the sale of the birthright to him by his brother, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:33), and through Esau's forfeiting of it by marrying with the Canaanites, (^{<0253>}Genesis 26:34); in these her sentiments she was right, but wrong in the ways and means she took to get it for him.

Ver. 11. *And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother*, etc.] Being timorous lest he should do an ill thing, and be accounted a deceiver, and bring a curse upon himself:

behold, Esau my brother [is] a hairy man; covered all over with hair; as with a hairy garment; so he was born, and so he continued, and no doubt his hair increased, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:25):

and I [am] a smooth man: without hair, excepting in those parts where it is common for all men to have it.

Ver. 12. *My father peradventure will feel me*, etc.] For, though he could not see him, and so discern whether he had any hair or no on him, yet, suspecting him by his voice, he might call him to him to feel him, as he did; for Jacob understood his mother right, that he was to represent his brother Esau in the transaction of this affair:

and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; one that imposes upon another and causes him to err, leads him to say or do wrong things: and not only appear as one, but be really one, and even a very great one, as the doubling of the radical letters in the word shows; yea, the worst of deceivers, a deceiver of a parent, of one that was both aged and blind:

and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing; and he might justly fear, that should he be found out, it would so provoke his father, that instead of blessing him, he would curse him, (see ¹⁶⁷¹⁸Deuteronomy 27:18).

Ver. 13. *And his mother said unto him, upon me [be] thy curse, my son,* etc.] That is, if thy father should curse thee, which I am well assured he will not, let the curse, be what it will, fall upon me, and not on thee; I shall bear the blame and the punishment: this she said in the strong faith of the divine oracle, being fully persuaded her scheme would succeed, and that Jacob would have the blessing, and therefore she feared no curse falling upon her or her son; and this she said to encourage him: the Targum of Onkelos is,

“to me it has been said in prophecy, that the curses shall not come upon thee, my son:”

only obey my voice, and go fetch me [them]; the two fat kids of the goats from the flock.

Ver. 14. *And he went and fetched and brought [them] to his mother,* etc.] Being satisfied with what his mother had said, he went to the field where the flock was, and took out of it two young kids, and brought them to his mother; and thus far he did right to obey her commands:

and his mother made savoury meat, such as his father loved; by picking out proper pieces, and seasoning them well, it was as grateful to him as if it had really been venison, such as he loved.

Ver. 15. *And Rebekah took goodly garments of her eldest son Esau,* etc.] Or “desirable”^{f1431} ones, exceeding good ones:

which [were] with her in the house; which she had the care and keeping of, and were wore only on particular occasions: some think these were priestly garments, which belonged to him as the firstborn, and were not in the keeping of his wives, being idolaters, but in his mother’s keeping; which is not very probable, yet more likely than that they were, as some Jewish

writers ^{f1432} say, the garments of Adam the first man, which Esau seeing on Nimrod, greatly desired them, and slew him for them, (see ~~<0110>~~Genesis 10:10); and hence called desirable garments:

and put them upon Jacob her younger son; that he might be took for Esau, should Isaac examine him and feel his garments, or smell them.

Ver. 16. *And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands*, etc.] Upon both his hands, and the whole of them that was bare, that he might appear to be like Esau:

and upon the smooth of his neck; which in Esau was covered with hair as his hands; and Hiscuni, a Jewish writer ^{f1433}, observes, that the skins of goats are rough, and like the skin of a hairy man; and so Bochart ^{f1434} remarks, that goats' hair in the eastern countries is not much unlike human hair; (see ~~<0093>~~1 Samuel 19:13,16).

Ver. 17. *And she gave the savoury meat*, etc.] Seasoned and dressed in such a manner as might be taken for venison:

and the bread which she had prepared to eat with it,

into the hand of her son Jacob; the dish of meat in one hand, and the bread in the other.

Ver. 18. *And he came unto his father*, etc.] Into the tent and apartment where he was:

and said, my father; to try whether he was awake, and to let him know that he was come, since he could not see him:

and he said, here [am] I; what hast thou to say to me?

who [art] thou, my son? for, from the voice and the quick dispatch made, he suspected it was not his son Esau.

Ver. 19. *And Jacob said unto his father, I [am] Esau thy firstborn*, etc.] Had he only said that he was his firstborn, he might have been excused from lying, because he had bought the birthright of Esau; but when he says, I am Esau, he can by no means be excused; for to say he impersonated Esau will not do; besides, he afterwards says he was his very son Esau, (~~<0123>~~Genesis 27:24):

I have done according as thou badest me; which is another lie; for Isaac had not bid him bring him any venison, nor go into the field for it, and take it and dress it for him; nor indeed had Jacob done either of these:

arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison; or “*hunting*”^{f1435}, what he had hunted; another untruth, for it was not venison he brought him, nor anything that was hunted by him: by this it seems that Isaac lay upon a bed or couch through infirmity, and therefore is bid to arise and put himself in a proper posture for eating, which in those times and countries was usually sitting:

that thy soul may bless me; as this was the thing in view, so speaking of it as soon as he came in, and which he desired might be done after his father had eat and drank, might serve to take off the suspicion of his being another person; since this was what Isaac himself proposed to Esau to do; and this he said when there were none else present.

Ver. 20. *And Isaac said unto his son*, etc.] Supposing him to be Esau:

how [is it] that thou hast found [it] so quickly, my son? that is, the venison; that he had met with it so soon in, the field, and got it dressed and ready in so short a time, which was not common, and seemed to be too little for doing all this in it, and so still created some suspicion of deceit:

and he said, because the Lord thy God brought [it] to me; which was another falsehood; for it was not the Lord, but his mother brought it to him: and this seems to be the most marvellous of all, that so good a man should dare to bring the name of the Lord God into this affair; indeed he does not say the Lord my God, or our God, but thy God; which some think was done on purpose, the more to cover the deceit, because they suppose that Esau, whom Jacob impersonated, was an idolater, but this is not so evident; rather it looks as if Jacob had not the confidence to call the Lord his God with a lie in his mouth.

Ver. 21. *And Isaac said unto Jacob, come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son*, etc.] Still suspecting some fraud in the case; and whereas he knew that Esau was a hairy man, and Jacob smooth, he thought by feeling he could discover the imposture, if there was any:

whether thou [be] my very son Esau, or not; which he still pretty much questioned.

Ver. 22. *And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father*, etc.] Boldly and without trembling; which he could the better do, as his father could not see him, and so not capable of discerning any change in his countenance or outward behaviour:

and he felt him; some parts of his body, especially his hands:

and said, the voice [is] Jacob's voice; very like it, as if it was the same, as indeed it was:

but the hands [are] the hands of Esau; are like them, being hairy as they; or, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem,

“the feeling of the hands is as the feeling of the hands of Esau;”

they feel like them.

Ver. 23. *And he discerned him not*, etc.] As he could not see, he could make no judgment by that sense; and, though he had his hearing, and thought the voice was like Jacob's, he might imagine there might be an alteration in Esau's voice, coming in haste and weary from the fields; yet, as there could not be any deception in his feeling, he thought it safest to trust to that, as it follows:

because his hands were hairy as his brother Esau's hands; which could not in a short time become so naturally; it was more reasonable to think that Esau's voice should be altered and become like Jacob's, than that Jacob's hands should become like Esau's:

so he blessed him; or intended and determined within himself to bless him, for the blessing was not given till afterwards; unless this is to be understood of a common blessing, congratulating him on the quick dispatch he made, and the great success he met with; and after this gave him the patriarchal blessing, which as yet he had not, being not thoroughly satisfied of him, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 24. *And said, [art] thou my very son Esau?* etc.] Still having some doubt on his mind whether he really was so or not, because of his voice:

and he said, I [am]; as for the observation of Jarchi upon this, in order to excuse Jacob from lying, that he does not say, “I am Esau”, only “I”, it will not do, since it is an answer to Isaac's question, with a design to deceive

him; and he intended by it that he should understand him as he did, that he was really Esau.

Ver. 25. *And he said, bring [it] near to me*, etc.] Being in a good measure satisfied that it must be Esau that was with him, he agreed that he should set his savoury meat before him he had prepared and brought to him:

and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee; this showed that as yet he had not blessed him, at least that the main and principal blessing was yet to come:

and he brought [it] near to him, and he did eat; set it on a table before him, and guided his hands to it, or fed him with it, and he made a meal of it:

and he brought him wine, and he drank; and so was comfortably refreshed, and in a good temper and disposition of mind to confer the blessing.

Ver. 26. *And his father Isaac said unto him*, etc.] After he had eat and drank, and the repast was over, and all were took away:

come near now, and kiss me, my son; which was desired either out of affection to him, excited by this instance of preparing such savoury and agreeable food; or else having some suspicion still, and willing to have more satisfaction before he proceeded further to bless, from the smell of his breath, and of his garments,

Ver. 27. *And he came near, and kissed him*, etc.] Jacob came near and kissed Isaac his father:

and he smelled the smell of his raiment; which being not like the smell of a sheep coat, but of a field, might give him more full satisfaction that it was truly Esau:

and he blessed him; with his patriarchal and prophetic blessing, which here begins:

and said, see, the smell of my son [is] as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed; like a field full of fragrant herbs, flowers, and spices, watered with the dews and rain of heaven, and so made fruitful, which emits a most, delightful odour; this may respect the scent of Esau's clothes, now on Jacob's back, which they received from the fields, which Esau continually frequented; or rather from the odoriferous herbs and fruits

which were put among them in the chest, in which Rebekah had laid them up; and it may be, that whereas the goatskins on his hands and neck would be apt to send forth a rank and disagreeable smell, these might be so scented by Rebekah as to prevent that. Some render these words, “see the smell of my son, whom the Lord hath blessed”^{f1436}, as the smell of a field”; and so Isaac pronounces him blessed of the Lord, as well as by himself; the sense is the same: as to the smell many interpreters consider this as a type and figure of the acceptance of believers with God, being clothed with the goodly, excellent, and desirable garment of the righteousness of Christ their elder brother, even of their persons, services, and sacrifices; which is indeed truly spiritual and evangelical; but is liable to this objection, that it makes profane Esau a type of Christ. I see not that anything can well be objected to the application of this son of Isaac’s to the Messiah himself, whom he may have a special regard unto in this prophetic blessing, reading the words, “the smell of my son [shall be] as the smell of a field”: or “my son, whom the Lord hath blessed”, and came before with all the blessings of goodness, and in whom all nations shall be blessed, shall be “as the smell of a field”; all whose garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, (~~1437~~Psalm 45:8), even Isaac’s principal son, that should be of his seed, of whom Jacob his present son was a type, and who was to spring from him.

Ver. 28. *Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven*, etc.] Or “shall” or “will give thee”^{f1437}, seeing he was blessed of God, and the blessed seed should spring from him, as well as his posterity should inherit the land of Canaan; for this is said rather by way of prophecy than wish, and so all that follow; and the dew of heaven is the rather mentioned, not only because that makes the earth fruitful on which it plentifully falls, but likewise because the land of Canaan, the portion of Jacob’s posterity, much needed it, and had it, for rain fell there but seldom, only twice a year, in spring and autumn; and between these two rains, the one called the former, the other the latter rain, the land was impregnated and made fruitful by plentiful dews; and these signified figuratively both the doctrines and blessings of grace, which all Jacob’s spiritual offspring, such as are Israelites indeed, are partakers of, and especially under the Gospel dispensation, (see ~~1438~~Deuteronomy 32:2 ~~1439~~Hosea 14:5 ~~1440~~Micah 5:7):

and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine; and such the land of Canaan was, a fat and fertile land, abounding with all good things, (see ~~1441~~Deuteronomy 8:8); by which are figured the plenty of Gospel provisions, the word and ordinances, which God has given to his Jacob and

Israel in all ages, as he has not given to other people, and especially in the times of the Messiah, Jacob's eminent seed and son, (see ^{<9579>}Psalm 147:19,20 ^{<2386>}Isaiah 25:6 ^{<3897>}Zechariah 9:17).

Ver. 29. *Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee*, etc.] Which was literally true in the times of Joshua and the judges, when the Canaanites were conquered and subdued, and those that remained became tributary to the Israelites; and still more so in the times of David, a son of Jacob, in the line of Judah, when the Philistines, Moabites, Syrians, Ammonites, and Edomites, became subject to him, his servants and tributaries; and yet more so in the times of the Messiah that was to spring from Jacob, and did, to whom many nations have been already subject, and all will in the latter day, (^{<19721>}Psalm 72:11 ^{<66504>}Revelation 15:4). And this passage is applied to the Messiah, and his times, by the Jews, in an ancient book ^{f1438}of theirs, at least said to be so. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it of the children of Esau or the Edomites, and of the children of Keturah; and that of Jerusalem, of the children of Esau, and of Ishmael:

be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee; these seem rather to be the children of Esau, Jacob's brother, and his mother's sons; the Targum of Jerusalem interprets the latter of the sons of Laban, his mother's brother, the Arabians and Syrians; which will be more fully accomplished when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, (^{<66115>}Revelation 11:15); who will then appear to be King of kings, and Lord of lords, (^{<66714>}Revelation 17:14), even the King of the whole earth:

cursed [be] everyone that curseth thee; it signifies, that those who were the enemies of Jacob, or would be the enemies of the church and people of God, his spiritual Israel, and of the Messiah, would be reckoned the enemies of God, and treated as such;

and blessed [be] he that blesseth thee; and that those that were his friends, and the friends of the people of God, and heartily wish well to the interest of Christ, these should be accounted the friends of God, and be used as such. The same blessing is pronounced on Abraham the grandfather of Jacob, (^{<1128>}Genesis 12:3).

Ver. 30. *And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of, blessing Jacob*, etc.] So that he had the whole entire blessing, and nothing

wanting; and takes in blessings of all sorts, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, of which the land of Canaan, and the fruits of it, were typical:

and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father; which no doubt he made haste to do, as soon as he had got the blessing; partly to avoid his brother, whom he might expect to come in every moment, and partly to relate to his mother the success he had met with: or “scarce in going out was gone out” ^{f1439}, was just gone out, and that was all; the Targum of Jonathan says, he was gone about two hands’ breadths; that is, out of the door of his father’s tent, which was a small space indeed. Jarchi interprets this doubling of the word, of the one going out and the other coming in at the same time; but Ainsworth more rightly observes, that it makes the matter the more remarkable, touching God’s providence herein:

that Esau his brother came in from his hunting; and not only was come out of the field from hunting, but had been at home some time, and had dressed what he had caught in hunting, and was just coming in with it to his father, as appears from (^{Q238}Genesis 27:31).

Ver. 31. *And he also made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father,* etc.] Which was made of real venison, or of creatures taken in hunting, and not like Jacob’s, made of other flesh, in imitation of it; for what the Jewish writers ^{f1440} say is not to be regarded, that he was hindered from getting true venison, by angels loosing the deer he bound; still less what the Targum of Jonathan says, that he killed a dog, made savoury meat of it, and brought it to his father:

and said unto his father, let my father arise, and eat of his son’s venison, that thy soul may bless me; this address is made by Esau to his father in a very respectful manner, as became a dutiful son to an aged and honoured parent; who in obedience to his command had prepared agreeable food for him, and now brought it to him, in order to receive his blessing, which he had himself proposed to give him upon it.

Ver. 32. *And Isaac his father said unto him, who [art] thou?* etc.] Hearing another voice more like Esau’s than what he had heard before surprised him, and therefore in haste puts this question:

and he said, I [am] thy son, thy firstborn Esau; all which was true in a sense; he was his son, and he was Esau, and he was his firstborn by nature, but not by right, for he had sold his birthright.

Ver. 33. *And Isaac trembled very exceedingly*, etc.] Or “trembled with a great trembling exceedingly”^{f1441}; he was amazed, and astonished, and seized with a trembling all over his body, and with terror and confusion of mind; at the craft of Jacob in getting the blessing; at the disappointment of Esau in losing it; at his own act in blessing Jacob instead of Esau, contrary to his inclination and intention; and at the overruling providence of God in bringing this about in so strange a manner, agreeably to the oracle he had given Rebekah; which now perhaps came fresh into the mind of Isaac, if he had heard it before; and all together threw him into this amazement:

and he said, who? where [is] he; which words spoken in haste, and without order, show the hurry and consternation of mind he was in:

that hath taken venison, and brought [it] me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest; he was here but just now; he was scarce gone out before thou camest in; who, and where is he, that has done this? He knew it must be Jacob that had prepared and brought him food he called venison, which he had eaten sufficiently of, though in the confusion of his mind he puts these questions: and

have blessed him? yea, [and] he shall be blessed; for he now saw clearly that it was according to the divine will that Jacob should be blessed, though his natural affection led him to bless Esau; and no doubt, while he was pronouncing the blessing on Jacob, he felt an uncommon impulse upon his mind, by which he was assured that he was right in blessing him, that it was according to the will of God, was by his direction, and with his approbation; and therefore he here, even after Jacob’s deceit was detected, confirms and ratifies it; and this is added, lest any question should be made of the validity of the blessing of Jacob, when it was given through mistake, and got by deceit; but this Isaac did and said knowingly, and by faith, as the apostle says, (⁸¹¹Hebrews 11:20).

Ver. 34. *And when Esau heard the words of his father*, etc.] That another person had been before him, and got the blessing; and especially when he heard this ratified, and confirmed, and made irrevocable:

he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry; as loud as he possibly could, and in as doleful and hideous a manner as can be imagined; according to the Vulgate Latin version, he roared like a lion:

and said unto his father, bless me, [even] me also, O my father; thou art my father, and I am a child of thine as well as Jacob, show paternal

affection to me; give me also a child's blessing, one at least equal to what thou hast given Jacob, if not a greater, as being the firstborn.

Ver. 35. *And he said, thy brother came with subtilty*, etc.] The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so Jarchi, interpret it, “with wisdom”, taking it in a good sense, and as excusing the fact; or rather commending it, as if it was wisely and prudently managed; but the word signifies fraud and deceit, and so it must be understood; though it may be Isaac says this, not so much to blame Jacob for what he had done, as to excuse himself to Esau, that he did not intend to give the blessing from him, but that he was imposed upon through the craft and subtilty of his brother, who feigned himself to be Esau; pretending he had been hunting, and had had wonderful success, and had got venison, and had prepared it; and came with goat, skins upon his hands and neck, that he might seem to be hairy as Esau was, and by these artful tricks he had deceived him, and therefore Esau could not blame him for what he had done:

and hath taken away thy blessing; which belonged to him as the firstborn, and he expected to have, and Isaac intended to have given it to him.

Ver. 36. *And he said, is not he rightly named Jacob?* etc.] As he was by his parents, and those that were at his birth, because he took his brother by the heel as he came out of his mother's womb; for Jacob signifies “heeler”, a supplanter, and was given him to keep up the memory of what he had done, to which Esau here refers:

for he hath supplanted me these two times; to supplant another is to put his foot under the heel of another, in order to trip him up, to which Esau alludes; but uses the word in a figurative sense, for circumventing him, and dealing fraudulently and deceitfully with him, though he is not able to support his charge; for if he dealt fraudulently with any, it was with his father, and not with him, and the two times he refers to prove it not:

he took away my birthright; which is not true, he did not take it away from him either by force or fraud, Esau sold it to him for a mess of pottage, (⁽¹²⁵⁾Genesis 25:29-34); he had despised and made light of it himself, and had parted with it at so mean a price, and now falsely charges his brother with taking it away from him, and wrongly accuses him of being a supplanter on that account:

and behold, now he hath taken away my blessing; this also is not true, he had not taken it away; it was given him by his father; and though he had

used some artful methods with him to get it, (⁰¹²⁷¹⁵Genesis 27:15-17), he had neither supplanted Esau, but if anyone, his father; nor had he done any injustice to Esau, since as he had bought of him the birthright, the blessing annexed to it went along with it, and of right belonged to Jacob:

and he said, hast thou not reserved a blessing for me? is the whole fund of blessings exhausted? are all bestowed upon Jacob? is there not one left for me? he hoped there was, and that as good a one as he had bestowed on his brother, and entreats he might have it.

Ver. 37. *And Isaac answered and said unto Esau,* etc.] Giving an account of the blessing he had bestowed upon his brother:

behold, I have made him thy lord; the lord of his posterity, who would be subdued and become tributary to his seed:

and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; the Edomites, who sprung from his brother Esau, who, according to this prophetic blessing, became servants to David, who was a son of Jacob's, (see Gill on ⁰¹²⁷²⁹Genesis 27:29");

and with corn and wine have I sustained him; promised him a fruitful country, the land of Canaan, abounding with all good things, particularly with corn and wine, which are put for all the rest:

and what shall I do now unto thee, my son? what is there remains? what can be bestowed upon thee? there is nothing left; dominion over others, even over all nations, yea, over thyself and thy posterity, and plenty of all good things, are given already to Jacob; what is there to be done for thee, or thou canst expect?

Ver. 38. *And Esau said unto his father, hast thou but one blessing, my father?* etc.] He seems to speak diminutively of what had been given to Jacob, calling it one blessing: whereas there were many, and of different sorts, both temporal and spiritual; but it may be Esau had not so clear and comprehensive a view of what was contained in Jacob's blessing; or at least was willing to think and hope that there was not so much given, but there might be some behind for him, and that his father had a greater stock than to be drained of all at once:

bless me, [even] me also, O my father: with another blessing, with one equal to what has been given my brother:

and Esau lift up his voice, and wept; in order to move the affections of his father, and to prevail upon him to reverse the blessing he had bestowed on Jacob, and give it to him; but he could not bring his father to repentance, to change his mind, and revoke the blessing, and give it him, with all his crying and tears, as the apostle observes, (^{<58127>}Hebrews 12:17).

Ver. 39. *And Isaac his father answered and said unto him*, etc.] Being willing to bestow what he could upon him, without lessening or breaking in upon the grant made to Jacob:

behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above: this agrees with part of the blessing of Jacob, only the clauses are inverted, and no mention made of corn and wine; the land of Edom not being so fat and fruitful as the land of Canaan. Castalio renders the words very differently, “thy habitation shall be from the fatness of the earth, or without the fatness of the earth, and without the dew of heaven from above”^{f1442}; or otherwise he thinks Esau would have the same blessing with Jacob, and so would have no occasion of complaint or grief, or to have hated his brother and sought his life; to which may be added, that the land of Edom, which Esau and his posterity inhabited, was a very desert country, (see ^{<3008>}Malachi 1:3).

Ver. 40. *And by thy sword shalt thou live*, etc.] By what he could get by it; his land being so poor that he could not live upon it, but must be obliged to such methods for a livelihood; or his country being surrounded with enemies, his posterity would be obliged to defend themselves by the sword, and other weapons of war:

and shalt serve thy brother; which is the sense and language of the oracle, (^{<0253>}Genesis 25:23); and which Isaac perhaps now remembered, and had a clear understanding of it, and delivers out his prophetic blessing agreeably to it:

and it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the dominion; not over the Israelites, the posterity of Jacob, which the Edomites, Esau’s posterity, never had; but when they should get a greater degree of strength, power, authority, and dominion in the world:

that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck; the Edomites should revolt from the posterity of Jacob, and shake off the yoke of bondage and subjection they had been long under; as they did in the times of Joram, king

of Judah, and set up a king of their own, and continued in such a state of freedom a long time, (see ~~1880~~ 2 Kings 8:20-22).

Ver. 41. *And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him*, etc.] It being a better blessing than his; giving him a better country, and greater plenty of good things, a larger dominion, and even dominion over him and his seed; for as for the promise of the Messiah, and spiritual blessings, he seems to have no concern about them, only temporal ones:

and Esau said in his heart; within himself, but he did not long keep it there, but told somebody of it; or otherwise, how should Rebekah be informed of it, as afterwards related? what he said follows,

the days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob: that is, the time of his father's death was drawing nigh, when there would be a mourning for him for some days; at which time, or at the end of it, he proposed to pick a quarrel with Jacob about his title to his father's substance, and in the quarrel kill him, and so regain the birthright and the blessing; and Jacob dying unmarried, and without issue, would defeat both the oracle of God, and the prophetic benediction of his father; but he failed in all, the time of his father's death was not so near as he imagined, for he lived forty three years after this; and this design of his being discovered, was the occasion of Jacob's going to Haran, where he married two sisters, and by them and their maids had a numerous offspring, whereby both the oracle and the blessing had their accomplishment. Esau seems to have retained some affection for his father, and therefore put off the execution of this wicked design until his death, being unwilling to grieve him, but had no regard for his mother, who he knew loved Jacob better than he, and was assisting to him in getting the blessing from him. Schmidt gives a sense of this passage different from all interpreters, and renders the words, "the days of my father's mourning will draw nigh"; not in which his father would be mourned for, being dead, but in which his father, being alive, would himself mourn for his son Jacob, being slain by Esau; and accordingly he renders the next clause, "for I will slay my brother Jacob"; and that will make him mourn, and perhaps die of his grief; and so he shows an ill will to his father because he confirmed the blessing to Jacob, as well as to Jacob because he had it.

Ver. 42. *And these words of Esau her eldest son were told to Rebekah*, etc.] Jarchi and Jonathan say, by the Holy Ghost; but Aben Ezra thinks, by

one of Esau's friends and confidants, to whom out of the abundance of his heart he had revealed this secret, which is not at all unlikely:

and she sent and called Jacob her younger son; who might be in another tent or apartment, or with the flocks in the field:

and said unto him, behold, thy brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, [purposing] to kill thee; he has determined on it, and has laid a scheme for it, and comforts himself with the thought of it, that he shall be able to accomplish it, and so be the heir of the promise, and get the blessing; and even such is his nature, that thy death will be a comfort to him under the loss of his blessing, though he gets nothing by it, so sweet is revenge unto him.

Ver. 43. *Now therefore, my son, obey my voice*, etc.] Hearken to what I say, and do according to it, as he had already in many instances, and particularly in a late one, in which he succeeded, and therefore had good reason to attend to her advice and direction, (see ^{<1273>}Genesis 27:13);

and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, to Haran; where Laban her brother, dwelt.

Ver. 44. *And tarry with him a few days*, etc.] Which Aben Ezra interprets a few years; rather, as Hiscuni, one year; perhaps it may be better should it be said one or two years; but instead of so short a time Jacob stayed there twenty years, and perhaps Rebekah never saw him anymore, being dead before he returned; after this account, no more mention is made of her:

until thy brother's fury turn away; which she hoped would abate, subside, and be entirely gone in process of time, and especially when the object of it was out of sight, and so it might be thought would be out of mind.

Ver. 45. *Until thy brother's anger turn away from thee*, etc.] Which is repeated from the preceding verse, to carry on the connection:

and he forget [that] which thou hast done to him; in getting the blessing from him; being convinced that Jacob had done him no injury, and that he had no just cause of being angry with him, it being the will of God that he should have the blessing; and besides, having bought the birthright of him, the blessing belonged to him in course; or however would in time forgive and forget what he thought was an injury done him:

then I will send, and fetch thee from thence; send messengers to him that should acquaint him with the disposition of his brother towards him, and, if agreeable, bring him along with them to his mother again; this is said to encourage him to go:

why should I be deprived also of you both in one day? who might either in the quarrel kill one another; or however, as one would be murdered, so the other, the murderer, must die by the hand of the civil magistrate, according to the law in (^{<0096>}Genesis 9:6); or should he escape justice being done him by men, yet the hand of God would find him; or if obliged to flee and hide himself, it would be as if he was not.

Ver. 46. *And Rebekah said to Isaac*, etc.] Not what she had told Jacob concerning the enmity of Esau to Jacob, and his intention to kill him, lest it should grieve him, and bring his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave; but what follows, as an excuse to get Isaac's leave for Jacob's departure, concealing the true reason of it:

I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; whom Esau had married, (^{<0254>}Genesis 26:34,35); who were continually vexing and teasing her by their impiety and idolatry, their irreligion and profaneness, their disobedience and contradiction, their froward temper and behaviour;

if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth; as his brother has done, and after his example, as the best are too apt to be led by bad examples:

such as these [which are] of the daughters of the land: like those Esau had married, of the same tribe, or of other of the tribes of the Canaanites, which were in religion and manners like unto them:

what good shall my life do me? I shall have no comfort in it; death would be more eligible than such a life: this she said with great vehemence and affection, to move and work upon Isaac to lay him commands on Jacob, and give him orders and directions to go to her family and friends, and there take him a wife; and she succeeded according to her wishes, as the following chapter shows.

CHAPTER 28

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 28

In this chapter an account is given of the charge Isaac gave to Jacob not to marry a Canaanitess, but to go to Padanaram, and take a wife from his mother's family, and of his blessing him before he sent him away, (^{<0281>}Genesis 28:1-5); of the notice that Esau took of this blessing and charge, which led him to take a wife of the family of Ishmael, (^{<0286>}Genesis 28:6-9); of the dream of the ladder, which Jacob had in his way to Haran, (^{<02810>}Genesis 28:10-12); of the blessing which God conferred upon him there, (^{<02813>}Genesis 28:13-15); of the awfulness of the place upon his awaking, and of his erecting a pillar in it, and giving a name to it, (^{<02816>}Genesis 28:16-19); and of the vow he made to God, should he be supplied with the necessaries of life, and be kept in safety by him, (^{<02820>}Genesis 28:20-22).

Ver. 1. *And Isaac called Jacob*, etc.] Or therefore ^{f1443}, because of what Rebekah had said to him, related in the latter part of the preceding chapter, he sent for Jacob to come to him from his tent or apartment where he was, or from the field where he was keeping the flocks; thus paying a great regard to what his wife Rebekah had suggested to him, and which appeared to him very right and reasonable:

and blessed him; he did not send for him to chide and reprove him for his fraudulent dealings with him to get the blessing from his brother, much less to revoke it, but to confirm it; which was necessary to prevent doubts that might arise in the mind of Jacob about it, and to strengthen him against the temptations of Satan; since he was about to be sent away from his father's house solitary and destitute, to go into another country, where he was to be for awhile in a state of servitude; all which might seem to contradict the blessing and promises he had received, and would be a trial of his faith in them, as well as a chastisement on him for the fraudulent manner in which he obtained them:

and charged him, and said unto him, thou shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; it was time that he was married; for he was now, as

the Jewish writers ^{f1444} say, seventy seven, years of age, which exactly agrees with what Polyhistor ^{f1445}, an Heathen writer, relates from Demetrius, that Jacob was seventy seven years of age when he came to Haran, and also his father Isaac was then one hundred and thirty seven years old; and so it is calculated by the best chronologers, and as he must be, since he was born when his father was sixty years of age, (see Gill on “(⁰¹²⁷⁰Genesis 27:1”)); and being now declared the heir of the promised land, it was proper he should marry, but not with any of the Canaanites, who were to be dispossessed of the land of Canaan, and therefore their seed, and Abraham’s, to whom it was given, must not be mixed. Isaac takes the same care, and gives the same charge concerning the marriage of his son Jacob, on whom the entail of the land was settled, as his father Abraham did concerning his, (⁰¹²⁴⁰Genesis 24:3).

Ver. 2. *Arise, go to Padanaram*, etc.] Of this place, (see Gill on “(⁰¹²⁵⁰Genesis 25:20”)); either he is bid to go directly, in haste and alone; perhaps by this time Rebekah had given Isaac some hint of the ill design of Esau against him, which made Isaac the more urgent upon him to be gone, as well as it was high time he had took to himself a wife:

to the house of Bethuel thy mother’s father; who though now dead in all probability, yet the house and family went by his name:

and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother’s brother: who had daughters unmarried, of which no doubt Isaac and Rebekah had knowledge, a correspondence being kept up between the two families, though at a great distance.

Ver. 3. *And God Almighty bless thee*, etc.] This is not a new blessing, distinct from that in (⁰¹²⁸⁰Genesis 28:1), but the same; there it is expressed in general, here the particulars of it are given; and by which it appears, that Isaac’s blessing Jacob was a prayer, wishing a blessing from God upon him, and was the prayer of faith, delivered out under the spirit of prophecy; and they are blessed indeed that are blessed of God, and they must needs be blessed who are blessed by the Almighty; for what is it he cannot do or give? The Targum of Jonathan adds,

“with much riches;”

but no doubt all kind of blessings are included, both temporal and spiritual:

and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee; with a numerous offspring:

that thou mayest be a multitude of people; or an “assembly” or “congregation” ^{f1446} of them; which may all unite in one body and make one nation, as the twelve tribes descending from Jacob did.

Ver. 4. *And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee*, etc.] Which was promised to Abraham, and was entailed upon Isaac and his seed, and now upon Jacob and his seed, which follows:

that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave to Abraham; the land of Canaan, which was given to Abraham by promise, but not in possession; he was a sojourner and stranger in it, and so Isaac had been all his days, and now Jacob, who through the blessing was become heir of it; but as yet neither he nor his posterity must enjoy it, but be strangers and sojourners in it, for the exercise of faith, and for the leading of their minds off of all earthly enjoyments, to the better and heavenly country God has provided for his people; (see ^{<810>}Hebrews 11:9,10,13,16).

Ver. 5. *And Isaac sent away Jacob*, etc.] From Beersheba; not in anger, or in a dishonourable way, but took his leave of him no doubt in an affectionate manner; as it is clear he went with his blessing, and had his good wishes for a prosperous journey:

and he went to Padanaram; which from Beersheba, according to some ^{f1447}, was four hundred and eighty miles:

unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian; some versions make Laban to be the Syrian, others Bethuel; it is a matter of no great moment which is here so called, since they were both called Syrians, (see ^{<0250>}Genesis 25:20):

the brother of Rebekah; this refers to Laban, for Bethuel was her father:

Jacob's and Esau's mother; Jacob is set first, not only as being most beloved by his mother, but as now having the birthright and the blessing.

Ver. 6. *And when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob*, etc.] Had conferred the blessing before given, or had wished him a good journey; which perhaps may be all that Esau understood by it, and so was not so much offended with it:

and sent him away to Padanaram, to take him a wife from thence; which likewise might not be displeasing to him, partly as he understood it to be only on account of taking a wife, and not on account of his ill design upon

him, which he might imagine his parents knew nothing of; and partly as he would now be out of the way, and he might find means the easier to ingratiate himself into his father's favour, and get him to revoke the blessing, and settle the inheritance upon him:

and that as he blessed him, he gave him a charge, saying, thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; or of the Canaanites, of any of the tribes or nations that belonged to that people, whether Hittites or others.

Ver. 7. *And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother,* etc.] As it became him, and as it becomes all children to be obedient to their parents in all things lawful they command them; and it would have been well if Esau had been obedient to them also in a like case, the case of his marriage:

and was gone to Padanaram; as they had enjoined him, to take a wife from thence.

Ver. 8. *And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father.*] Who he perceived was displeased with the daughters of Canaan, or that they were “evil in [his] eyes”^{f1448}, offensive to him, and disapproved of by him, because of their ill manners: Rebekah is not mentioned, whose displeasure he cared not for.

Ver. 9. *Then went Esau unto Ishmael,* etc.] Not to Ishmael in person, for he was now dead, (⁴⁰²⁵⁷Genesis 25:17), and had been dead as is reckoned about fourteen years before this, but to the house of Ishmael:

and took unto the wives which he had; the daughters of Heth, and who seem by this to be both alive at this time:

Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son; the same with Bashemath, (⁴⁰³⁶⁸Genesis 36:3); as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, this person having two names, and is further described,

the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife; who was the eldest son of Ishmael, and, his father being dead, was the principal in the family; and this woman Esau took to wife was his sister by his mother's side, as the above Targum expresses, as well as by his father's; whereas he might have other sisters only by his father's side, he having had more wives than one. This Esau seems to have done in order to curry favour with his father, who was displeased with his other wives, and therefore takes one of his father's

brother's daughters; but in this he acted an unwise part, on more accounts than one; partly as it was taking to wife the daughter of one that was cast out of his grandfather's house, and had been a persecutor of his father, and therefore not likely to be agreeable to him; and partly as being a daughter of the bondmaid's son: children born of her could not inherit the land promised to Abraham and Isaac.

Ver. 10. *And Jacob went out from Beersheba*, etc.] Where Isaac and Rebekah now lived: from hence he went alone, without any servants to attend him, though perhaps not without letters of recommendation from his parents, testifying their affection to him, and that he came with their knowledge and consent, and was their heir, as Isaac had been to Abraham; nor without provisions, at least not without money to purchase them by the way, as appears by the oil he had, (^{<02818>}Genesis 28:18):

and went toward Haran: for thither he could not get in one day, being many days' journey; (see Gill on "^{<02815>}Genesis 28:5").

Ver. 11. *And he lighted upon a certain place*, etc.] Without any design to take up there, but as it were casually to him, though very providentially, after he had travelled forty eight miles; for so far it seems it was from Beersheba to Luz or Bethel ^{f1449}, as this place was called:

and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; which hindered his pursuing his journey any further that day, and therefore took a night's lodging here: and he took of the stones of that place; one of the stones that lay there, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech rightly interpret it, as appears from (^{<02813>}Genesis 28:13); though the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem will have it, that these were four stones that he took, and that by a miracle they became one, and is one of the five miracles they say were done for Jacob on that day:

and put [them for] his pillows, and lay down in that place and slept; being weary with his journey though he had no other bed than the earth, and for his pillow a stone, and for his canopy or curtain the open heaven; a different lodging this from what he had been used to in his father's house, and under the indulgence of his mother; and one would wonder how he could sleep in such circumstances, and that he did not take cold, after such a journey: but it must be considered that it was in a warm climate, and in an age when they did not use themselves to such soft beds as now, and especially that he was under the particular care of divine Providence.

Ver. 12. *And he dreamed*, etc.] As he slept; not a common dream, but under divine direction and influence:

and, behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: denoting either the providence of God, and the various steps of it, bringing about his own glory and the good of his people; and which is steady, firm, and sure, and reaches to all things here on earth; and in an especial manner is concerned about the people of God, their protection and safety; and is directed and governed according to the will, counsels, and purposes of God in heaven; a view of which must be very encouraging to Jacob in his present circumstances: or else the incarnation and mediation of Christ, who in his human nature was to be in the fulness of time on earth, there to live a while, obey, suffer, and die, and so was the ladder set on earth; and his divine nature was the top of it, which reached heaven; here he was in that nature before his incarnation, and from hence he came; and indeed here he was in that when on earth; and as man, he ascended on high when he had done his work, and is now higher than the heavens; he may be fitly represented hereby as the Mediator, who has reconciled things in heaven and things on earth, and has as it were joined and united heaven and earth together: and the various rungs in this ladder, so considered, are Christ's interposition as a surety front eternity; his incarnation in time; his being under the law, and his obedience to it; his sufferings, the shedding of his blood, and the death of the cross; his resurrection from the dead, ascension to heaven, session at the right hand of God, and intercession there. Moreover this may point out to us Christ as the way to his Father, of access unto him, and acceptance with him, by which he communicates the blessings of his grace to men, and by which they ascend to God with their prayers and praises to him: as also as being the way to heaven and eternal happiness; the various steps to which are election in him, redemption by him, regeneration by his Spirit and grace, the several graces of his Spirit, faith, hope, and love, justification by his righteousness, pardon by his blood, adoption through him, and the resurrection of the dead:

and, behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it: which may be expressive of the employment of angels in the affairs of Providence, who receive their commission from heaven, and execute it on earth, in which they are diligent, faithful, and constant; and of the ministry of them, both to Christ personal, and to his church and people, even to every particular believer; (see ~~also~~ John 1:51).

Ver. 13. *And behold, the Lord stood above it*, etc.] Ordering, directing, and overruling all things in Providence, for the glory of his name and the good of his people; and may signify, as the ladder may be a figure of Christ, that Jehovah the Father, is above him, as man and Mediator, and makes himself known in and by him, and delivers out all his blessings and promises through him, both temporal and spiritual, and such as follow:

and said, I [am] the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: their covenant God and Father in Christ, who had made promises unto them, and bestowed blessings upon them; and the same was and would continue to be the God of Jacob, which is strongly intimated:

the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; meaning not that small pittance of land only on which his body then lay, and which it covered, but all the land of which it was a part, even the whole land of Canaan; hereby entailing it on him and his seed, and so explaining and confirming the blessing of his father Isaac; and by which it appears, that all that had been done was under a divine direction, and according to the will of God.

Ver. 14. *And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth*, etc.] Innumerable, (see ^{<0136>}Genesis 13:16 ^{<0230>}Numbers 23:10);

and thou shalt spread abroad to the west; or “the sea”, the Mediterranean sea, which was west of the land of Canaan:

and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; not of the whole world, but of the land of Canaan: the meaning is, that his posterity should be numerous, and break out and spread themselves like a flood of water, and reach to the utmost bounds of the land on all sides:

and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed; that is, in that eminent and principal seed that should spring from him, the Messiah, in whom some of all nations should, as they have been, be blessed with all spiritual blessings, as redemption, peace, pardon, justification, adoption, and eternal life; the same promise had been made to Abraham, was renewed to Isaac, and now confirmed to Jacob, (see ^{<0228>}Genesis 22:18 26:4).

Ver. 15. *And, behold, I [am] with thee*, etc.] Though alone, at a distance from his father’s house, no friend to keep him company, or servant to

attend him; but the presence of God here promised is abundantly more than an equivalent for all this:

and will keep thee in all [places], whither thou goest; from beasts of prey, in lonesome places through which he might travel; from thieves and robbers, to whom he might be exposed; from his brother Esau, and all his ill designs against him; and from being always under the bondage of Laban, into which he would be brought:

and will bring thee again into this land: the land of Canaan, which was entailed on him and his seed for an inheritance; but, as he would now soon be out of it, and continue in another land for many years, as he did, which would make it look very unpromising that he and his seed should inherit it, this is said unto him:

for I will not leave thee, until I have done [that] which I have spoken to thee of; made good all his promises to him: and the sense is, not that he would then leave him when he had done so, but as not before, so never after; for God never does, nor never will, utterly forsake his people.

Ver. 16. *And Jacob awaked out of his sleep*, etc.] Which had been sweet unto him, and out of his dream, it being now over; and it having left such a weight upon his mind, and such an awe upon his spirits, it might tend the sooner to awaken him; what time it was is not said, perhaps it was in the middle of the night or towards morning, since after this it is said that he rose early in the morning:

and he said, surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew [it] not; God is everywhere, in a general way, upholding all things by his power, as he is immense and omnipresent; but here he was in a special sense, by some signal token of his presence; by a stream of light and glory darting from the heavens, hence Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it,

“the glory of the Lord, and the glory of the majesty of the Lord;”

and by the appearance of angels, and by the communications of his mind and will, and grace to Jacob, and that communion he had with him in his dream, of which he was very sensible: for, when he says, “I knew it not”, the meaning is, he did not think or expect to meet with God in such a place; he did not know that God ever appeared anywhere but in the houses of his people, such as his father’s house; and in the congregation of the faithful, or where the saints met for public worship, or where an altar was

erected for God: though sometimes God is present with his people, and they are not sensible of it; as the church in (²³¹¹⁰ Isaiah 41:10); and as Mary, when Christ was at her elbow, and she knew him not, (⁴³⁰¹³ John 20:13).

Ver. 17. *And he was afraid*, etc.] Not with a servile but filial fear; not with a fear of the wrath and displeasure of God, but with a fear of his grace and goodness; not with a fear of distrust of it, of which he had just had such a comfortable assurance; but with an awe of the greatness and glory of God, being conscious of his own unworthiness to receive such favours from him;

and said, how dreadful [is] this place! not terrible and horrible, being not like Mount Sinai, but like Sion; not as the suburbs of hell, but as the gate of heaven majestic and venerable, because of the glory of God that appeared in it, whose name is holy and reverend and because of the holy angels here present: and so the church, of which this was an emblem, is a solemn assembly, awful and venerable; a city of solemnities, because of the worship of God in it, and his presence there; who is to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all that are about him; and where persons should behave in a serious and solemn manner. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“how tremendous and praiseworthy is this place! this is not a common place:”

this [is] none other but the house of God; wherefore he afterwards called it Bethel, which signifies the house of God; and so the church of God is often called, (⁴³²¹⁶ Psalm 23:6 69:9 ⁵⁴³¹⁵ 1 Timothy 3:15 ⁴⁰⁴¹⁷ 1 Peter 4:17); which is of God’s building, where he dwells, and his family is, of which he is the master and governor; which he beautifies and adorns, fills, repairs, and defends:

and this [is] the gate of heaven: Mr. Mede renders it “the court of heaven”, because of the angels; since in gates justice was administered by kings, attended with their retinue; but royal courts were not kept there, only courts of judicature: this place seems to be so called, because the heavens were opened and the glory of God was seen, attended by his angels, who were passing and repassing, as people through the streets of a city; and was an emblem of the church of Christ, who is figured by the ladder set on earth, whose top reached to heaven, the door, the gate, the way of ascent to it; here he is preached in the word as the way of salvation, the way to heaven and eternal happiness; here he is held forth in the

ordinances; here he grants his presence to his people, and indulges them with communion with him, which makes it like and next to heaven unto them: and, generally speaking, though not always, God brings his people to heaven this way, through a Gospel church state, and by means of the word and ordinances; and here angels also attend, (~~6110~~ 1 Corinthians 11:10).

Ver. 18. *And Jacob rose up early in the morning*, etc.] In order to proceed on his journey, being comfortably refreshed both in body and mind: but first he

took the stone that he had put [for] his pillows, and set it up [for] a pillar; not for a statue or an idol to be worshipped, but for a memorial of the mercy and goodness of God unto him, (see ~~0048~~ Joshua 4:3-9); indeed, among the Heathens, stones, even rude and unpolished ones, were worshipped as gods; and this was the ancient custom among the Greeks, and which, as Pausanias ^{f1450} says, universally obtained among them:

and poured oil upon the top of it; which he had brought with him for necessary uses in his journey, or fetched from the neighbouring city; the former is most likely: and this he did, that he might know it again when he returned, as Aben Ezra remarks, and not for the consecration of it for religious use; though it is thought, by some learned men ^{f1451}, that the Phoenicians worshipped this stone which Jacob anointed; and that from this anointed stone at Bethel came the Boetylia, which were anointed stones consecrated to Saturn and Jupiter, and others, and were worshipped as gods; the original of which Sanchoniatho ^{f1452} ascribes to Uranus, who, he says, devised the Boetylia, forming animated stones, which Bochart renders anointed stones; and so Apuleius ^{f1453}, Minutius Felix ^{f1454}, Arnobius ^{f1455}, and others, speak of anointed stones, worshipped as deities; and hence it may be through the early and ancient abuse of such pillars it was, that they were forbidden by the law of Moses, and such as the Heathens had erected were to be pulled down, (~~0001~~ Leviticus 26:1 ~~0005~~ Deuteronomy 7:5 12:3).

Ver. 19. *And he called the name of that place Bethel*, etc.] The house of God, which he took this place to be:

but the name of that city [was called] Luz at the first; which signifies an almond or hazel nut, (~~0137~~ Genesis 30:37); perhaps from the number of this sort of trees that grew there, under which Jacob might lay himself down, which was probably in the field of Luz; and being at night, he might not

know there was a city so near, until the morning. Though Josephus^{f1456} says he did it purposely, out of hatred to the Canaanites, and chose rather to lie under the open air. This was about twelve miles from Jerusalem, as Jerom^{f1457} says.

Ver. 20. *And Jacob vowed a vow*, etc.] Which is the first vow we read of in Scripture:

saying, if God will be with me; the word *if* is not a sign of doubting, but is either an adverb of time, and may be rendered, “when God shall be with me”^{f1458}; or as a supposition, expressive of an inference or conclusion drawn, “seeing God will be with me”^{f1459}; which he had the utmost reason to believe he would, since he had not only promised it, but had so lately granted him his presence in a very singular and remarkable manner, referring to the promise of God, (^{<0285}Genesis 28:15):

and will keep me in this way that I go; as he had said he would, and as hitherto he had, and for the future he had reason to believe he still would:

and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on; which is included in that clause, “I will not leave thee”, etc. (^{<0285}Genesis 28:15), even not without food and raiment; which is all men can desire or use, and therefore with them should be content.

Ver. 21. *So that I come again to my father’s house in peace*, etc.] In safety from Esau, and all other enemies, as God promised him he should:

then the Lord shall be my God; not as if he should not be his God if he did not do all this for him; which would savour not only of a mercenary spirit, but of great impiety; neither of which were to be found in Jacob: but the meaning is, that he should not only continue to own him as his God, and to worship him, but having fresh obligations upon him, should be stirred up more eagerly and devoutly to serve him in a very singular way and manner, and particularly by doing what is expressed in (^{<0282}Genesis 28:22). Some think he has respect to the Messiah, owning him to be the true God with the Father and the blessed Spirit, who had appeared to Abraham, and was the fear of Isaac, and whom Jacob now owned as his God: this receives some confirmation from the Targum of Jonathan, which begins the paragraph thus,

“if the Word of the Lord will be my help, etc. then the Lord shall be my God.”

Ver. 22. *And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house*, etc.] Building an altar of it with some others, and sacrificing to God on it; and wherever God is worshipped, that place is his house, be it what or where it will; and Jacob did as he promised to do, (see ~~GEN~~ Genesis 35:3,7):

and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee; for the support of his worship; for the maintenance of such that were employed in it; for the provision of sacrifice, and for the relief of the poor, or for any use or service in which God might be glorified: this was imitated by the Heathens in later times, who gave the tenth of their substance to their gods, Jupiter, Hercules, and others ^{f1460}.

CHAPTER 29

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 29

This chapter informs us of Jacob's coming to a well near Haran, where meeting with some shepherds he inquires after Laban, (⁻⁰¹²⁹⁰Genesis 29:1-8); and there also with Rachel his daughter, the shepherds made known to him, and acquainted her who he was, (⁻⁰¹²⁹⁰Genesis 29:9-12); upon which she ran to her father, and told him who was at the well, who went forth and brought him to his house, and kindly entertained him, (⁻⁰¹²⁹³Genesis 29:13,14); with whom he agreed to stay and serve seven years for Rachel his daughter, (⁻⁰¹²⁹⁵Genesis 29:15-20); at the end of which Jacob demands his wife, but instead of Rachel, Leah was brought to him as his wife, (⁻⁰¹²⁹²Genesis 29:21-25); which being discovered, and complained of, it was proposed he should have Rachel also, provided he would serve yet seven years more, to which he agreed, (⁻⁰¹²⁹³Genesis 29:26-30); and the chapter is concluded with an account of four sons being born to Jacob of Leah, (⁻⁰¹²⁹⁸Genesis 29:31-35).

Ver. 1. *Then Jacob went on his journey*, etc.] After the above vow at Bethel, and having had some intimation that what he desired would be granted him; or "he lift up his feet" ^{f1461}, which not only shows that he walked afoot, but that he went on his journey with great cheerfulness; for having such gracious promises made him, that God would be with him, and keep him, and supply him with all necessities, and return him again to the land of Canaan, which made his heart glad; his heart, as the Jewish writers say ^{f1462}, lift up his legs, and he walked apace, and with great alacrity:

and came into the land of the people of the east; the land of Mesopotamia or Syria, which lay to the east of the land of Canaan, (see ⁻²³⁹¹Isaiah 9:11); hither he came by several days' journeys.

Ver. 2. *And he looked, and behold a well in the field*, etc.] Near Haran; he might purposely look out for a well, as knowing that there people frequently came for water for their families, or shepherds to water their flocks, of whom he might get intelligence concerning Laban's family, and where they dwelt; or he might lookout for this particular well, where his

grandfather's servant had met with his mother Rebekah, of which he had been informed, and very probably had some directions how to find it: of this well, (see Gill on "^(Q31)Genesis 24:11"); to which may be added what another traveller says ^{f1463}, there is in this city (Orpha, the same with Haran) a fountain, which both Jews, Armenians, and Turks, reported unto us was Jacob's well, and that here he served his uncle Laban: near Alexandretta is a fine well, called Jacob's well, and its water is excellent; not far from which the Greeks say are the remains of Laban's house ^{f1464}:

and, lo, there [were] three flocks of sheep lying by it; in order to be watered, when it should be opened:

for out of that well they watered the flocks; the shepherds:

and a great stone [was] upon the well's mouth; so that until that was rolled off, they could not be watered, which was the reason of their lying by it: this stone was laid upon it, partly to keep the water from flowing out, and being wasted, that there might be a sufficiency for the flocks; and partly to keep the water pure and clean, that it might be wholesome for the flocks, as well as entire for the use of those that had a property in it.

Ver. 3. *And thither were all the flocks gathered*, etc.] The three above mentioned, (^(Q32)Genesis 29:2):

and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep; that is, when they watered the sheep, they used to roll away the stone from the mouth of the well in order to do it; for as yet the flocks, now lying by it, had not been watered, as appears from (^(Q33)Genesis 29:7,8):

and put a stone upon the well's mouth in this place; this they were wont to do every time they watered the flocks.

Ver. 4. *And Jacob said unto them*, etc.] To the shepherds, though not expressly mentioned; it cannot be imagined he spoke to the flocks, but to the keepers of them:

my brethren, whence [be] ye? a kind and affable way of speaking, used even to strangers, since all men are brethren by nature; or might be used by Jacob, because they were of the same occupation with himself, shepherds, asking them of what city they were, and from whence they came? and which being answered, would lead on to a conversation, which was what he wanted:

and they said, of Haran [are] we; the very place he was bound for, and was sent unto, (^{<0274>}Genesis 27:43 28:10).

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, know ye Laban the son of Nahor?* etc.] He was the son of Bethuel, and grandson of Nahor; grandsons being called the sons of their grandfather; and Nahor might be more known than Bethuel, Haran being Nahor's city, (^{<0240>}Genesis 24:10); and not Bethuel his mother's father, but Laban her brother is inquired after; perhaps Bethuel was dead, and Laban was the head of the family, and well known, and it was to him he was sent:

and they said, we know him; perfectly well; he lives in our city, and is our neighbour.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto them, [is] he well?* etc.] In good health, he and his family, or "is peace unto him" ^{f1465}; does he enjoy prosperity and happiness? for this word was used in the eastern nations, and still is, for all kind of felicity:

and they said, [he is] well; or has peace; he and his family are in good health, enjoying all the comforts and blessings of life:

and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep; at that very instant she was coming out of the city with her father's flock of sheep, to water them at the well; an instance of great humility, diligence, and simplicity; this was very providential to Jacob.

Ver. 7. *And he said, lo, [it is] yet high day,* etc.] Noonday, when the sun is highest; at which time in those hot countries flocks used to be made to lie down in shady places, and by still waters, to which the allusion is in (^{<0271>}Psalm 23:2 ^{<0200>}Song of Solomon 1:7); or however the sun was still up very high, and there was a great deal of the day yet to come; for so the phrase is, "yet the day is great" or "much" ^{f1466}, a long time still untill night:

neither [is it] time that the cattle should be gathered together; off of the pastures, to be had home, and put into folds, which was usually done in the evening:

water ye the sheep, and go [and] feed [them]; give them water out of the well to drink, and then lead them out the pastures, and let them feed until the night is coming on: this he said not in an authoritative way, or in a surly ill natured manner, and as reproving them for their slothfulness; but kindly

and gently giving his advice, who was a shepherd himself, and knew what was proper to be done; and this appears by the shepherds taking in good part what he said, and returning a civil answer.

Ver. 8. *And they said, we cannot*, etc.] That is, water the sheep; either because the stone was a great one, as Jarchi observes, and therefore used to be removed by the joint strength of all the shepherds when they came together, though Jacob rolled it away of himself afterwards; but this is imputed to his great strength: or rather it was a custom that obtained among them, or an agreement made between them, that the stone should not be removed from the mouth of the well, and any flock watered,

until all the flocks be gathered together; and therefore they could not fairly and rightly do it, without violating the law and custom among them:

and [till] they roll the stone from the well's mouth; that is, the shepherds of the several flocks:

then we water the sheep; and not till then.

Ver. 9. *And while he yet spake with them*, etc.] While Jacob was thus discoursing with the shepherds:

Rachel came with her father's sheep; to water them at the well. She was within sight when Jacob first addressed the shepherds, but now she was come to the well, or near it, with the sheep before her:

for she kept them: or “she was the shepherdess” ^{f1467}; the chief one; she might have servants under her to do some parts of the office of a shepherd, not so fit for her to do; it may be Laban's sons, for some he had, (^{<0300>}Genesis 31:1); were not as yet grown up, and Leah, the eldest daughter, having tender eyes, could not bear the open air, and light of the sun, nor so well look after the straying sheep; and therefore the flock was committed to the care of Rachel the younger daughter, whose name signifies a sheep. The Jews say ^{f1468}, that the hand of God was upon Laban's flock, and there were but few left, so that he put away his shepherds, and what remained be put before his daughter Rachel, (see ^{<0330>}Genesis 30:30); and some ascribe it to his covetousness that he did this; but there is no need to suggest anything of that kind; for keeping sheep in those times and countries was a very honourable employment, and not below the sons and daughters of great personages, and still is so accounted. Dr. Shaw ^{f1469} says it is customary, even to this day, for the

children of the greatest Emir to attend their flocks; the same is related of the seven children of the king of Thebes, of Antiphus the son of Priam, and of Anchises, Aeneas's father^{f1470}.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother*, etc.] Coming with her flock towards the well, and for whom and whose flock only the shepherds might be waiting:

and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother; wherefore out of respect to him and his, he being so nearly allied to him, it was

that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, either with the help of the shepherds, or of himself by his own strength; which the Jewish writers^{f1471} say amazed the shepherds, that he should do that himself, which required their united strength. The Targum of Jonathan says, he did it with one of his arms; and Jarchi, that he removed it as easily as a man takes off the lid cover of a pot:

and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother; this he did partly out of respect to his relations, and partly that he might be taken notice of by Rachel.

Ver. 11. *And Jacob kissed Rachel*, etc.] Which he did in a way of courtesy and civility; this was done after he had acquainted her with his relation to her; he saluted her upon that:

and lifted up his voice, and wept; for joy at the providence of God that had brought him so opportunely to the place, and at the sight of a person so nearly related to him; and who he hoped would be his wife, and was the person designed of God for him.

Ver. 12. *And Jacob told Rachel*, etc.] Or "had told"^{f1472} her; before he kissed her, and lift up his voice and wept, as Aben Ezra observes:

that he [was] her father's brother; his nephew by his sister, for such were sometimes called brethren, as Lot, Abraham's brother's son, is called his brother, (⁰¹⁴²Genesis 14:12,14,16):

and that he [was] Rebekah's son; sister to her father, and aunt to her, and whose name and relation she doubtless knew full well:

and she ran and told her father; leaving the care of her flock with Jacob; Rebekah, in a like case, ran and told her mother, (⁰¹²⁸Genesis 24:28), which

is most usual for daughters to do; but here Rachel runs and tells her father, her mother very probably being dead, as say the Jewish writers ^{f1473}.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son*, etc.] That there was such a man at the well, thus related to him, and what he had done there, had rolled away the stone, and watered his flock. The Jewish writers ^{f1474} make this report chiefly to respect his great strength showed in the above instance, with other things:

that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house; Jarchi and other interpreters represent this as done with avaricious views, and that he expected Jacob had brought presents with him, as pieces of gold, pearls and jewels, and such like precious things Abraham's servant brought and gave him when he came for Rebekah, (^{<0253>}Genesis 24:53); but I see not why we may not take all this to be hearty, sincere, and affectionate, arising from nearness of relation, and a sense of it:

and he told Laban all these things; how he was sent hither by his parents on account of the hatred of his brother Esau, because he had got the birthright and blessing from him; how God had appeared to him at Luz, and the promises he had made him; how providentially he had met with Rachel at the well, and perhaps might him at, if he did not openly declare, the end of his coming thither for a wife.

Ver. 14. *And Laban said to him, surely thou [art] my bone and my flesh*, etc.] Nearly allied in blood, being his sister's son:

and he abode with him the space of a month; or "a month of days" ^{f1475}, a full month to a day; all this while feeding his flocks, and doing whatsoever service he had for him to do.

Ver. 15. *And Laban said unto Jacob, because thou [art] my brother*, etc.]. Or nephew, his sister's son, (see Gill on "^{<0292>}Genesis 29:12"):

shouldest thou therefore serve me for nought? nearness of kin was no reason why he should serve him freely, or for nothing, but rather why he should be more kind to him than to a stranger, and give him better wages:

tell me, what [shall] thy wages [be]? by the day, or month, or year; signifying he was willing to give him anything that was just and reasonable, which was very well spoken; and this gave Jacob a fair opportunity of

opening his mind more freely to him, and for answering a principal end for which he came, as follows:

Ver. 16. *And Laban had two daughters*, etc.] Grown up and marriageable:

and the name of the elder was Leah; which signifies labour or weariness:

and the name of the younger was Rachel; before mentioned, whom Jacob met with at the well, (^{Q290}Genesis 29:10); and whose name signifies a sheep, as before observed, (see Gill on "^{Q290}Genesis 29:9").

Ver. 17. *Leah [was] tender eyed*, etc.] Blear eyed, had a moisture in them, which made them red, and so she was not so agreeable to look at; though Onkelos renders the words,

“the eyes of Leah were beautiful,”

as if her beauty lay in her eyes, and nowhere else;

but Rachel was beautiful and well favoured; in all parts, in the form of her countenance, in her shape and stature, and in her complexion, her hair black, her flesh white and ruddy, as Ben Melech observes.

Ver. 18. *And Jacob loved Rachel*, etc.] As he seems to have done from the moment he saw her at the well, being beautiful, modest, humble, affable, diligent, and industrious:

and he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter: signifying, that he desired no other wages for his service than that, that he might have her for his wife, at the end of seven years' servitude, which he was very willing to oblige himself to, on that condition; for having no money to give as a dowry, as was customary in those times, he proposed servitude instead of it; though Schmidt thinks this was contrary to custom, and that Laban treated his daughters like bondmaids, and such as are taken captives or strangers, and sold them, of which they complain, (^{Q15}Genesis 31:15).

Ver. 19. *And Laban said*, etc.] Deceitfully, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, pretending great respect for Jacob, and that what he had proposed was very agreeable to him, when he meant to impose upon him:

[it is] better that I should give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man; by which he not only intimates that he preferred him, a relation, to another man, a stranger; but as if he did not insist upon the

servitude for her, but would give her to him; unless he means upon the terms proposed, and so it should seem by what follows:

abide with me: the term of seven years, and serve me; suggesting, that then he agreed Rachel should be his wife; and so Jacob, a plain hearted man, understood him; but he designed no such thing.

Ver. 20. *And Jacob served seven years for Rachel*, etc.] The whole term of time, diligently, faithfully, and patiently. Reference is had to this in (~~Gen~~^{Hosea} 11:12):

and they seemed unto him [but] a few days, for the love he had to her; for though to lovers time seems long ere they enjoy the object beloved; yet Jacob here respects not so much the time as the toil and labour of service he endured in it; he thought that seven years' service was a trifle, like the service of so many days, in comparison of the lovely and worthy person he obtained thereby; all that he endured was nothing in comparison of her, and through the love he bore to her: besides, the many pleasant hours he spent in conversation with her made the time slide on insensibly, so that it seemed to be quickly gone; which shows that his love was pure and constant.

Ver. 21. *And Jacob said unto Laban, give [me] my wife*, etc.] Meaning Rachel, who was his wife by contract; the conditions of her being his wife were now fulfilled by him, and therefore he might challenge her as his wife:

for my days are now fulfilled; the seven years were up he agreed to serve him for his daughter; and therefore it was but just and right she should be given him:

that I may go in unto her; as his lawful wife, and it was high time Jacob had her; for he was now, as the Jewish writers generally say^{f1476}, and that very rightly, eighty four years of age; and from him were to spring twelve princes, the heads of twelve tribes, which should inhabit the land of Canaan.

Ver. 22. *And Laban gathered together all the men of the place*, etc.] Of the city of Haran, which may be understood of the chief and principal of them, to make the marriage of his daughter public and authentic:

and made a feast; a marriage or marriage feast, as the Septuagint version, (see ^{412P}Matthew 22:2); which was usual, when a marriage was solemnized, expressive of joy on that account.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass in the evening*, etc.] After the feast was over, and the guests were departed; when it was night, a fit season to execute his designs, and practise deceit:

that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him, to Jacob, in his apartment, his bedchamber, or to him in bed: for it is still the custom in some eastern countries for the bridegroom to go to bed first, and then the bride comes, or is brought to him in the dark, and veiled, so that he sees her not: so the Armenians have now such a custom at their marriages that the husband goes to bed first; nor does the bride put off her veil till in bed ^{f1477}; and in Barbary the bride is brought to the bridegroom's house, and with some of her female relations conveyed into a private room ^{f1478}; then the bride's mother, or some very near relation, introduces the bridegroom to his new spouse, who is in the dark, and obliged in modesty not to speak or answer upon any account: and if this was the case here, as it is highly probable it was, the imposition on Jacob is easily accounted for:

and he went in unto her; or lay with her as his wife; a modest expression of the use of the bed.

Ver. 24. *And Laban gave unto his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid, [for] an handmaid.*] It was usual to have many given them at this time, as Rebekah seems to have had, (⁰²⁶⁹Genesis 24:59,61); but Leah had but one, and this was all the portion Jacob had with her. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“and Laban gave her Zilpah his daughter, whom his concubine bore unto him:”

hence the Jews say ^{f1479}, that the daughters of a man by his concubines are called maids.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, that, in the morning, behold, it [was] Leah*, etc.] The morning light discovered her, and her veil being off, her tender eyes showed who she was: it is much her voice had not betrayed her; but perhaps there might be a likeness of voice in her and her sister; or she might keep silence, and so not be discovered in that way; but to excuse her from sin is not easy, even the sin of adultery and incest. Many things may be said indeed in her favour, as obedience to her father, and, being the eldest

daughter, might be desirous of having an husband first, and especially of having the promised seed, which God promised to Abraham, and was to be in the line of Jacob: and it may be, as Schmidt observes, that Laban had persuaded her to believe, that the matrimonial contract he had made with Jacob was on her account, and that she was truly his spouse; and the same he might say to Rachel, which made her easy, or otherwise it is difficult to account for it that she should acquiesce in it; for it can hardly be thought to be done without her knowledge, when it was for the solemnity of her marriage that the men of the city were called together, and a feast made for them; for that she should deliver up to her sister the things or signs that Jacob had given her to carry on the fraud, as the Jewish writers^{f1480} say, is beyond belief:

and he said to Laban; when he arose in the morning, and at first meeting with him:

what is this that thou hast done unto me? what a wicked thing is it? as it was, to put another woman to bed to him that was not his wife, and in the room of his lawful wife; or why hast thou done this to me? what reason was there for it? what have I done, that could induce thee to do me such an injury? for Jacob knew what he had done, of that he does not inquire, but of the reason of it, and expostulates with him about the crime, as it was a sin against God, and an injury to him:

did I not serve thee, for Rachel? even seven years, according to agreement? was not this the covenant I made with thee, that she should be my wife at the end of them?

wherefore then hast thou beguiled me? by giving Leah instead of her: though Laban is not to be justified in this action, yet here appears in Providence a righteous retaliation of Jacob; he beguiled his own father, pretending he was his brother Esau; and now his father-in-law beguiles him, giving him blear eyed Leah instead of beautiful Rachel.

Ver. 26. *And Laban said, it must not be so done in, our country*, etc.] Or “in our place”^{f1481}; in this our city it is not usual and customary to do so; he does not deny what he had done in beguiling him, nor the agreement he had made with him, but pleads the custom of the place as contrary to it:

to give the younger, that is, in marriage,

before the firstborn; but it does not appear there was any such custom, and it was a mere evasion; or otherwise, why did not he inform him of this when he asked for Rachel? and why did he enter into a contract with him, contrary to such a known custom? and besides; how could he have the nerve to call the men of the city, and make a feast for the marriage of his younger daughter, if this was the case?

Ver. 27. *Fulfil her week*, etc.] Not Rachel's week, or a week of years of servitude for her, but Leah's week, or the week of seven days of feasting for her marriage; for a marriage feast used to be kept seven days, according to the Jewish writers ^{f1482}, and as it seems from (~~0747~~Judges 14:17); and the Targum of Jerusalem fully expresses this sense,

“fulfil the week of the days of the feast of Leah;”

and to the same sense the Targum of Jonathan, Aben Ezra and Jarchi:

and we will give this also; meaning Rachel that stood by; and the sense is, that he and his wife, if he had any, or his friends about him, would give to Jacob Rachel also to be his wife, upon the following condition:

for the service which thou shall serve with me yet seven other years; which shows the avaricious temper of the man.

Ver. 28. *And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week*, etc.] The week of the days of the feast of Leah, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; he agreed to it; during which time he cohabited with Leah as his wife, and which confirmed the marriage: how justifiable this was, must be left. The marrying of two sisters was forbidden by the law of Moses, (~~0888~~Leviticus 18:18); and polygamy was not allowed of in later times, and yet both were dispensed with in times preceding; and there seems to be an overruling Providence in this affair, which oftentimes brings good out of evil, since the Messiah was to spring from Leah, and not Rachel; (see Gill on “~~0235~~Genesis 29:35”); and having more wives than one, and concubines also, seems to be permitted for this reason, that Jacob might have a numerous progeny, as it was promised he should: and indeed Jacob was under some necessity of marrying both sisters, since the one was ignorantly defiled by him, and the other was his wife by espousal and contract; and though he had served seven years for her, he could not have her without consenting to marry the other, and fulfilling her week, and serving seven years more; to such hard terms was he obliged by an unkind uncle, in a strange country, and destitute:

and he gave him Rachel his daughter to wife also; not after seven years' service, as Josephus^{f1483} thinks, but after the seven days of feasting for Leah; though on condition of the above service, as appears from various circumstances related before the seven years' service could be completed; as his going in to Rachel, (^{<028>}Genesis 29:30); her envying the fruitfulness of her sister, (^{<031>}Genesis 30:1); giving Bilhah her handmaid unto him, (^{<033>}Genesis 30:3); and the whole series of the context, and life of Jacob.

Ver. 29. *And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter, Bilhah his handmaid to be her maid.*] As he had given Leah an handmaid he gave Rachel another; and this in the Targum of Jonathan is said to be a daughter of Laban by a concubine also, as the former.

Ver. 30. *And he went in also unto Rachel*, etc.] Cohabited with her as his wife:

and he loved also Rachel more than Leah; she was his first love, and he retained the same love for her he ever had; as appears by his willingness to agree to the same condition of seven years' servitude more for her sake, and which he performed as follows:

and served with him, yet seven other years; that is, Jacob served so many years with Laban after he had married his two daughters, and fulfilled the weeks of feasting for each of them.

Ver. 31. *And when the Lord saw that Leah [was] hated*, etc.] Not properly and simply hated by Jacob, as appears by his doing the duty of an husband to her, but comparatively; she was less loved than Rachel: and there are many things to be said for it; she was not beautiful as Rachel was; she was not Jacob's choice, as she was but imposed upon him through deceit, and he was forced to marry her, or he could not have Rachel his beloved wife: but the Lord had pity on her, and that she might have a share in her husband's affections,

he opened her womb; or gave her conception; as Onkelos paraphrases it:

but Rachel [was] barren; bare no children as yet, and for many years after, (^{<032>}Genesis 30:22-24).

Ver. 32. *And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben*, etc.] That is, "see the son", as if she by this name called upon her husband, her friends, and all about her, to look at him, and view him;

perhaps hoping and imagining he might be the famous son, the promised seed, the Messiah that was to spring to Abraham, in the line of Jacob; but if she so thought, she was greatly mistaken; for this son of hers proved unstable, and did not excel; or rather God hath seen or provided a son, as Hillerus^{f1484} gives the signification of the name, which seems better to agree with what follows:

for she said, surely the Lord hath looked on my affliction; being deceived by her father, not so much loved by her husband as her sister was, and perhaps slighted by her:

now therefore my husband will love me: more than he has done, and equally as my sister, having bore him a son.

Ver. 33. *And she conceived again, and bare a son*, etc.] As soon as she well could. The Jews^{f1485} have a notion, that Leah brought forth her sons at seven months' end:

and said, because the Lord hath heard that I [was] hated; or less loved than her sister:

he hath therefore given me this [son] also; to comfort her under the trial and exercise, and engage her husband's love the more unto her:

and she called his name Simeon: which signifies "hearing", and answers to the reason of her having him as she concluded.

Ver. 34. *And she conceived again, and bare a son*, etc.] A third time, as soon as she well could after the former birth:

and said, now this time will my husband be joined to me; in greater affection and stronger ties of love, and cleave unto her:

because I have born him three sons; which she considered as a threefold cord, binding his affections to her, which could not be easily broke;

and therefore was his name called Levi; which signifies "joined"; from him the Levites sprung, and had their name.

Ver. 35. *And she conceived again, and bare a son*, etc.] A fourth son, a son in whose line, and from whose tribe, the Messiah was to spring:

and she said, now will I praise the Lord; she had praised him before for looking on her affliction, and hearing her cries, and giving her one son after

another; but now she determines to praise him more than ever, having a fresh instance of his goodness to her: the Targum of Jonathan adds this as a reason,

“because from this my son shall come forth kings, and from him shall come forth David the king, who shall praise the Lord.”

And why may it not be as well supposed that she had knowledge of the Messiah springing from him, which would greatly heighten and increase her joy and praise?

and therefore she called his name Judah; which signifies “praise”. A further improvement is made of this name, and the signification of it, in (~~4008~~Genesis 49:8). According to the Jewish writers ^{f1486}, these four sons of Jacob were born, Reuben on the fourteenth day of Chisleu, or November, and lived one hundred and twenty four years; Simeon on the twenty first of Tebeth, or December, and lived one hundred and twenty years; Levi on the sixteenth of Nisan, or March, and lived one hundred and thirty seven years; and Judah on the fifteenth of Sivan, or May, and lived one hundred and nineteen years. And all these names being of the Hebrew language, and derived from words in it, show that this language, or what was much the same with it, was spoken in Laban’s family, and had been continued from Nahor, as it had been in Isaac’s family from Abraham:

and left bearing; that is, for a while, for after this she bore two sons and a daughter; (see ~~4007~~Genesis 30:17-19).

CHAPTER 30

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 30

This chapter gives an account of Rachel's envy of her sister for her fruitfulness, and of her earnest desire of having children, which she expressed to Jacob in an unbecoming manner, for which he reproved her, (~~Q301~~Genesis 30:1,2), of her giving her maid Bilhah to Jacob, by whom he had two sons, Dan and Naphtali, (~~Q303~~Genesis 30:3-8); and of Leah's giving her maid Zilpah to him, by whom he had two other sons, Gad and Asher, (~~Q309~~Genesis 30:9-13); and of Reuben's mandrakes he found in the field, and the agreement made between Rachel and Leah about them, (~~Q304~~Genesis 30:14-16); and of Leah's bearing Jacob two more sons and one daughter, (~~Q307~~Genesis 30:17-21), and of Rachel's also bearing him a son, whose name was Joseph, (~~Q302~~Genesis 30:22-24); upon which he desires leave of Laban to depart into his own country, his time of servitude being up, (~~Q305~~Genesis 30:25,26); which brought on a new agreement between him and Laban, that for the future he should have all the speckled, spotted, and brown cattle for his service, (~~Q302~~Genesis 30:27-36); and the chapter is concluded with an account of a cunning scheme of Jacob's to increase that sort of cattle, which succeeded, and by which he became rich, (~~Q307~~Genesis 30:37-43).

Ver. 1. *And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children*, etc.] In the space of three or four years after marriage, and when her sister Leah had had four sons:

Rachel envied her sister; the honour she had of bearing children, and the pleasure in nursing and bringing them up, when she lay under the reproach of barrenness: or, "she emulated her sisters"^{f1487}; was desirous of having children even as she, which she might do, and yet not be guilty of sin, and much less of envy, which is a very heinous sin:

and said unto Jacob, give me children, or else I die; Rachel could never be so weak as to imagine that it was in the power of Jacob to give her children at his pleasure, or of a barren woman to make her a fruitful mother of children; though Jacob at sight seems so to have understood her: but

either, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, that he would pray the Lord to give her children, as Isaac prayed for Rebekah; so Aben Ezra and Jarchi: or that he would, think of some means or other whereby she might have children, at least that might be called hers; and one way she had in view, as appears from what follows: or otherwise she suggests she could not live comfortably; not that she should destroy herself, as some have imagined; but that she should be so uneasy in her mind, that her life would be a burden to her; that death would be preferred to it, and her fretting herself for want of children, in all probability, would issue in it.

Ver. 2. *And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel*, etc.] Whom yet he dearly loved, hearing her talk in such an extravagant manner, as her words seemed to be, and were not: only expressive of great uneasiness and impatience, but implied what was not in the power of man to do:

and he said, [am] I in God's stead: do you take me to be God, or one that has a dispensing power from him to do what otherwise no creature can do; and which also he never gives to any? for, as the Targum of Jerusalem on (^{Q32}Genesis 30:22) says, this is one of the four keys which God delivers not to an angel or a seraph; even the key of barrenness. Children are the gift of God, and his only, and therefore he is to be sought unto for them: hence Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it;

“wherefore dost thou seek them of me? shouldest thou not seek them of the Lord?”

who hath withheld from thee the fruit of the womb? children, (^{Q32}Psalm 127:3); not Jacob, but the Lord.

Ver. 3. *And she said*, etc.] in order to pacify Jacob, and explain her meaning to him; which was, not that she thought it was in his power to make her the mother of children, but that he would think of some way or another of obtaining children for her, that might go for hers; so the Arabic version, “obtain a son for me”: but, since no method occurred to him, she proposes one:

behold my maid Bilhah, go in unto her, take her and use her as thy wife:

and she shall bear upon my knees; either sit on her knees in the time of labour, and so bring forth as if it was she herself; or rather bear a child, which Rachel would take and nurse, and dandle upon her knees as her own, (see ^{Q32}Isaiah 66:12);

that I may also have children by her; children as well as her sister, though by her maid, and as Sarah proposed to have by Hagar, whose example, in all probability, she had before her, and uses her very words; (see Gill on “~~“and”~~Genesis 16:2”).

Ver. 4. *And she gave him Bilhah her handmaid*, etc.] To be enjoyed as a wife, though she was no other than a concubine; yet such were sometimes called wives, and were secondary ones, and were under the proper lawful wife, nor did their children inherit; but those which Jacob had by his wives' maids did inherit with the rest:

and Jacob went in unto her; consenting to what Rachel his wife proposed to him: having concubines, as well as more wives than one, were not thought criminal in those times, and were suffered of God, and in this case for the multiplication of Jacob's seed; and perhaps he might the more readily comply with the motion of his wife, from the example of his grandfather Abraham, who took Hagar to wife at the instance of Sarah.

Ver. 5. *And Bilhah conceived, and bare Jacob a son.*] This was so far countenanced by the Lord, that he blessed her with conception, and Jacob with a son by her.

Ver. 6. *And Rachel said*, etc.] As soon as she heard that Bilhah had bore a son:

God hath judged me: and hereby testified his approbation, as she understood it, of the step she had took in giving her maid to her husband, and she was justified in what she had done:

and hath also heard my voice: of prayer; she had prayed to God that her maid might have a child, or she have one by her:

and hath given me a son; whom she reckoned her own, Bilhah being her servant, and so her children born of her, hers; or whom she adopted and called her own, and therefore took upon her to give it a name, as follows: and here let it be observed, that she looked upon this child as a gift of God, as the fruit of prayer, and as in mercy to her, God dealing graciously with her, and taking her part, and judging righteous judgment:

therefore called she his name Dan; which signifies “judgment”; the reason of it lies in the first clause of the verse.

Ver. 7. *And Bilhah, Rachel's maid, conceived again,* etc.] Soon after the birth of her first child:

and bare Jacob a second son; this was his sixth son, but the second by Bilhah.

Ver. 8. *And Rachel said, with great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister,* etc.] Or, “with the wrestlings of God”,^{f1488}, wrestling and striving in prayer with God; being vehement and importunate in her petitions to him, that she might have children as well as her sister: some render it, “I used the craftinesses of God”, or “great craftiness with my sisters”^{f1489}; by giving her maid Bilhah to her husband, and having children by her:

and I have prevailed; as she strove in her desires and prayers to have another child before her sister had; in that she prevailed, or she was succeeded in her desires, she had children as she wished to have:

and she called his name Naphtali; which signifies “my wrestling”, being a child she had been striving and wrestling for: these two sons of Bilhah were born, as say the Jews, Dan on the twenty ninth day of Elul or August, and lived one hundred and twenty seven years; Naphtali on the fifth of Tisri or September, and lived one hundred and thirty three years.

Ver. 9. *When Leah saw that she had left bearing,* etc.] For a little while, for she afterwards bore again, and observing also what her sister had done;

she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her Jacob to wife: in this she was less excusable than Rachel, since she had four children of her own, and therefore might have been content without desiring others by her maid; nor had she long left off bearing, and therefore had no reason to give up hope of having any more.

Ver. 10. *And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore Jacob a son.*] For it seems he consented to take her to wife at the motion of Leah, as he had took Bilhah at the instance of Rachel; and having gratified the one, he could not well deny the other; and went in to her, and she conceived, though neither of these things are mentioned, but are all necessarily supposed.

Ver. 11. *And Leah said, a troop cometh,* etc.] A troop of children, having bore four herself, and now her maid another, and more she expected; or the commander of a troop cometh, one that shall head an army and overcome his enemies; which agrees with the prophecy of Jacob, (⁽¹⁴⁹⁾Genesis 49:19);

and she called his name Gad: which signifies a “troop”, glorying in the multitude of her children, that she had or hoped to have.

Ver. 12. *And Zilpah, Leah’s maid, bare Jacob a second son.*] As well as Bilhah, and no more.

Ver. 13. *And Leah said*, etc.] Upon the birth of the second son by her maid:

happy am I; or, “in my happiness”; or, “for my happiness”^{f1490}; that is, this child is an addition to my happiness, and will serve to increase it: for the daughters will call me blessed; the women of the place where she lived would speak of her as a happy person, that had so many children of her own, and others by her maid; (see ^{<8C7B>}Psalm 127:5):

and she called his name Asher, which signifies “happy” or “blessed”. These two sons of Zilpah, according to the Jewish writers^{f1491}, were born, Gad on the tenth day of Marchesvan or October, and lived one hundred and twenty five years; and Asher on the twenty second day of Shebet or January, and lived one hundred and twenty three years.

Ver. 14. *And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest*, etc.] Leah’s eldest son, who is supposed to be at this time about four or five years of age^{f1492}, who went out from the tent to the field, to play there perhaps; and this was at the time of wheat harvest, in the month Sivan, as the Targum of Jonathan, which answers to part of our May; a time of the year when the earth is covered with flowers:

and found mandrakes in the field; the flowers or fruit of mandrakes, mandrake apples, as the Septuagint. This plant is said to excite love, provoke lust, dispose for, and help conception; for which reasons it is thought Rachel was so desirous of these “mandrakes”, which seem to have their name “dudaim” from love: the word is only used here and in (^{<21713>}Song of Solomon 7:13); where they are commended for their good smell, and therefore cannot be the plant which goes now by that name; since they neither give a good smell, nor bear good fruit, and are of a cold quality, and so not likely to produce the above effects ascribed unto them. It is very probable they were lovely and delightful flowers the boy picked up in the field, such as children delight in; some think the “jessamin”, others lilies, and others violets^{f1493}; it is not easy to determine what they were; (see Gill on “So 7:13”);

and brought them unto his mother Leah; as children are apt to do, to show what line flowers or fruit they have gathered:

then Rachel said to Leah, give me, I pray thee, of thy son's mandrakes; being taken with the colour or smell of them; for as for the notion of helping conception, or removing barrenness and the like, there is no foundation for it; for Rachel, who had them, did not conceive upon having them; and the conception both of her and Leah afterwards is ascribed to the Lord's remembering and hearkening to them.

Ver. 15. *And she said unto her*, etc.] Leah to Rachel, taking this opportunity to bring out a thing which had some time lain with uneasiness upon her mind:

[is it] a small thing that thou hast taken away my husband? got the greatest share of his affections, and had most of his company; which last was very probably the case, and more so, since Leah had left off bearing; and this she could not well stomach, and therefore upon this trifling occasion outs with it:

and wouldst thou take away my son's mandrakes also? which were poor things to be mentioned along with an husband; and besides, Rachel did not offer to take them away from the child without her leave, which she in very humble manner asked of her:

and Rachel said, therefore he shall lie with thee tonight for thy son's mandrakes; which showed no great affection to her husband, and a slight of his company, to be willing to part with it for such a trifle; and it seems by this as if they took their turns to lie with Jacob, and this night being Rachel's turn, she agrees to give it to Leah for the sake of the mandrakes: or however, if she had engrossed him to herself very much of late, as seems by the words of Leah above, she was willing to give him up to her this night, on that consideration; which Leah agreed she should have, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 16. *And Jacob came out of the field in the evening*, etc.] From feeding his flocks;

and Leah went out to meet him; knowing full well the time he used to come home:

and said, thou must come in unto me; into her tent, for the women had separate tents from the men; as Sarah from Abraham; and so these wives of Jacob had not only tents separate from his, but from one another:

for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes: that is, she had hired that night's lodging with him of Rachel, with the mandrakes her son Reuben had brought out of the field. Jacob made no objection to it; but consented, being willing to please both his wives, who he perceived had made this agreement between themselves:

and he lay with her that night; and that only, for the present: for, by the way of speaking, it looks as if he did not continue with her more nights together at that time, but went, as before that evening, to Rachel's tent.

Ver. 17. *And God hearkened unto Leah*, etc.] To the prayer of Leah, as the Targum of Jonathan, for more children: the desire of these good women for the company of their husband was not from lust, or an amorous desire in them, but for the sake of having many children, as appears by giving their maids to him; and the reason of this was, as Bishop Patrick well observes, that the promise made to Abraham of the multiplication of his seed, and of the Messiah springing from thence, might be fulfilled; and is the true reason of Moses's taking such particular notice of those things, which might seem below the dignity of such a sacred history:

and she conceived, and bare Jacob the fifth son; the fifth he had by her, but the ninth in all, that were born unto him.

Ver. 18. *And Leah said, God hath given me my hire*, etc.] Of the mandrakes with which she had hired of Rachel a night's lodging with Jacob, and for which she had a sufficient recompense, by the son that God had given her: and she added another reason, and a very preposterous one, and shows she put a wrong construction on the blessing she received:

because I have given my maiden to my husband; which, she judged, was so well pleasing to God, that he had rewarded her with another son;

and she called his name Issachar, which signifies "hire" or "reward"; or, there is a reward, or a man of reward.

Ver. 19. *And Leah conceived again*, etc.] For bearing children Jacob took more to her, and more frequently attended her apartment and bed:

and bare Jacob a sixth son; the sixth by her, but the tenth by her and his two maids.

Ver. 20. *And Leah said, God hath endued me [with] a good dowry*, etc.] Having so many children; for though her husband could give her nothing at marriage, and her father gave her no more than one handmaid, yet God had abundantly made it up to her, in giving her so many sons: these are the heritage of the Lord, (^{BCB}Psalm 127:3);

now will my husband dwell with me; constantly; and not come to her tent now and then only, as he had used to do;

because I have borne him six sons; this she thought would fix his affections to her, and cause him to cleave to her, and continue with her:

and she called his name Zebulun; which signifies “dwelling”. These two sons of Leah, according to the Jewish writers ^{f1494}, were born, Issachar on the tenth day of Ab or July, and lived one hundred and twenty two years, and Zebulun on the seventh of Tisri or September, and lived one hundred and twenty four years.

Ver. 21. *And afterwards she bare a daughter*, etc.] Which some writers, as Aben Ezra observes, say, was at the same birth with Zebulun, a twin with him; but being said to be afterwards shows the contrary:

and called her name Dinah; which signifies “judgment”: perhaps she may have some reference to the first son of Bilhah, Rachel’s handmaid, whom she called Dan, a name of the same signification; intimating as if it was a clear case that judgment went on her side; and that by the number of children she had, it was plain God had determined in her favour.

Ver. 22. *And God remembered Rachel*, etc.] In a way of mercy and kindness, whom he seemed to have forgotten, by not giving her children:

and God hearkened to her; to her prayer, which had been made time after time, that she might have children; but hitherto God had delayed to answer, but now gives one:

and opened her womb; gave her conception, and made her fruitful, and she became the mother of a child she so much desired.

Ver. 23. *And she conceived and bare a son*, etc.] Through the goodness of God unto her, and for which she was greatly thankful;

and said, God hath taken away my reproach; the reproach of barrenness with which she was reproached among her neighbours; and perhaps by her sister Leah, and indeed it was a general reproach in those times; and especially, it was the more grievous to good women in the family of Abraham, because they were not the means of multiplying his seed according to the promise, and could have no hope of the Messiah springing from them.

Ver. 24. *And she called his name Joseph*, etc.] Which signifies “adding”, or rather, “to be added”; or, “God shall add”, giving this reason for it;

and said, the Lord shall add to me another son: which is expressive of strong faith; that as she had begun to bear children, she should bear another, as she did; though some read the words as a wish or prayer, “may the Lord”, or, “and that the Lord would add”, etc. ^{f1495}; but our version seems best: the name Joseph is composed of two words, one which signifies to gather or take away, used in (^{<0323>}Genesis 30:23), and another which signifies to add; and so has respect to the Lord’s taking away her reproach, and adding to her another son: Melo, an Heathen writer, makes mention of Joseph by name, as Polyhistor ^{f1496} relates, and makes him the twelfth and last son of Abraham, whereas he was the eleventh of Jacob. He was born, as the Jews say ^{f1497}, the twenty seventh of Tammuz or June, and lived one hundred and ten years.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass, when Rachel had borne Joseph*, etc.] At which time his fourteen years of servitude were ended; for Jacob was in Laban’s house twenty years, fourteen were spent in serving for his wives, and the other six for his cattle, which begun from this time, as the context clearly shows; (see ^{<0341>}Genesis 31:41); so that, as the Jewish writers ^{f1498} truly observe, in seven years’ time Jacob had twelve children born to him, eleven sons and one daughter; for he had served seven years before he had either of his wives: they also pretend that a twin was born with each, except with Joseph, but for that there is no foundation:

that Jacob said unto Laban, send me away; give me leave to depart thy house: he had a right to demand his liberty, and to insist upon it, since the time of his servitude was up; but he chose to have leave, and part in a friendly manner:

that I may go unto mine own place, and to my own country; to Beersheba, where his father and mother lived, and whom, no doubt, he longed to see;

and to the land of Canaan, in which that place was, which was his native country and was given him by promise, and was to be the inheritance of his seed.

Ver. 26. *Give [me] my wives*, etc.] His two wives, Leah and Rachel, and the two maids, Bilhah and Zilpah, which he had given him for wives also; he desires leave not to have them, but to take them away with him:

and my children; his twelve children; he did not desire his father-in-law to take any of them, and keep them for him, but was desirous of having them with him: no doubt, for the sake of their education, though he had nothing of his own wherewith to support them; not doubting that God would make good his promise in giving him food and raiment, and returning him to his country; and which his faith applied to his family as well as to himself:

for whom I have served thee; not for his children, but for his wives, his two wives;

and let me go; free from thy service, and to my own country;

for thou knowest my service which I have done thee: how much and great it is, and with what diligence and faithfulness it has been performed, and that the time of it fixed and agreed upon was at an end.

Ver. 27. *And Laban said unto him, I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes, tarry*, etc.] One would think he could not expect to have much from him, by his treatment of him; but he craftily cajoles him in this fawning, flattering way, in order to gain a point, and begs of him, in a very humble and suppliant manner, if he had any love for him, that he would not depart from him, but stay with him, which he should take as a great favour; for he could not insist upon it, as bound in duty, or as a point of justice:

for I have learned by experience; by the observations made in the fourteen years past;

that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake: Laban had so much religion as to ascribe the blessings, the good things he had, to the Lord, as the author and giver of them; and so much honour, or however, thought it was more his interest to own it, that it was for Jacob's sake that he was thus blessed: the word translated is used sometimes of divination, and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem render it, "I have used divinations"; and according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, Laban was a diviner and soothsayer; and by the

teraphim he had in his house, (^{<0319>}Genesis 31:19); he divined, and knew thereby that he was blessed for the sake of Jacob; but, as Schmidt observes, it is not credible that the devil should give so famous a testimony to Laban of Jehovah and Jacob.

Ver. 28. *And he said, appoint me thy wages, and I will give [it].*] Say what thou wilt have, fix what salary thou thinkest sufficient, and I will agree to it, and punctually pay it: this he craftily said, not choosing to propose anything himself, but leaving it to Jacob, knowing very well the honesty and modesty of Jacob, that he would mention less wages than he could have the face to offer him.

Ver. 29. *And he said unto him,* etc.] Jacob to Laban,

thou knowest that I have served thee; not only diligently and faithfully, without any salary, excepting for his wives; otherwise he had no wages for his service all this time, which therefore should be considered for the future:

and how thy cattle was with me: always under his care, and he ever watchful of them; spent all his time and labour with them, and had no opportunity of getting anything for himself.

Ver. 30. *For [it was] little which thou hadst before I [came],* etc.] Perhaps but a single flock, and that not a very large one, since Rachel, his youngest daughter, had the care of it:

and it is [now] increased unto a multitude; or “broke forth”^{f1499}, spread itself over the fields and plains, hills and mountains adjacent, so that they were covered with his sheep, these bringing forth thousands and ten thousands, (^{<0313>}Psalms 144:13);

and the Lord hath blessed thee since my coming; or “at my foot”^{f1500}; ever since he set foot in his house. Aben Ezra observes it as a proverbial saying, such an one has a good foot, a lucky one, wherever he comes a blessing or success goes with him; or the meaning may be, wherever Jacob went or led his flock, and fed it, it prospered, the blessing of God going with him. Onkelos renders it, “for my sake”; and so it is the same with what Laban had observed and owned, (^{<0327>}Genesis 30:27);

and now, when shall I provide for mine own house? suggesting it was his duty to do it, and it was high time he did it, since he had a large family to provide for; (see ^{<488>}1 Timothy 5:8).

Ver. 31. *And he said, what shall I give thee?* etc.] So said Laban to Jacob, still avoiding making any offer himself, but waiting for Jacob, and pressing upon him to fix his wages:

and Jacob said, thou shalt not give me anything; a speech Laban liked very well: his meaning is, that he should give him no certain settled salary, nor even of anything that Laban was now possessed of, and God had blessed him with for his sake he did not desire any part of it;

but if thou wilt do this thing for me; which he was about to mention, and does in (^{<482>}Genesis 30:32);

I will again feed [and] keep thy flock; there is an elegance in the original; “I will return, I will feed, I will keep thy flock”: it seems by this that Jacob had relinquished the care of the flock, upon the time of his servitude being out; but, upon the following condition, proposes to return to it, lead it out to the pastures, and feed it on them, and keep it night and day, as he had used to do.

Ver. 32. *I will pass through all thy flock today,* etc.] Not alone, but Laban and his sons with him;

removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle; that is, such as were black and had white spots on them, or were white and had black spots on them; and the “speckled”, according to Jarchi and Ben Melech, were such as had small spots on them; and the “spotted” were such as had larger:

and all the brown cattle among the sheep; the russet coloured ones, or the “black” ^{f1501} ones, as some render it; and so Aben Ezra, and who makes mention of another sort, called “barud”, which signifies spotted with white spots like hailstones, but is not to be found in the text here, but in (^{<4810>}Genesis 31:10); and besides coincide with those before described:

and the spotted and speckled among the goats: that had larger and lesser spots upon them as the sheep;

and [of such] shall be my hire; not those that were now in the flock, but such as were like them, that should be brought forth for the time to come;

which seems to be a strange proposal, and what was not likely to turn out much to the advantage of Jacob; but he knew what he did, and very probably was directed of God, if not in a vision, yet by an impulse on his mind, that such a method would be right, and would succeed; (see ~~Gen 31:10-12~~ Genesis 31:10-12).

Ver. 33. *So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come*, etc.].

Either by the success I shall have, and the blessing of God upon me, making it prosperous; it will appear in time to come, and to all posterity, that I have most righteously and faithfully served thee: or rather, such a separation being made in Laban's flock, all the spotted ones being removed, and only white ones left with Jacob to keep; it would be a clear case hereafter, if any such should be found with Jacob, they were not taken from Laban's flock, but were what in Providence he was blessed with, and came by honestly and righteously:

when it shall come for my hire before thy face; when any spotted ones would be brought forth, it would be plain and manifest to his face, that they belonged to him for his hire or wages; or, as Schmidt, when any complaint should come before Laban concerning his hire, or about any speckled and spotted cattle that were Jacob's hire, as if he had wronged him of it, the action now done, by making such a separation, would be a sufficient vindication of him, and justify him from such an aspersion:

and everyone that [is] not speckled and spotted amongst the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be accounted stolen with me; if any such were found among those that Jacob should hereafter call his flock, as were without specks and spots, or were not brown, he was content they should be reckoned as stolen, and what he had no right unto.

Ver. 34. *And Laban said*, etc.] Being well pleased with the proposal Jacob made, as knowing that, generally speaking, cattle of a colour produced those that were of the same; and whereas Jacob proposed to have a flock of sheep of only white in colour, committed to his care, and to have such for his own that should be produced of them, that were speckled, spotted, and brown, Laban concluded from the general nature of things that he could have but very few, if any, and therefore was for striking the bargain at once:

behold, I would it might be according to thy word; he agreed it should be as Jacob had settled it, and he hoped and wished he would abide by it; he was afraid he would not keep to it.

Ver. 35. *And he removed that day the he goats that were ringstraked and spotted*, etc.] That had strakes of a different colour from the rest on their shoulders, thighs, legs, or feet, or in any part of the body: the word here used stands in the room of that before translated “speckled”; this Laban did, as the context shows; he went about it immediately at the motion of Jacob, with which he was pleased:

and all the she goats that were speckled and spotted; so that there might be neither male nor female of those mixed colours; this he did to prevent any generation of them:

[and] everyone that had [some] white in it; any white spot in it, as the Targum of Jonathan; that is, everyone of the brown or black colour, that had any white in it:

and all the brown among the sheep: that were entirely so:

and, gave [them] into the hands of his sons; not the sons of Jacob, as some in Aben Ezra; for they were not fit for the care of a flock, the eldest son, Reuben, not being seven years of age; but the sons of Laban, who were now grown up and fit for such service.

Ver. 36. *And he set three days’ journey between himself and Jacob*, etc.] Not three days’ journey for a man, but for cattle; this distance there was between the place where Laban and his sons kept the spotted, speckled, and brown cattle, and that in which Jacob kept the flock only consisting of white sheep; and this was done, that the flocks might not be mixed, and that there might be no opportunity to take any of the spotted ones, and that they might not stray into Jacob’s flock; or lest any of his seeing them might bring forth the like, such precaution was used:

and Jacob fed the rest of Laban’s flock; those that remained after the spotted, speckled, and brown were taken out; and Jacob having none but white sheep, there was no great likelihood, according to the course of nature, of his having much for his hire; since he was only to have the spotted, speckled, and brown ones that came from them, and generally like begets like; and, according to the Jewish writers^{f1502}, those that were

committed to his care were old and barren, and sick, and infirm, that so he might have no profit from them.

Ver. 37. *And Jacob took him rods of green poplar*, etc.] Of the white poplar tree, called green, not from the colour, but from the moisture, being such as were cut off of the tree:

and of the hazel and chestnut tree; the former some take to be the almond tree, as Saadiah Gaon, and others; and the latter to be the plantain or plane tree, so Ainsworth, and others:

and pilled white strakes in them; took off the bark of them in some places, and left it on in others, which made white strakes:

and made the white appear which [was] in the rods; that part of the rods which was stripped of the bark appeared white; and it appeared the whiter for the bark that was left on in other parts; and both made the rods to appear to have various colours, which was the design of Jacob in pilling them.

Ver. 38. *And he set the rods which he had pilled before the flocks*, etc.] Opposite them, in the view of them:

in the gutters in the watering troughs, when the flocks came to drink; that is, in places of water, where troughs or vessels were made, into which the water ran convenient for the cattle to drink out of; and here he placed his party coloured rods right over against the flocks:

that they should conceive when they came to drink; as it was most likely they should when they were together at the water, and had refreshed themselves with it; and being “heated”, ^{f1503}, as the word signifies, with a desire of copulation, might conceive in sight of the above rods; which were set to move upon their imagination at the time of their conception, in order to produce cattle of different colours; to which no doubt he was directed of God, and it had, through his blessing, the wished for success, as follows:

Ver. 39. *And the flocks conceived before the rods*, etc.] At them, and in sight of them; which had such influence upon them through the force of imagination, and a divine power and providence so directing and succeeding this device, that they

brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted; such as Jacob was to have for his hire; and, though there was no doubt a more than ordinary

concourse of divine Providence attending this affair; yet there have been many strange things brought about in a natural way by the strength of imagination, as may be observed in those marks which women are said to mark their children with, while with child of them; as also in conceiving and bearing such like unto them they have fancied, as the woman that bore a blackamoor, through often looking at the picture of one in her chamber; and an Ethiopian queen, who by the same means bore a white child, fair and beautiful, which she exposed, lest she should be thought an adulteress ^{f1504}; and what comes nearer to the case here, Jerom reports ^{f1505} the like things done in Spain among horses and mares, by placing beautiful horses before mares at the time of leaping; and the Apis, or Egyptian ox, which had peculiar spots in it, was produced in like manner, so that there was always in succession one of the same form and colour, as Austin asserts ^{f1506}; and it may be observed, what is affirmed by some writers ^{f1507}, that sheep will change their colours according to the different waters they drink of at the time of their being covered; and that some rivers drank of will make white sheep black, and black white, and others red and yellow. But as Jacob was directed of God to take this method, this is sufficient to justify him, and upon his blessing and providence the success depended, whatever there may be in nature to bring about such an effect; and as it was to do himself justice, who had been greatly injured by Laban, it was equally as just and righteous a thing to take this course, as it was for the Israelites by a divine direction to borrow jewels, etc. of the Egyptians, whereby they were repaid for their hard service.

Ver. 40. *And Jacob did separate the lambs*, etc.] The ringstraked, speckled, and spotted;

and set the faces of the flocks, that were all white,

towards the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; either to go before those that were all white, that they by looking at them might conceive and bring forth such, which was another artifice of Jacob's to increase his own sheep; or else he set at the water troughs the white sheep on one side of them, and on the opposite side the speckled ones, etc. that the same effect might also be produced the more successfully both by the rods and by the speckled lambs:

and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not unto Laban's cattle; partly that they might not be mixed together, but kept distinct, that what was his property might be discerned from Laban's; and partly, lest his

spotted ones, being mixed with Laban's white sheep, by continual looking at them, should conceive and bring forth such likewise, and so his flocks be lessened.

Ver. 41. *And it came to pass, whensoever the stronger cattle did conceive,* etc.] Whose limbs were well compact, and were strong and healthy:

that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods; and bring forth party coloured ones, and such as were robust and strong like themselves; and this was another device of Jacob's to get the best of the flock. Aben Ezra thinks this refers to the two seasons of the year, when the flocks conceived; the one was in Nisan, in the spring, and such as were brought on that conception were strong, and therefore Jacob chose to lay the rods in the gutters at that time, that he might have the best cattle; and so the Targum of Jonathan calls these here the forward ones, as it does those in (^{<1302>}Genesis 30:42) we render feeble, the latter ones; which, according to Aben Ezra, conceived in Tisri or September, and what they brought were weak and feeble.

Ver. 42. *And when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in,* etc.] Or "when covered", as Menachem, that is, with wool, and so not so desirous of copulation with the males, nor so fit and strong for generation; and therefore he put not in the rods into the gutters, partly that he might have none feeble in his flock, and partly that he might not spoil Laban of his whole flock, strong and weak:

so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's; not only his flocks became more numerous than Laban's, but were a better quality.

Ver. 43. *And the man increased exceedingly,* etc.] Jacob grew very rich: *and had much cattle;* the greater part of Laban's flocks brought forth speckled, spotted, and brown cattle, which, according to agreement, were Jacob's:

and maidservants, and menservants; which he got to take care of his household affairs, and to assist him in keeping his flocks:

and camels, and asses; for his flocks increasing so very much, he sold many of his sheep at a good price, as Jarchi observes, and with it bought camels and asses; and these were very fit for his use, when he should be obliged or think fit to remove into his own country, and which he was

meditating, and had a direction from the Lord for, as in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 31

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 31

This chapter relates how that Jacob observing that Laban and his sons envied his prosperity, and having a call from God to return to his own country, acquaints his wives with it; and reports to them Laban's ill usage of him, and the wonderful appearance of God to him, and for him, and his orders to him to depart from thence, (^{<01301>}Genesis 31:1-13); to which they agreed, knowing full well their father's unkindness, and that they had nothing to expect from him, and therefore judged it best to go off with what they had got through the gift of God unto them, (^{<01314>}Genesis 31:14-16); upon which Jacob set out privately, with all he had, towards his own country, while Laban was shearing his sheep, (^{<01317>}Genesis 31:17-21); three days after, Laban, being informed of it, pursued after Jacob, and overtook him at Mount Gilead; but was warned by the way to be cautious what he said to him, (^{<01322>}Genesis 31:22-25); yet nevertheless he warmly expostulated with him about his secret flight, not giving him the opportunity of taking his leave of his children, and especially for taking away his gods, (^{<01326>}Genesis 31:26-30); to which Jacob gave an answer, (^{<01331>}Genesis 31:31-35); and in his turn was warm likewise, and chided Laban severely for his hot pursuit of him, his charge of stealth, when he could find nothing on him, his hard labour for the space of twenty years with him, and his ill requital of him for it, (^{<01336>}Genesis 31:36-42); however, upon the whole, an amicable agreement was made between them, and they parted in a friendly manner, (^{<01343>}Genesis 31:43-55).

Ver. 1. *And he heard the words of Laban's sons*, etc.] That is, Jacob, as is expressed in the Septuagint and Syriac versions, either with his own ears, overhearing their discourse in their tents, or in the field, or from the report of others, his wives or some of his friends, who thought proper to acquaint him with it; these were the sons of Laban, who had the care of the cattle committed to them, separated by the direction of Jacob, and with the consent of Laban, (^{<01335>}Genesis 30:35);

saying, Jacob hath taken away all that [was] our father's; meaning not precisely all that their father had, for that would have been a downright lie;

for what was become of them that were committed to their care? besides, we afterwards read of Laban's shearing his sheep, (^{Q319}Genesis 31:19); but that all that Jacob had was their father's, and he had taken it away from him, if not by force and stealth, yet by fraud; and so Jacob might fear he would treat him in an ill manner, and therefore began to think it was high time for him to be gone:

and of [that] which [was] our father's hath he gotten all the glory; his many servants, numerous cattle, sheep, camels and asses, in which carnal men place all their happiness; or those riches, as the Targum of Jonathan, by which he got the name and glory of a rich man among men: and it was so far true what they say, that it was out of their father's flock that Jacob got all his increase; but then it was according to a covenant that Laban and he entered into, and therefore was obtained in a just and lawful manner.

Ver. 2. *And Jacob beheld the countenance of Laban*, etc.] Upon this he observed Laban's looks, that he might gather from thence how he took his prosperity; what were his thoughts about it, and what he might expect from him on that account:

and, behold, it [was] not towards him as before; he said nothing to Jacob, nor charged him with robbing of him, or any false dealing with him, yet was uneasy at his growing prosperity; he put on sour looks, and an envious countenance, sad, and surly, and lowering; so that Jacob saw it foreboded no good to him, and therefore thought it most advisable to depart as soon as he could; though perhaps he first sought the Lord about it, who spoke to him as in (^{Q308}Genesis 31:3).

Ver. 3. *And the Lord said unto Jacob*, etc.] In answer to a prayer of his; or seeing what difficulties and discouragements Jacob laboured under, he appeared unto him for his encouragement and instruction how to proceed:

return unto the land of thy fathers; the land of Canaan, given to Abraham and Isaac by promise:

and to thy kindred: his father and mother, and brother, who all dwelt in the land of Canaan at this time, or as many as were living: or "to thy nativity"^{f1508}, the place where he was born, and to which he must have a natural desire to return: and

I will be with thee; to protect him from any injury that might be attempted to be done unto him, either by Laban or Esau.

Ver. 4. *And Jacob sent*, etc.] Having this encouragement and direction from the Lord, which seems to have been given him in the field, while he was attending his flocks, he dispatched a messenger home to his wives, one of his servants or under shepherds. The Targum of Jonathan says it was his son Naphtali, whom he sent, because he was a swift messenger; the Targumist alludes to (^{<0442>}Genesis 49:21); but the former is more probable;

and called Rachel and Leah; Rachel is mentioned first, as being his proper and lawful wife, and is only called so, (^{<0459>}Genesis 46:19); and it was for her sake Jacob had Leah. Jacob, like a prudent man and an affectionate husband, thought proper to acquaint his wives with his case, and advise with them, and neither leave them nor take them away suddenly and by force; and therefore sent for them,

to the field unto his flock; where he was feeding his flock: this he might do for divers reasons; he might not judge it so proper and convenient to go home to them, since it might be difficult to get one of them to come to the apartment of the other; and it was proper they should be together, and that might cause some suspicion in Laban's family, who might listen to overhear what passed between them; and besides, he might be afraid of Laban and his sons, that being in such an ill temper they would lay violent hands on him, and do him a mischief; and therefore he sent for his wives to him in the field, where they could more privately and freely converse together, without being overheard or interrupted, and the flock in the mean while not neglected.

Ver. 5. *And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it [is] not towards me as before*, etc.] (See Gill on "^{<0302>}Genesis 31:2"); no notice is taken of what their brethren, the sons of Laban, had said:

but the God of my father hath been with me; not only by affording him his gracious presence with him, which supported him under all his troubles; but by his good providence prospering and succeeding him in his outward affairs, as well as he had lately appeared to him, and encouraged him to return to his own country.

Ver. 6. *And ye know, that with all my power I have served your father.*] With all faithfulness and uprightness; with all diligence and industry; with all wisdom and prudence; with all my might and main, contriving the best methods, and sparing no pains by day or night to take care of his flocks, and increase his substance: of this his wives had been witnesses for twenty

years past, and to them he appeals for the truth of it; so that there was no just reason for their father's behaviour towards him.

Ver. 7. *And your father hath deceived me*, etc.] In the bargain he had made with him about his wages for keeping his cattle the six years past, after the fourteen years' servitude were ended:

and changed my wages ten times; that is, either very often, many times, as the number ten is sometimes. Used for many, (see ^{<0335>}Leviticus 26:26); or precisely ten times, since he repeats it afterwards in the same form to Laban's face, (^{<0344>}Genesis 31:41); he had now served him six years upon a new bargain; that he should have all that were of such and such different colours, which were produced out of his flock of white sheep. Laban was at first highly pleased with it, as judging it would be a very good one to him, as he might reasonably think indeed: and it is highly probable he did not attempt any alteration the first year, but observing Jacob's cattle of the speckled sort, etc. prodigiously increasing, he did not choose to abide by the any longer. Now it must be observed, that the sheep in Mesopotamia, as in Italy ^{f1509}, brought forth the young twice a year; so that every yeanning time, which was ten times in five years, Laban made an alteration in Jacob's wages; one time he would let him have only the speckled, and not the ringstraked; another time the ringstraked, and not the speckled; and so changed every time, according as he observed the prevailing colour was, as may be concluded from (^{<0308>}Genesis 31:8):

but God suffered him not to hurt me; to hinder his prosperity, or having justice done him for his service; for whatsoever colour Laban chose for Jacob to have the next season of yeanning, there was always the greatest number of them, or all of them were of that colour, whether speckled or ringstraked, etc.

Ver. 8. *If he said thus, the speckled shall be thy wages*, etc.] Sometimes Laban would say to Jacob, only the speckled lambs which the ewes shall bring forth shall be thine hire, and not the spotted; or the ringstraked, or the brown, which according to the bargain should have been his, the one and the other:

then all the cattle bare speckled; that season, God ordering it so in his providence, that Laban might be disappointed, and Jacob might have his full hire; that is, the greatest part of the cattle bore such, as Ben Melech observes:

and if he said thus, the ringstraked shall be thine hire; observing the cattle to bring forth only speckled, or the greatest part such, then he changed his hire, and would have it be not the speckled, nor the brown, only the ringstraked, there being none or few of that colour the last yearning time:

then bare all the cattle ringstraked; or the greatest part of them were such; so that let Laban fix on what colour he would as Jacob's wages, there were sure to be the greatest part of that colour; which shows the hand of God in it, as is next observed by Jacob.

Ver. 9. *Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father*, etc.] Not all of them, (see ^{Q319}Genesis 31:19); but a great part of them; his flock was much lessened by those means, and more were taken away, and came to Jacob's share, than if Laban had abode by the original agreement:

and gave [them] to me; who has the disposing of all things in the world, whose the world, and all in it, are, and gives of it to the sons of men as he pleases. Jacob takes no notice of any artifice of his, or of any means and methods he made use of, but wholly ascribes all to the providence of God, and points to his wives the hand of God only; and indeed it seems to be by his direction that he took the method he did, as appears from (^{Q311}Genesis 31:11-13).

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, at the time that the cattle conceived*, etc.] Whether in spring or in autumn cannot be said, for it seems this was twice a year; this probably was at the beginning of the six years' servitude, or just before the agreement was made between Laban and Jacob, and was an instruction to the latter how to make his bargain with the former:

that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream; in a vision of the night, so things were represented to his fancy and imagination:

and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle [were] ringstraked, speckled, and grisled; from whence he might conclude, that the cattle they leaped upon would bring forth the like, and so be a direction to him to make his agreement with Laban to have such for his hire; not that the rams in the flock were really of those colours, for they were all white, but so they were represented to Jacob in the vision, to suggest to him, that such would be produced by them; and it is not improbable by the artifice Jacob was directed to, and took, that the ewes, when they came to the watering troughs to drink, upon seeing the party coloured rods in the water, these made such an impression upon their imaginations, that they fancied the

rams that leaped upon them were of those colours, and so conceived and brought forth the like. Here is another colour mentioned, not taken notice of before, at least by this name, “grisled”; it stands in the place of “spotted”, and seems to be the same with that, and signified such as had spots on them like hailstones, and distinguishes them from the speckled: the speckled were such as were white with black spots, these such as were black, and had white spots like hail.

Ver. 11. *And the Angel of God spake unto me in a dream*, etc.] In the same dream before related, and to direct him to observe what was presented to him, and to confirm what he saw, and lead him to the design and use of it. This was not a created angel, but the eternal one, the Son of God, and who is afterwards called God, and to whom Jacob had made a vow, which he would never have done to an angel; but to God only, as Ben Melech observes:

[saying], Jacob; and I said, here [am] I; the Angel called him by his name, to which he answered, and signified that he was ready to attend to whatsoever he should say to him.

Ver. 12. *And he said, lift up now thine eyes, and see*, etc.] This was all visionary, Jacob was still in a dream; but it was so impressed upon his mind, that he was spoke to, and bid to observe, and take notice, as follows: that

all the rams that leap upon the cattle [are] ringstraked, speckled, and grisled; thereby assuring him, that such would be those the ewes would bring forth, which would be right in him to agree with Laban for as his hire; and it is probable that there was some distance of time, at least a night, between the first motion of Laban’s to Jacob to settle his wages, (^{GEN 30:28}) and his repeating that, and being urgent to have it done, (^{GEN 31:31}); and in this interval of time might be the night Jacob had this dream and vision in, for his direction; or if it was after the bargain made, since it is said to be at the time the cattle conceived, he had it to assure him of God’s approbation of it, and of his success in it:

for I have seen all that Laban doeth to thee; had took notice how he had made him serve fourteen years for his wives, and had given him nothing for his service; and how he now was taking advantage of Jacob’s modesty to get him to fix his own wages, which he supposed would be lower than he could have the face to, offer him.

Ver. 13. *I [am] the God of Bethel*, etc.] The same Angel that appeared to Jacob in a dream, at the beginning of his six years' servitude, now appeared to him at the close of it, declaring himself to be the God of Bethel; or that God that manifested himself to him at Bethel, as Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase the words; for this is a distinct vision from that in the preceding verses, concerning the rams of different colours, and are both put together for the sake of brevity, and because they belong to the same affair:

where thou anointedst the pillar, [and] where thou vowedst a vow unto me: (see Gill on "~~Gen 28:19~~Genesis 28:19"), (see Gill on "Gen 28:20"); hereby signifying the divine approbation of the name Jacob gave to that place, and of what he did in it, and to put him in mind of his promise there made:

now arise, get thee out from this land: of Mesopotamia, or Syria, and out of Haran, a city there, where Jacob now was, and Laban lived:

and return unto the land of thy kindred: to the land of Canaan, the place of his nativity, and where his relations dwelt: this shows, that this appearance of God to him, as the God of Bethel, was at the close of his six years' service.

Ver. 14. *And Rachel and Leah answered and said unto him*, etc.] One after another, and their answers agreeing, are put together; it may be Rachel answered in the name of Leah, and for herself, since she is mentioned first, and the verb is singular. The Targum of Jonathan is, Rachel answered with the consent of Leah;

[is there] yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house? it was what might have been justly expected, as they were his children, that they should have been used as such, and have had children's portions given them; but by the whole of Laban's attitude towards them, both at their marriage, and ever since, it was plain he never intended to give them anything; but kept all he had to himself, or designed it for his sons, and therefore it was in vain for them to hope for anything; signifying to Jacob hereby, that they were willing to leave their father's house, and go with him when he pleased, since they could expect nothing by their stay here.

Ver. 15. *Are we not accounted of him strangers?* etc.] He had not treated them as children, nor even as freeborn persons; but as if they were foreigners that he had taken in war, or bought of others; or at least, that they were born bondmaids in his house, and so had a right to sell them as he had:

for he hath sold us; he had sold them to Jacob for fourteen years' service, as if they had been his slaves, instead of giving dowries with them as his children:

and hath quite devoured also our money; that which he got by the servitude of Jacob, instead of giving it to them as their portion; he spent it on himself and his sons, and there was nothing left for them.

Ver. 16. *For all the riches which God hath taken from our father*, etc.] And given to Jacob for his labour:

that [is] ours, and our children's; it belonged to us by the law of nature, before it came into thine hands; and our right unto it is still more manifest, and is confirmed by the service thou hast done for it, by which means it came into thy possession; and therefore it is no point of conscience with us, nor need it be any with thee especially, to go off with it:

now then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do; for that must needs be right: this was well spoken indeed; they mean, that he should leave their father's house, and go into the land of Canaan, as God had directed him; and they signified that they were willing: to go along with him.

Ver. 17. *Then Jacob rose up*, etc.] And went with them to Laban's house, where his children were, as is plain from Rachel's theft, (^{<0319}Genesis 31:19):

and set his sons and his wives upon camels; which were his own, (see ^{<0348}Genesis 30:43); creatures fit for travelling; on these he set his wives, Rachel and Leah, and his concubine wives, Bilhah and Zilpah; for these went with him, as appears from (^{<0316}Genesis 33:6 35:22); and "his sons", or rather "his children": for they were not all sons, there was one daughter, and they were all young; his eldest son Reuben could not be much more than twelve years of age, and his youngest son Joseph about six.

Ver. 18. *And he carried away all his cattle*, etc.] His sheep, camels, and asses: the Jews say ^{f1510} he had 5,500 head of cattle:

and all the goods which he had gotten: all the rest besides his cattle; his menservants, and maidservants, and all his gold and his silver, and whatsoever else he had:

the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padanaram: or Mesopotamia: this seems to be purposely observed, to show that he took

nothing but what was his own getting, not anything that belonged to Laban:

for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan; but it was some years before he got to his father's house, staying at several places by the way. No mention is made of his mother Rebekah, she perhaps being now dead.

Ver. 19. *And Laban went to shear his sheep*, etc.] Which were under the care of his sons, and were three days' distance from Jacob's flocks; this gave Jacob a fair opportunity to depart with his family and substance, since Laban and his sons were at such a distance, and their servants with them also:

and Rachel had stolen the images that [were] her father's; afterwards called gods, which he made use of in an idolatrous and superstitious manner, one way or other: they seem to be a kind of "penates", or household gods; in the Hebrew they are called "teraphim"; and which De Dieu thinks were the same with "seraphim"^{f1511}; and were images of angels, consulted on occasion, and placed in the house for the protection of it, and to increase the substance thereof: some take them to be plates of brass describing the hours of the day, a sort of sundials; or were such forms, that at certain times were made to speak, and show things to come: but they rather seem to be images of an human form, as say the Jewish writers, and as seems from (~~0903~~ 1 Samuel 19:13-16); and which it is supposed were made under certain constellations, and were a sort of talismans, and were consulted as oracles, and in high esteem with the Chaldeans and Syrians, a people given to astrology, and by which they made their divinations; (see Gill on "~~2804~~ Hosea 3:4") and also (see Gill on "~~3802~~ Zechariah 10:2"); and therefore Rachel took them away, that her father might not consult them, and know which way Jacob fled, as Aben Ezra; but this looks as if she had an opinion of them, and that they had such a power of discovering persons and things that were attributed to them: and indeed some think she took them away from an affection and veneration for them, supposing she should not be able to meet with such in Canaan in Isaac's family; and what is observed in (~~0332~~ Genesis 35:2) seems to countenance this; but one would think she had been better instructed by Jacob during his twenty years' conversation with her; and besides, had she been tinctured with such sort of superstition and idolatry, she would never have used them so indecently, as to have sat upon them in the circumstances in which she was, (~~0334~~ Genesis 31:34,35); it is more to her

credit and character to say with Jarchi, that she did this to take off her father from the idolatrous worship of them, and to convince him that they were no gods; since they could not inform him of the designs of Jacob, and of his flight, nor secure themselves from being carried away by her; unless it can be thought that she took them because of the metal of which they were made, gold or silver, being willing to have something of her father's goods as her portion, which she thought she had a right unto, or in recompence of her husband's service. Dr. Lightfoot^{f1512} thinks she took them for a civil use, to preserve the memory of some of her ancestors, of which these were the pictures, and Laban had idolized; but whether pictures were so early is questionable.

Ver. 20. *And Jacob stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian*, etc.] Went away without his knowledge, or giving him any notice of it; he was too cunning for Laban the Syrian; notwithstanding his astrology and superstitious arts, which the Syrians are addicted to, he had no foresight of this matter: or he “stole away the heart of Laban”^{f1513}, that which his heart was set upon; not his gods, these Rachel stole away; nor his daughters, for whom he does not appear to have had any great affection and respect; but rather the cattle and goods Jacob took with him, which Laban's eye and heart were upon, and hoped to get into his possession by one means, or at one time or another; but the former sense, that he “stole from” his heart^{f1514}, or stole away without his knowledge, seems best to agree with what follows;

in that he told him not that he fled; or that he designed to go away, and was about to do it.

Ver. 21. *So he fled with all that he had*, etc.] His wives, his children, cattle and substance;

and he rose up, and passed over the river; the river Euphrates, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it, which lay between Mesopotamia and Canaan;

and set his face [toward] the mount Gilead: he travelled and bent his course that way: this, was a mountain on the border of the land of Canaan, adjoining to Lebanon, near which was a very fruitful country, which had its name from it: it is so called here by way of anticipation; for this name was afterwards given it from the heap of stones here laid, as a witness of the agreement between Laban and Jacob, (⁰³⁴⁵Genesis 31:45).

Ver. 22. *And it was told Laban on the third day, that Jacob was fled.*]

Three days after Jacob was gone he had the report of it, by some means or another; by some of his neighbours, or servants left at home, and sooner he could not well have it, since the flock he went to shear was three days' distance from Jacob's, (^{<0336>}Genesis 30:36).

Ver. 23. *And he took his brethren with him,* etc.] Some of his relations, the descendants of his father's brethren, the sons of Nahor, of whom there were seven, besides Bethuel; and who all perhaps lived in Haran the city of Nahor, (see ^{<0223>}Genesis 22:20-24); or some of his neighbours and acquaintance whom he might call to:

and pursued after him seven days' journey; which must be reckoned, not from Jacob's departure from Haran, but from Laban's; for Laban being three days' journey from thence, whither he had to return, after he received the news of Jacob being gone; Jacob must have travelled six days before Laban set out with his brethren from Haran; so that this was, as Ben Gerson conjectures, the thirteenth day of Jacob's travel; for Laban not having cattle to drive as Jacob, could travel as fast again as he, and do that in seven days which took up Jacob thirteen:

and they overtook him in the mount Gilead; said to be three hundred and eighty miles from Haran ^{f1515}.

Ver. 24. *And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night,* etc.] It is probable that Laban came to Mount Gilead late in the evening, and so had no sight of, or conversation with Jacob until the morning; and that night God came to him, and in a dream advised him as follows: or it may be rendered, "and God had come", etc. ^{f1516}; in one of the nights in which he had lain upon the road; though the former seems best to agree with (^{<0329>}Genesis 31:29); the Targum of Jonathan has it, an angel came; and the Jews ^{f1517} say it was Michael; by whom, if they understand the uncreated Angel, the Son of God, it is right:

and said unto him, take heed that thou speak not to, Jacob either good or bad; not that he should keep an entire silence, and enter into no discourse with him on any account, but that he should say nothing to him about his return to Haran again; for it was the will of God he should go onward towards Canaan's land; and therefore Laban should not attempt to persuade him to return, with a promise of good things, or of what great

things he would do for him; nor threaten him with evil things, or what he would do to him if he would not comply to return with him.

Ver. 25. *Then Laban overtook Jacob*, etc.] He was come to the mount the overnight, but now in the morning he came nearer to him, so as to hold a conversation with him:

now Jacob had pitched his tent in the mount, and Laban with his brethren pitched in the mount of Gilead; both on the same mount; one perhaps at the bottom, and the other at the top; or one on one hill of it, and the other on another, or right over against one another.

Ver. 26. *And Laban said unto Jacob*, etc.] Upon their meeting together; perhaps in some middle place between their two tents:

what hast thou done? what evil hast thou committed? what folly art thou guilty of? and what could induce thee to take such a step as this? suggesting that he could see no necessity for it; and as if he had done nothing that should occasion it, and that Jacob had done a very ill thing

that thou hast stolen away unawares to me: of this phrase (see Gill on “^{Q312}Genesis 31:20”);

and carried away my daughters, as captives [taken] with the sword; as were commonly done by a band of robbers that made incursions upon their neighbours, and plundered them of their substance, and carried away by force their wives and daughters; and such an one Laban represents Jacob to be, a thief and a robber; who had not only stolen away from him, but had stole away his goods, and even his gods, and carried away his daughters against their will: all which were false, and particularly the latter, since they went along with him with their free and full consent.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me?* etc.] Intimating as if he should not have been against his departure, if he had but acquainted him with it, and the reasons of it; so that he had no need to have used such privacy, and go away like a thief by stealth, as if he had done something he had reason to be ashamed of:

and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret and with harp: pretending that he would have given him leave to depart; and not only have dismissed him from his house and service in an honourable way, but very cheerfully and pleasantly: he would

have got a band of music, men singers and women singers, and others to play on musical instruments, as the tabret and harp; and so had a concert of vocal and instrumental music, which would have shown that they parted by consent, and as good friends: whether this was an usual custom in this country, of parting with friends, I cannot say, but it seems to be very odd; for usually relations and friends, that have a cordial affection for each other, part with grief and tears: by this Laban appears to be a carnal man, and had but little sense of religion, as well as acted the hypocritical part.

Ver. 28. *And hast not suffered me to kiss my sons and my daughters?* etc.] Did not give him an opportunity of taking his farewell, which used to be done with a kiss, as it is with us at this day: by his sons he means his grandsons, and so the Targum of Jonathan, my daughters' sons; and by his daughters Rachel and Leah, and Dinah his granddaughter:

thou hast done foolishly in [so] doing: since, as he would have him believe that he was both a loser by this step he took, and exposed himself to danger, seeing it was in the power of Laban to do him hurt, as in (^{Q329}Genesis 31:29); but Jacob knew what he did, and that it was the wisest part to follow the direction of God.

Ver. 29. *It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt,* etc.] Jacob and his family, wives, children, and servants, who were not able to stand against Laban and the men he brought with him; and so the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases it,

“I have an army and a multitude;”

a large force, which Jacob could not withstand: or, “my hand could have been for a god”^{f1518} to me: you could have no more escaped it, or got out of it, or withstood me, than you could God himself: such an opinion had he of his superior power and strength, and that this would have been the case:

but the God of your father spoke unto me yesternight; the night past, or the other night, some very little time ago, since he came from home at least: by his father he means either his father Isaac, or his grandfather Abraham, whose God the Lord was, and who came to Laban and told him who he was. This serves to strengthen the opinion that Laban was an idolater, and adhered to the gods of his grandfather Terah, from whom Abraham departed, and which Laban may have respect to; intimating that he abode by the religion of his ancestors at a greater remove than Jacob's: however,

though he does not call him his God, he had some awe and reverence of him, and was influenced by his speech to him;

saying, take heed that thou spake not to Jacob either good or bad: this, though greatly to Jacob's honour, and against Laban's interest, yet his conscience would not allow him to keep it a secret; though, doubtless, his view was to show his superior power to Jacob, had he not been restrained by Jacob's God.

Ver. 30. *And now, [though] thou wouldest needs be gone,* etc.] Or, "in going wouldest go"^{f1519}, was determined upon it, and in haste to do it:

because thou sore longedst after thy father's house, or "desiring didst desire it"^{f1520}; had a vehement desire for it, which Laban signifies he should not have opposed, if he had let him know his mind: but be it so that he had ever so great desire to leave him and return to his father's house, says he,

[yet], wherefore, hast thou stolen my gods? what reason had he for that? if he took away himself, his wives, his children, his goods, what business had he with his gods? he could not claim these as his, meaning the images or teraphim before mentioned, (~~Gen 31:19~~ Genesis 31:19); by which it appears that Laban was some way or other guilty of idolatry in the use of these images; looking upon them as types, or representations of God, as Josephus^{f1521} calls them, and worshipped God in them, or along with them and by them; for he could never think they were truly and really gods, that could not preserve themselves from being stolen away, and that must be a poor god that a man may be robbed of.

Ver. 31. *And Jacob answered and said to Laban, because I was afraid,* etc.] That he would have done all he could to have hindered him from going away himself; and not only so, but would have prevented his taking his daughters with him; and especially would have detained his cattle; but of this last Jacob makes no mention, only of the former:

for I said; either within himself, or to his wives;

peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me; which of right belonged to him; for though they were Laban's daughters, they were Jacob's wives; and being given in marriage to him, he had a right unto them, and to take them with him; nor had Laban any right to detain them, which Jacob feared he would have attempted to have done, had he known his design; and this must have been done by force if done at all; for neither

Jacob nor his wives would have agreed that they should stay with Laban upon his departure: what Laban charges Jacob with, in going away with his wives, he himself would have done, namely, using force to them. Laban's charge was false, but there was much reason for Jacob's suspicion.

Ver. 32. *With whomsoever thou findest thy gods, let him not live*, etc.]

This is the answer to his last question, as what goes before is to his first: Jacob knew nothing of their being taken away by any, and thought himself safe in saying what he did, being confident that no one with him could ever take them; but it was too rashly spoken by him, giving leave to Laban to put to death the person with whom they should be found, or imprecating death on him by the hand of God; "may he not live", but die, die immediately or before his time, as the Targum of Jonathan: hence the Jewish writers^{f1522} observe, that Rachel died in giving birth in consequence of this imprecation, but without any foundation:

before our brethren discern thou what [is] thine with me, and take [it] to thee: not only his gods, but any of his goods or cattle, whatsoever he could find in his tents, or in his flocks, that were his property, he was welcome to take; and this he declared before the men that Laban brought with him, whom he also calls his brethren, being his kinsfolks and neighbours; and these he appeals to as witnesses of his honesty, integrity, and fair dealing; being conscious to himself that he had took nothing but what was his own:

for Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them; the images or gods; or he would have been more careful of his expression, in love and tenderness to his most beloved wife.

Ver. 33. *And Laban went into Jacob's tent*, etc.] Into that first where he most suspected they were, being taken not out of value for them, but contempt of them;

and into Leah's tent; and not Leah's tent next, whom next to Jacob he might suspect of taking them, out of veneration to them, because her tent lay next:

and into the two maidservants' tents: Bilhah and Zilpah; or "the" tent of them; for the word is singular, and perhaps they had but one tent for them both, which distinguished them from the principal wives:

but he found [them] not; in neither of these tents:

then went he out of Leah's tent, and entered into Rachel's tent; which he went into last of all, as least suspecting her, being less addicted to the superstition and idolatry of his family than Leah and the maidservants: Aben Ezra thinks that he was twice in Leah's tent, and at the last time came out of that into Rachel's; and that Jacob's tent lay between Leah's and Rachel's. From this account it more clearly appears that men and their wives had separate tents or apartments; (see ¹⁰²⁶⁷Genesis 24:67).

Ver. 34. *Now Rachel had taken the images*, etc.] Hearing her father inquire about them, and her husband having given leave to search for them, and to put to death whoever should be found to have them, took them from the place where she had before laid them:

and put them into the camel's furniture; perhaps the camel's furniture she rode on, and therefore it was in her tent, which some understand of the saddle on which she rode; rather, it seems to be the saddle cloth or housing, in which she might wrap the images and put them under her clothes; though some interpret it of the straw or litter of the camel, which is not so probable:

and sat upon them; the images, which, if she had the veneration for, as some suggest, she would never have used in such a manner:

and Laban searched all the tent, but found [them] not; excepting the place where Rachel sat; but Aben Ezra thinks she was not in the tent, but in some place without it, and if so, there needs no exception.

Ver. 35. *And she said to her father*, etc.] As he approached nearer to her, having searched her tent all over:

let it not displease my lord that I cannot rise up before thee: she addresses him with great honour and respect; calling him her lord, being her father, though an unkind one, and entreats him not to be displeased that she did not rise up and yield that obeisance to him which was due from her to a father:

for the custom of women [is] upon me; her menstrues; which before the law of Moses were reckoned a pollution, and such persons were not to be touched or come near unto, and everything they sat upon was unclean, and not to be touched also; (⁴⁸¹⁵⁹Leviticus 15:19-23);

and he searched; all about her, and around her; but did not oblige her to get up, nor could he imagine that ever the images could be under her in such circumstances:

but found not the images; and so left off searching; nor do we find that he searched the flock for any of his cattle there, knowing full well Jacob's honesty and integrity.

Ver. 36. *And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban*, etc.] Having answered Laban's questions to the silencing of him, and nothing of his upon search, being found with him, Jacob took heart, and was of good courage and in high spirits, and in his turn was heated also; and perhaps might carry his passion a little too far, and is not to be excused from some degree of sin and weakness; however, his reasoning is strong and nervous, and his expostulations very just and pathetic; whatever may be said for the temper he was in, and the wrath and resentment he showed:

and Jacob answered and said to Laban; that whereas he had suggested that he had done a very bad thing, he asks him,

what [is] my trespass? what [is] my sin? what heinous offence have I committed? what law of God or man have I broke?

that thou hast so hotly pursued after me? with so much haste and swiftness, and with such a number of men, as if he came to take a thief, a robber, or a murderer.

Ver. 37. *Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff*, etc.] Or all my vessels ^{f1523}, or utensils; whether household goods, or such as were used with regard to the cattle, or armour for defence:

what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? is there any vessel or utensil, or anything whatever thou canst claim as thine own? is there anything that has been taken away from thee either by me or mine?

set [it] here before my brethren and thy brethren; publicly before them all, and let it be thoroughly inquired into whose property it was, and whether lawfully taken or not:

that they may judge betwixt us both; Jacob was so conscious to himself of his own uprightness, that he could safely leave anything that might be disputed in arbitration with the very men that Laban had brought with him: it was so clear a case that he had not wronged him of anyone thing.

Ver. 38. *This twenty years [have] I been [with] thee*, etc.] So that he now must have been ninety seven years of age:

thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young: or very few of them: it was a rare case for any to be abortive, if ever: this, though owing to the blessing of God, was for Jacob's sake, and, under God, to be ascribed to his care and diligence in watching and keeping the flock, and doing everything needful for them:

and the rams of the flock have I not eaten: being content with meaner food, as lentil pottage and the like; see the contrary of this in shepherds, (^{341B}Ezekiel 34:3).

Ver. 39. *That which was torn [of beasts] I brought not unto thee*, etc.] To show what had befallen it; that so it might appear he had one the less to account for to him:

I bore the loss of it; took it upon himself, as if it had been somewhat blameworthy in him, as the word used signifies; and so made satisfaction for it; which, how he did, when he had no wages, is difficult to say: he might have some perquisites allowed him by Laban, though he had no settled salary; or he might lay himself under obligation to make it good whenever it was in his power, as follows:

of mine hand didst thou require it, [whether] stolen by day, or stolen by night; whether by men or beasts; or by men in the daytime, and by beasts in the night, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem distinguish: Laban was so rigorous and unjust as to require the restoration of them, or an equivalent for them at the hand of Jacob; all which were contrary to the law of God, (¹²²¹⁰Exodus 22:10-13).

Ver. 40. *[Thus] I was*, etc.] In such a situation, as well as in the following uncomfortable plight and condition:

in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night: the violent heat in the daytime scorched him, and the severe frosts in the night pinched him: that is, in the different seasons of the year, the heat of the day in the summertime, and the cold of the night in the wintertime; for it cannot well be thought that there should be excessive heat in the day and sharp frosts in the night, in the same season of the year: it looks as if Laban did not allow Jacob the proper conveniencies of clothes, and of tents to secure him from the inclemency of the weather, which other shepherds usually had:

and my sleep departed from mine eyes; through diligent care and watchfulness of the flocks in the night season, which on some occasions were necessary; (see ~~4118~~ Luke 2:8).

Ver. 41. *Thus have I been twenty years in thy house*, etc.] Attended with these difficulties, inconveniencies, and hardships;

I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters; Rachel and Leah; first seven years for Rachel; and having Leah imposed upon him instead of her, was obliged to serve seven years more, which he did for her sake; whereas he ought to have given them, and a dowry with them, to one who was heir to the land of Canaan, and not have exacted servitude of him:

and six years for thy cattle, to have as many of them for his hire, as were produced from a flock of white sheep, that were speckled, spotted, or ringstraked, or brown:

and thou hast changed my wages ten times; (see Gill on “~~4120~~ Genesis 31:7”);

Ver. 42. *Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me*, etc.] One and the same God is meant, who was the God of his father Isaac, and before him the God of Abraham, and now the fear of Isaac, whom he feared and served with reverence and godly fear, being at this present time a worshipper of him: now Jacob suggests, that unless his father’s God had been on his side, and had protected and preserved him, as well as before blessed and prospered him,

surely thou hadst sent me away now empty: coming with such force upon him, he would have stripped him of all he had, of his wives and children, and servants and cattle:

God hath seen my affliction, and the labour of my hands; what hardships he endured in Laban’s service, and what pains he took in feeding his flocks:

and rebuked [thee] yesternight; in a dream, charging him to say neither good nor evil to Jacob, which he himself had confessed, (~~4123~~ Genesis 31:29).

Ver. 43. *And Laban answered and said unto Jacob*, etc.] Not denying the truth of what he had said, nor acknowledging any fault he had been guilty of, or asking forgiveness for it, though he seemed to be convicted in his own conscience of it:

[these] daughters [are] my daughters: though thy wives, they are my own flesh and blood, and must be dear to me; so pretending strong natural affections for them:

and [these] children [are] my children; his grandchildren, for whom also he professed great love and affection:

and [these] cattle [are] my cattle; or of my cattle, as the Targum of Jonathan, sprung from them, as indeed they did:

and all that thou seest [is] mine; all this he observed in a bragging way, that it might be thought that he was generous in not insisting upon having it, but giving all back to Jacob again:

and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born? I cannot find in my heart to do them any hurt, or wrong them of anything, and am therefore willing all should be theirs.

Ver. 44. *Now therefore, come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou,* etc.] Let us be good friends, and enter into an alliance for mutual safety, and make an agreement for each other's good. Laban perceiving that Jacob's God was with him, and blessed him, and made him prosperous, and protected him, was fearful, lest, growing powerful, he should some time or other revenge himself on him or his, for his ill usage of him; and therefore was desirous of entering into a covenant of friendship with him:

and let it be for a witness between me and thee; that all past differences are made up, and former quarrels subside, and everything before amiss is forgiven and forgotten, and that for the future peace and good will subsist; of which a covenant made between them would be a testimony.

Ver. 45. *And Jacob took a stone, and set it up [for] a pillar.*] To show his readiness to agree to the motion, he immediately took a large stone that lay upon the mount, and set it up on one end, to be a standing monument or memorial of the agreement now about to be made between them.

Ver. 46. *And Jacob said unto his brethren, gather stones,* etc.] Not to his sons, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi; these would not be called brethren, and were not fit, being too young to be employed in gathering large stones, as these must be, to erect a monument with; rather his servants, whom he employed in keeping his sheep under him, and might so call them, as he did the shepherds of Haran, (^{Q1294}Genesis 29:4); and whom

he could command to such service, and were most proper to be made use of in it; unless it can be thought the men Laban brought with him, whom Jacob before calls his brethren, (^{<0137>}Genesis 31:37), are meant; and then the words must be understood as spoken, not in an authoritative way, but as a request or direction, which was complied with:

and they took stones, and made an heap; they fetched stones that lay about here and there, and laid them in order one upon another, and so made an heap of them:

and they did eat there upon the heap; they made it like a table, and set their food on it, and ate off of it; or they “ate by” it ^{f1524}, it being usual in making covenants to make a feast, at least to eat and drink together, in token of friendship and good will. The Chinese ^{f1525} call friendship that is most firm and stable, and not to be rescinded, “stony friendship”: whether from a like custom with this does not appear.

Ver. 47. *And Laban called it Jegarsahadutha*, etc.] Which in the Syriac and Chaldee languages signifies “an heap of witness”; it being, as after observed, a witness of the covenant between Laban and Jacob:

but Jacob called it Galeed; which in the Hebrew tongue signifies the same, “an heap of witness”; or “an heap, [the] witness”, for the same reason. Laban was a Syrian, as he sometimes is called, (^{<0120>}Genesis 25:20) (^{<0130>}Genesis 31:20,24), wherefore he used the Syrian language; Jacob was a descendant of Abraham the Hebrew, and he used the Hebrew language; and both that their respective posterity might understand the meaning of the name; though these two are not so very different but Laban and Jacob could very well understand each other, as appears by their discourse together, these being but dialects of the same tongue.

Ver. 48. *And Laban said, this heap [is] a witness between me and thee this day.*] A witness of the covenant now about to be made between them that day, and a witness against them should they break it:

therefore was the name of it called Galeed; by Jacob, as before observed; (see Gill on “^{<0147>}Genesis 31:47”).

Ver. 49. *And Mizpah*, etc.] Which being an Hebrew word, it looks as if the heap had also this name given it by Jacob, which signifies a “watch” or “watchtower”; though, by what follows, it seems to be given by Laban, who could speak Hebrew as well, as Syriac, or Chaldee:

for he said, the Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another; or “hid one from another”^{f1526}; when being at a distance, they could not see each other, or what one another did in agreement or disagreement with their present covenant: but he intimates, that the Lord sees and knows all things, and therefore imprecates that God would watch over them both, them and their actions, and bring upon them the evil or the good, according as their actions were, or as they broke or kept this covenant.

Ver. 50. *If thou shalt afflict my daughters*, etc.] In body or mind, by giving them hard blows, or ill words, and by withholding from them the necessities of life, food and raiment, and the like:

or if thou shall take [other] wives besides my daughters; which also would be an affliction and vexation to them, (see ~~CRISIS~~ Leviticus 18:18). Laban, though he had led Jacob into polygamy, and even obliged him to it, did not choose he should go further into it, for the sake of his daughters, to whom he professes now much kindness and affection, though he had shown but little to them before; as well as talks in a more religious strain than he had been used to do:

no man [is] with us; the sense is not that there were none with them at the present time, for the men or brethren that Laban brought with him were present: or that there were none fit to be witnesses, because these were kinsmen, for they are appealed to by Jacob as judges between them, (~~CRISIS~~ Genesis 31:33); but this refers to time to come, and may be supplied thus, “when no man be with us”; when there is none to observe what is done by either of us, contrary to mutual agreement, and to report it to one or other: then

see, take notice, and observe,

God [is] witness betwixt me and thee; who is omniscient and omnipresent, sees, observes all the actions of men, and deals with them accordingly; and so will be a witness for or against each of us, as we shall behave in observing, or not observing, the terms of our covenant.

Ver. 51. *And Laban said to Jacob*, etc.] Continued speaking to him, as follows:

behold this heap, and behold [this] pillar which I have cast betwixt me and thee; the heap of stones seems to be gathered and laid together by the

brethren, and the pillar to be erected by Jacob; and yet Laban says of them both, that he cast them, or erected them, they being done by his order, or with his consent, as well as Jacob's; unless the pillar can be thought to design another beside that which Jacob set up, and was like that, a single stone at some little distance from the heap: but the Samaritan and Arabic versions read, "which thou hast seen or set", etc. agreeably to (¹⁰³⁴⁵Genesis 31:45).

Ver. 52. *This heap [be] witness*, etc.] Agreeably to its name, which both he and Jacob gave unto it:

and [this] pillar [be] witness: which was set up for the same purpose:

that I will not pass over this heap to thee, and that thou shalt not pass over this heap and this pillar unto me, for harm; not that these were to be the boundaries of their respective countries; for neither of them at present were possessed of lands that reached hither, if of any at all; nor that it would be a breach of covenant to pass over or by those, from one country into another, but so as to do, or with an intent to do, hurt to each other.

Ver. 53. *The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us*, etc.] And the father of these was Terah, so that the god of them was not the true God, and is not meant, at least not as truly worshipped; but the god or gods of Terah, Nahor and Abraham worshipped while idolaters, and Laban still continued to do, though perhaps not in so gross a manner as some did:

and Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac; that is, by the true God his father Isaac feared, served, and worshipped: or "but Jacob"^{f1527}, etc. which seems plainly to suggest, that the God whom Laban called upon to be a judge between them, should they break covenant, and swore by, and he whom Jacob swore by, were different; each swore by their own deities.

Ver. 54. *Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount*, etc.] On Mount Gilead, not in a religious way, in which he could not join with Laban, or admit him to it; but in a civil way he "slew a slaughter"^{f1528}, or rather made one; that is, as Jarchi explains it, he slew cattle for a feast, as it was usual to make feasts for the several parties concerned in covenant, (see ¹⁰²³⁰Genesis 26:30):

and called his brethren, to eat bread; the, men that came with Laban, and him also, these he invited to his feast, for all sorts of food is called bread:

and they did eat bread, and tarried all night in the mount; this affair between Laban and Jacob had took up the whole day, at evening they feasted together upon the covenant being made, and then tarried all night to take their rest.

Ver. 55. *And early in the morning Laban rose up*, etc.] In order to prepare for, and set forward on his journey home:

and kissed his sons and his daughters; Jacob and his sons, who were his grandsons, and his daughters Rachel and Leah, with Dinah his granddaughter, as was the custom of relations and friends in those countries and times, at parting:

and blessed them; wished all happiness to them:

and Laban departed, and returned unto his place; to the city of Haran, where he dwelt; and after this we hear no more of him, nor of any transaction of his in life, or when and where he died, only his name is once mentioned by Jacob, (^{OLD}Genesis 32:4).

CHAPTER 32

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 32

This chapter informs us of Jacob's proceeding on in his journey, and of his being met and guarded by an host of angels, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:1,2); of his sending messengers to his brother Esau, acquainting him with his increase, and desiring his favour and good will, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:3-5), who return and report to him, that Esau was coming to him with four hundred men, which put him into a panic, and after devising ways and means for the security of himself; and those with him, at least a part, if not the whole, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:6-8); then follows a prayer of his to God, pressing his unworthiness of mercies, and his sense of them, imploring deliverance from his brother, and putting the Lord in mind of his promises, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:9-12); after which we have an account of the wise methods he took for the safety of himself and family, by sending a present to his brother, dividing those who had the charge of it into separate companies, and directing them to move at a proper distance from each other, he, his wives and children, following after, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:13-23); when they were over the brook Jabbok, he stopped, and being alone, the Son of God in an human form appeared to him, and wrestled with him, with whom Jacob prevailed, and got the blessing, and hence had the name of Israel, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:24-28); and though he could not get his name, he perceived it was a divine Person he had wrestled with, and therefore called the name of the place Penuel, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:29-31); the hollow of his thigh being touched by him with whom he wrestled, which put it out of joint, he halted as he went over Penuel, in commemoration of which the children of Israel eat not of that part of the thigh, (^{<0131>}Genesis 32:31,32).

Ver. 1. *And Jacob went on his way*, etc.] From Gilead towards the land of Canaan:

and the angels of God met him; to comfort and help him, to protect and defend him, to keep him in all his ways, that nothing hurt him, (^{<0911>}Psalms 91:11,12); these are ministering spirits sent forth by God to minister to his people, the heirs of salvation; and such an one Jacob was.

Ver. 2. *And when Jacob saw them*, etc.] These appeared in a visible form, most probably human, and in the habit, and with the accoutrements of soldiers, and therefore afterwards called an host or army. Aben Ezra thinks that Jacob alone saw them, as Elisha first saw the host of angels before the young man did that was with him, (^{<1167>}2 Kings 6:17):

he said, this [is] God's host: or army, hence he is often called the Lord of hosts; angels have this name from their number, order, strength, and military exploits they perform:

and he called the name of the place Mahanaim; which signifies two hosts or armies; either his own family and company making one, and the angels another, as Aben Ezra observes; or they were the angels, who very probably appeared in two companies, or as two armies, and one went on one side of Jacob and his family, and the other on the other side; or the one went before him, and the other behind him; the latter to secure him from any insult of Laban, should he pursue after him, and distress him in the rear, and the former to protect him from Esau, near whose country Jacob now was, and of whom he was in some fear and danger; thus seasonably did God appear for him. The Jewish writers ^{f1529} say, the host of God is 60,000, and that the Shechinah, or divine Majesty, never dwells among less, and that Mahanaim, or two hosts, are 120,000; there was afterwards a city of this name near this place, which very likely was so called in memory of this appearance, (^{<1173>}Joshua 21:38); and there seems to be an allusion to it in the account of the church, (^{<2163>}Song of Solomon 6:13); it was in the land of Gilead, and tribe of Gad, forty four miles from Jerusalem to the southeast ^{f1530}.

Ver. 3. *And Jacob sent messengers before him unto Esau his brother*, etc.] Or “angels”: not angels simply, as Jarchi, for these were not under the command, and in the power of Jacob to send, nor would they have needed any instruction from him afterwards given, but these were some of his own servants. Esau it seems was removed from his father's house, and was possessed of a country after mentioned, called from his name; and which Aben Ezra says lay between Haran and the land of Israel; but if it did not directly lie in the road of Jacob, yet, as it was near him, he did not choose to pass by without seeing his brother; and therefore sent messengers to inform him of his coming, and by whom he might learn in what temper and disposition of mind he was towards him:

unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom: which had its first name from Seir the Horite; and Esau having married into his family, came into the possession of it, by virtue of that marriage; or rather he and his sons drove out the Horites, the ancient possessors of it, and took it to themselves, from whom it was afterwards called Edom, a name of Esau, which he had from the red pottage he sold his birthright for to his brother Jacob, (^{<0250>}Genesis 25:30); perhaps it is here called Edom by an anticipation, not having as yet that name, though it had in Moses's time, when this history was wrote; (see ^{<0338>}Genesis 36:18,20,24 ^{<0312>}Deuteronomy 1:12,22).

Ver. 4. *And he commanded them*, etc.] Being his servants:

saying, thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; being not only a lord of a country, but his eldest brother, and whom he chose to bespeak in this manner, to soften his mind, and incline it to him; and that he might see he did not pique himself upon the birthright and blessing he had obtained; and as if these were forgotten by him, though hereby he does not give up his right in them:

thy servant Jacob saith thus, expressing great humility and modesty; for though his father Isaac by his blessing had made him lord over Esau, the time was not come for this to take place, his father not being yet dead; and besides, was to have its accomplishment not in his own person, but in his posterity:

I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now; had been a sojourner and a servant in Laban's family for twenty years past, and had had an hard master, and therefore could not be the object of his brother's envy, but rather of his pity and compassion.

Ver. 5. *And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants*, etc.] This he would have said, lest he should think he was come to ask anything of him, and put himself and his family upon him; and lest he should treat him with contempt, as a poor mean beggarly creature, and be ashamed of the relation he stood in to him:

and I have sent to tell my lord; of his coming, and of his state and circumstances:

that I may find grace in thy sight; share in his good will, which was all he wanted, and that friendship, harmony, and brotherly love, might subsist between them, which he was very desirous of.

Ver. 6. *And the messengers returned to Jacob*, etc.] After they had delivered their message, with the answer they brought back:

saying, we came to thy brother Esau; which, though not expressed, is implied in these words, and is still more manifest by what follows:

and also he cometh to meet thee; and pay a friendly visit, as they supposed:

and four hundred men with him; partly to show his grandeur, and partly out of respect to Jacob, and to do honour to him; though some think this was done with an ill design upon him, and which indeed seems probable; and it is certain Jacob so understood it, as is evident by the distress it gave him, and by the methods he took for his safety, and by the gracious appearance of God unto him, and the strength he gave him on this occasion, not only to pray to and wrestle with him, but to prevail both with God and men, as the following account shows. The Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call these four hundred men leaders or generals of armies, which is not probable; they were most likely Esau's subjects, his tenants and servants.

Ver. 7. *Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed*, etc.] Knowing what he had done to his brother in getting the birthright and blessing from him, and what an enmity he had conceived in his mind against him on that account, and remembering what he had said he would do to him; and therefore might fear that all his professions of respect to him were craftily and cunningly made to take him off of his guard, and that he might the more easily fall into his hands, and especially when he heard there were four hundred men with him; this struck a terror into him, and made him suspicious of an ill design against him; though herein Jacob betrayed much weakness and want of faith, when God has promised again and again that he would be with him, and keep him, and protect him, and return him safe to the land of Canaan; and when he had just had such an appearance of angels to be his helpers, guardians, and protectors:

and he divided the people that [was] with him, and the flocks, and the herds, and the camels, into two bands: some of his servants and shepherds, with a part of the flocks and herds, in one band or company, and some with the rest of them, and the camels, and his wives, and his children, in the other.

Ver. 8. *And said, if Esau come to the one company, and smite it*, etc.] The first, which perhaps consisted only of some servants, with a part of his

cattle; so that if Esau should come in an hostile manner, and fall upon that, and slay the servants, and take the cattle as a booty:

then the other company which is left shall escape; by flight, in which most probably were he himself, his wives and children, and the camels to carry them off who would have notice by what should happen to the first band; but one would think, that, notwithstanding all this precaution and wise methods taken, there could be little expectation of escaping the hands of Esau, if he came out on such an ill design; for whither could they flee? or how could they hope to get out of the reach of four hundred men pursuing after them, unless it could be thought, or might be hoped, that the first company falling into his hands, and the revenge on them, and the plunder of them, would satiate him, and he would proceed no further? but Jacob did not trust to these methods he concerted, but betakes himself to God in prayer, as follows.

Ver. 9. *And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac,* etc.] In this distress he does not consult the teraphim Rachel had taken from her father; nor does he call upon the hosts of angels that had just appeared to him, to help, protect, and guard him; but to God only, the God of his fathers, who had promised great things to them, and had done great things for them; who was their God in covenant, as he was his also, though he makes no mention of it, and who was heir of the promises made to them, the birthright and blessing being entailed upon him:

the Lord which saidst unto me, return unto thy country, and to thy kindred; the same God had appeared to him, when in Laban's house, and bid him return to his own country, and father's house; in obedience to which command he was now on his journey thither, and being in the way of his duty, and acting according to the will of God, though he had no dependence on, nor put any confidence in anything done by him, as appears by what follows; yet he hoped God of his grace and goodness would have a regard unto him, as he was doing what he was directed to by him, and especially since he had made the following gracious promise:

and I will deal well with thee: bestow good things on thee, both temporal and spiritual, and among the former, preservation from evils and dangers is included.

Ver. 10. *I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies,* etc.] Or of any of them, according to his humble sense of things his mind was now impressed

with; he was not worthy of the least mercy and favour that had been bestowed upon him; not even of any temporal mercy, and much less of any spiritual one, and therefore did not expect any from the hands of God, on account of any merit of his own: or “I am less than all thy mercies” ^{f1531}; Jacob had had many mercies and favours bestowed upon him by the Lord, which he was sensible of, and thankful for, notwithstanding all the ill usage and hard treatment he had met with in Laban’s house, and those were very great ones; he was not worthy of all, nor any of them; he was not deserving of the least of them, as our version truly gives the sense of the words:

and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; in performing promises made to him; grace, mercy, and goodness are seen making promises, and truth and faithfulness in the performance of them; Jacob had had a rich experience of both, and was deeply affected therewith, and which made him humble before God:

for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; the river Jordan, near to which he now was, or at least had it in view, either with the eyes of his body, or his mind; this river he passed over when he went to Haran with his staff in his hand, and that only, which was either a shepherd’s staff, or a travelling one, the latter most likely: he passed “alone” over it, as Onkelos and Jonathan add by way of illustration; unaccompanied by any, having no friend with him, nor servant to attend him. Jarchi’s paraphrase is,

“there was not with me neither silver nor gold, nor cattle, but my staff only.”

And now I am become two bands; into which he had now divided his wives, children, servants, and cattle; this he mentions, to observe the great goodness of God to him, and the large increase he had made him, and how different his circumstances now were to what they were when he was upon this spot, or thereabout, twenty years ago.

Ver. 11. *Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau*, etc.] For though his brother, it was his brother Esau, that had formerly vowed revenge upon him, and had determined to kill him, (⁻⁰²⁷⁴Genesis 27:41), and he knew not but that he was still of the same mind; and now having an opportunity, and in his power to do it, being accompanied with four hundred men, he feared he would attempt it; and therefore entreats the Lord, who was greater than he, to deliver him from falling into his hands, and being destroyed by him:

for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, [and] the mother with the children; for whom Jacob seems to be more concerned than for himself; the phrase denotes the utter destruction of his family, and the cruelty and inhumanity that would be exercised therein; which shows what an opinion he had of his brother, and of his savage disposition.

Ver. 12. *And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good*, etc.] All kind of good, most certainly and constantly; so Jacob rightly interpreted the promise, “I will be with thee”, (^{<0808>}Genesis 31:3); for the promise of God’s presence includes and secures all needful good to his people; and from this general promise Jacob draws an argument for a special and particular good, the preservation of him and his family, he was now pleading for; and the rather he might hope to succeed, since the following promise was also made him:

and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude; which could not be fulfilled, if he and his family were cut off at once, as he feared; but God is faithful who has promised.

Ver. 13. *And he lodged there that same night*, etc.] At Mahanaim, or some place near it:

and took of that which came to his hand; not what came next to hand, for what he did was with great deliberation, judgment, and prudence; wherefore the phrase signifies what he was possessed of, or was in his power, as Jarchi rightly interprets it:

a present for Esau his brother: in order to pacify him, gain his good will, and avert his wrath and displeasure, (see ^{<0808>}Proverbs 18:16); though Jacob had prayed to God, committed himself and family to him, and left all with him, yet he thought it proper to make use of all prudential means and methods for his safety: God frequently works in and by means made use of: the account of the present follows.

Ver. 14. *Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, two hundred ewes, and twenty rams*.] And it seems this proportion of one he goat to ten she goats, and of one ram to ten ewes, is a proper one, and what has been so judged in other times and countries ^{f1532}.

Ver. 15. *Thirty milch camels with their colts*, etc.] Milch camels were in great esteem in the eastern countries; their milk being, as Aristotle ^{f1533} and Pliny ^{f1534} say, the sweetest of all milk:

forty kine and ten bulls; one bull to ten cows; the same proportion as in the goats and rams:

twenty she asses and ten foals; and supposing thirty colts belonging to the camels; the present consisted of five hundred and eighty head of cattle: a large number to spare out of his flocks and herds, that he had acquired in six years' time; and showed a generous disposition as well as prudence, to part with so much in order to secure the rest.

Ver. 16. *And he delivered [them] into the hand of his servants*, etc.] To present them to Esau as from him:

every drove by themselves; there seems to have been three droves, (see ⁽¹³¹⁹⁾Genesis 32:19); very probably the two hundred and twenty goats, male and female, were in the first drove; and the two hundred and twenty sheep, ewes, and rams, were in the second drove; and the thirty camels, with their colts, and the fifty cows and bulls, with the twenty she asses and ten foals, which made in all one hundred and forty, were in the third drove: though Aben Ezra thinks there were five droves; nor is it improbable, the goats in one drove, the sheep in another, the camels and colts in a third, and the kine and bulls might make a fourth, and the asses with their foals a fifth:

and saith unto his servants, pass over before me: over the brook Jabbok, (⁽¹³²²⁾Genesis 32:22), a day's journey or less before him, as Jarchi observes, or rather a night's journey, as seems by the context; for these were sent out at evening, and Jacob stayed behind all night, as appears by what follows:

and put a space betwixt drove and drove; his meaning is, that they should not follow each other closely; but that there should be a considerable distance between them, and which he would have them careful to keep: his view in this was, partly to prolong time, Esau stopping, as he supposed he would, at each drove, and asking questions of the men; and partly that he might the better and more distinctly observe the largeness of his present, and his munificence in it, and so, both by the present, and by the frequent repetition of his submission to him as his servant, his wrath, if he came out in it, would be gradually abated, and before he came to him he would be in a disposition to receive him with some marks of affection and kindness, as he did.

Ver. 17. *And he commanded the foremost*, etc.] He that had the care of the first drove, which consisted of goats, male and female:

saying, when Esau my brother meeteth thee; as there was reason to believe he would, being on the road, and him first of all, being the foremost:

and asketh thee, saying, what [art] thou? that is, whose servant art thou? to whom dost thou belong?

and whither goest thou? what place art thou travelling to?

and whose are these before thee? whose are these goats? to whom do they belong thou art driving? for in driving and travelling on the road, sheep and goats went before those that had the care of them; whereas, in leading out to pastures, the shepherds went before, and the flocks followed, (~~Gen~~ John 10:4).

Ver. 18. *Then thou shall say, [they be] thy servant Jacob's*, etc.] Both the goats before them, and they themselves that had the care of them, belonged to Jacob, who directed them to speak of him to Esau as his “servant”:

it [is] a present sent unto my lord Esau; which is the answer to the second question:

and behold also he [is] behind us: that is, Jacob: this they were bid to tell, lest he should think that Jacob was afraid of him, and was gone another way; but that he was coming to pay a visit to him, and might expect shortly to see him, which would prepare his mind how to behave towards him.

Ver. 19. *And so commanded he the second and third*, etc.] Those who had the care of the second and third droves, he ordered them to say the same things, and in the same words as he had the first:

and all that followed the droves; either all that were with the principal driver; that if any of them should happen to be interrogated first, they might know what to answer; or those that followed the other droves, besides the three mentioned, which countenances Aben Ezra's notion of five droves, before observed:

saying, on this manner shall you speak to Esau, when you find him; that is, when they met him and perceived it was he that put questions to them.

Ver. 20. *And say ye moreover, behold, thy servant Jacob [is] behind us*, etc.] This is repeated to impress it upon their minds, that they might be careful of all things, not to forget that, it being a point of great importance; for the present would have signified nothing, if Jacob had not appeared in

person; Esau would have thought himself, at best, but slighted; as if he was unworthy of a visit from him, and of conversation with him:

for he said: that is, Jacob, or “had said” ^{f1535}, in his heart, within himself, as might be supposed from the whole of his conduct; for what follows are the words of Moses the historian, as Aben Ezra observes, and not of Jacob to his servants, nor of them to Esau:

I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterwards I will see his face: he hoped the present would produce the desired effect; that it would turn away his wrath from him, and pacify him; and then he should be able to appear before him, and see his face with pleasure: or, “I will expiate his face” ^{f1536}, as some render the words, or make him propitious and favourable; or cover his face, as Aben Ezra interprets it, that is, cause him to hide his wrath and resentment, that it shall not appear; or cause his fury to cease, as Jarchi; or remove his anger, wrath, and displeasure, as Ben Melech; all which our version takes in, by rendering it, “appease him”; and then,

peradventure he will accept of me: receive him with marks of tenderness and affection, and in a very honourable and respectable manner.

Ver. 21. *So went the present over before him*, etc.] Over the brook Jabbok, after mentioned, the night before Jacob did:

and himself lodged that night in the company; or “in the camp” ^{f1537}, either in the place called Mahanaim, from the hosts or crowds of angels seen there; or rather in his own camp, his family and servants; or, as Aben Ezra distinguishes, in the camp with his servants, and not in his tent, lest his brother should come and smite him; and so Nachmanides.

Ver. 22. *And he rose up that night*, etc.] In the middle of it, for it was long before break of day, as appears from (^{<0324>}Genesis 32:24);

and took his two wives, Rachel and Leah,

and his two womenservants, Bilhah and Zilpah, or, “his two concubines”, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; which distinguishes them from other womenservants or maidservants, of which, no doubt, he had many:

and his eleven sons; together with Dinah his daughter, though not mentioned, being the only female child, and a little one:

and passed over the ford Jabbok; over that river, at a place of it where it was fordable, or where there was a ford or passage: this was a river that took its rise from the mountains of Arabia, was the border of the Ammonites, washed the city Rabba, and ran between Philadelphia and Gerasa, and came into the river Jordan, at some little distance from the sea of Gennesaret or Galilee ^{f1538}, about three or four miles from it.

Ver. 23. *And he took them, and sent them over the brook*, etc.] His wives and children, under the care of some of his servants:

and sent over that he had: all that belonged to him, his servants and his cattle or goods.

Ver. 24. *And Jacob was left alone*, etc.] On the other side of Jabbok, his family and cattle having passed over it; and this solitude he chose, in order to spend some time in prayer to God for the safety of him and his:

and there wrestled a man with him; not a phantasm or spectre, as Josephus ^{f1539} calls him; nor was this a mere visionary representation of a man, to the imagination of Jacob; or done in the vision of prophecy, as Maimonides ^{f1540}; but it was something real, corporeal, and visible: the Targum of Jonathan says, it was an angel in the likeness of a man, and calls him Michael, which is not amiss, since he is expressly called an angel, (²⁰²⁴Hosea 12:4); and if Michael the uncreated angel is meant, it is most true; for not a created angel is designed, but a divine Person, as appears from Jacob's desiring to be blessed by him; and besides, being expressly called God, (⁰¹²⁸Genesis 32:28,30); and was, no doubt, the Son of God in an human form; who frequently appeared in it as a token and pledge of his future incarnation: and "this wrestling" was real and corporeal on the part of both; the man took hold of Jacob, and he took hold of the man, and they strove and struggled together for victory as wrestlers do; and on Jacob's part it was also mental and spiritual, and signified his fervent and importunate striving with God in prayer; or at least it was attended with earnest and importunate supplications; (see ²⁰²⁴Hosea 12:4); and this continued

until the breaking of the day: how long this conflict lasted is not certain, perhaps not long; since after Jacob rose in the night he had a great deal of business to do, and did it before this affair happened; as sending his wives, children, servants, and cattle over the brook: however, this may denote, that in the present state or night of darkness, wrestling in prayer with God

must be continued until the perfect state commences, when the everlasting day of glory will break.

Ver. 25. *And when he saw that he prevailed not against him*, etc.] That he, the man, or the Son of God in the form of man, prevailed not against Jacob, by casting him to the ground, or causing him to desist and leave off wrestling with him; not because he could not, but because he would not, being willing to encourage the faith of Jacob against future trials and exercises, and especially under his present one: besides, such were the promises that this divine Person knew were made to Jacob, and so strong was Jacob's faith at this time in pleading those promises in prayer to God, that he could not do otherwise, consistent with the purposes and promises of God, than suffer himself to be prevailed over by him:

he touched the hollow of his thigh; the hollow part of the thigh or the groin, or the hollow place in which the thigh bone moves, and is said to have the form of the hollow of a man's hand recurved:

and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him; that is, the huckle bone, or the thigh bone, was moved out of the hollow place in which it was: this was done to let Jacob know that the person he wrestled with was superior to him, and could easily have overcome him, and obliged him to cease wrestling with him if he would; and that the victory he got over him was not by his own strength, but by divine assistance, and by the sufferance of the himself he wrestled with; so that he had nothing to boast of: and this shows the truth and reality of this conflict; that it was not visionary, but a real fact, as well as it teaches the weakness and infirmities of the saints, that attend them in their spiritual conflicts. The word used in this and the preceding verse comes from a root which signifies dust; it being usual with wrestlers to raise up the dust with their feet when they strive together, as Kimchi^{f1541} remarks, as well as it was common with the ancients to wrestle in dust, and sand^{f1542}; and hence the phrase "descendere in arenam", combatants were called "arenarii".

Ver. 26. *And he said, let me go, for the day breaketh*, etc.] This was said that he might seem to be a man that was desirous of going about his business, as men do early in the morning; though the true reason perhaps was, that his form might not be more distinctly seen by Jacob, and much less by any other person:

and he said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me; for by his touching his thigh, and the effect of that, he perceived he was more than a man, even a divine Person, and therefore insisted upon being blessed by him: thus faith in prayer lays hold on God, and will not let him go without leaving the blessing it is pleading for; which shows the great strength of faith, and the efficacy of the prayer of faith with God; (see ^{<1320>}Exodus 32:10 ^{<2617>}Isaiah 62:7 ^{<915>}James 5:15,16).

Ver. 27. *And he said unto him, what [is] thy name?* etc.] Which question is put, not as being ignorant of it, but in order to take occasion from it, and the change of it, to show that he had granted his request, and had blessed him, and would yet more and more:

and he said, Jacob; the name given him at his birth, and by which he had always been called, and therefore tells it him at once, not staying to ask the reason of the question.

Ver. 28. *And he said, thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel,* etc.] That is, not Jacob only, but Israel also, as Ben Melech interprets it, or the one as well as the other; or the one rather and more frequently than the other: for certain it is, that he is often after this called Jacob, and his posterity also the seed of Jacob, though more commonly Israel, and Israelites:

for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed: this is given as a reason of his name Israel, which signifies a prince of God, or one who as a prince prevails with God; which confutes all other etymologies of the name, as the upright one of God, the man that sees God, or any other: he now prevailed with God in prayer, and by faith got the blessing, as he had prevailed before with Esau and Laban, and got the better of them, and so would again of the former: hence some render the word, “and shall prevail”^{f1543}; and indeed this transaction was designed to fortify Jacob against the fear of his brother Esau; and from whence he might reasonably conclude, that if he had power with God, and prevailed to obtain what he desired of him, he would much more be able to prevail over his brother, and even over all that should rise up against him, and oppose him; and this may not only be prophetic of what should hereafter be fulfilled in the person of Jacob, but in his posterity in future times, who should prevail over their enemies, and enjoy all good things by the favour of God: for it may be rendered, “thou hast behaved like a prince with God, and with men”, or, “over men thou shalt prevail”.

Ver. 29. *And Jacob asked [him], and said, tell [me], I pray thee, thy name*, etc.] Being asked his own name, and told it, and having another given him more significative and expressive, he is emboldened to ask the person that wrestled with him what was his name; (^{<00B13>}Exodus 3:13); for Jacob knew that he was God, as appears by his earnest desire to be blessed by him; and he knew it by the declaration just made, that he had power with God as a prince; but he hoped to have some name, taken by him from the place or circumstance of things in which he was, whereby he might the better remember this affair; as he was pleased to call himself the God of Bethel, from his appearance to Jacob there, (^{<00B13>}Genesis 31:13); therefore since he did not choose to give him his name, Jacob himself imposed one on the place afterwards, as a memorial of God being seen by him there:

and he said, wherefore [is] it [that] thou dost ask after my name? which is both a reproof of his curiosity, and a denial of his request; signifying that he had no need to put that question, it was enough for him that he had got the blessing, and which he confirms:

and he blessed him there; in the same place, as the Vulgate Latin version, where he had been wrestling with him, as he was taking his leave of him; for this was a farewell blessing, and a confirmation of that he had received, through the name of Israel being given him.

Ver. 30. *And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel*, etc.] In (^{<00B13>}Genesis 32:31); Penuel, which signifies the face of God, or God hath looked upon me, or hath had respect to me: there was afterwards a city built here, called by the same name; (see ^{<00B13>}Judges 8:8 ^{<1125>}1 Kings 12:25); it is said ^{f1544} to be four miles from Mahanaim; the reason of it follows:

for I have seen God face to face: it may be observed, that in wrestling men are face to face, and in this position were Jacob and the man that wrestled with him; which he seems to have respect unto, as well as to the familiarity and intimate communion he was admitted to:

and my life is preserved: though he had wrestled with one so vastly superior to himself, who could have easily crushed this worm Jacob to pieces, as he is sometimes called; and though he had had such a sight of God as face to faces referring, as is thought, to a notion that obtained early, even among good men, that upon sight of God a man instantly died; though we have no example of that kind: but perhaps he observed this for his encouragement; that whereas he had met with God himself, and

wrestled with him in the form of a man, and yet was preserved, he doubted not that, when he should meet with his brother and debate matters with him, he should be safe and unhurt.

Ver. 31. *And as he passed over Penuel the sun rose upon him*, etc.] It was break of day when the angel desired to be let go, and by that time the parley held between them ceased, and they parted, the sun was rising; and as Jacob went on it shone upon him, as a token of the good will and favour of God to him, and as an emblem of the sun of righteousness arising on him with healing in his wings, (~~300D~~ Malachi 4:2);

and he halted upon his thigh; it being out of joint, of which he became more sensible when he came to walk upon it; and besides, his attention to the angel that was with him caused him not so much to perceive it until he had departed from him: some think he went limping all his days; others, that he was healed immediately by the angel before he came to Esau; but of either there is no proof.

Ver. 32. *Therefore the children of Israel eat not [of] the sinew which shrank*, etc.] Which was contracted by the touch of the angel, and by which it was weakened and benumbed; or the sinew of the part that was out of joint, the sinew or tendon that keeps the thigh bone in the socket, together with the flesh that covered it, or the muscle in which it is; or that sinew, others, that contracts itself and gives motion to the thigh bone to work itself: of this the Israelites eat not:

which [is] upon the hollow of the thigh; or the cap of it:

unto this day; when Moses wrote this history:

because he [the angel] touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, in the sinew that shrank; and very superstitiously do they abstain from it unto this day: they have a whole chapter in one of their treatises in the Misnah ^{f1545}, giving rules concerning it; where it is forbidden to eat of it, whether in the land of Israel or out of it; whether in common food or sacrifices, even in burnt offerings it was to be taken out; and whether in cattle of the house or of the field; and both in the right and left thigh, but not in fowls, because they have no hollow, and butchers are not to be trusted; and whoever eats of it to the quantity of an olive is to be beaten with forty stripes; and because the Jews are more ignorant of this nerve, as Mercer observes, therefore they abstain from all nerves in the posteriors of animals. Leo of Modena ^{f1546}, of what beast soever they eat, they are very careful to take away

all the fat and the sinew which shrunk: and hence it is, that in many places in Italy, and especially in Germany, they eat not at all of the hinder quarters of ox, lamb, or goat; because there is in those parts of the beast both very much fat, and also the forbidden sinew; and it asketh so much care to cleanse the parts of these, that there are few that are able to do it, or dare to undertake it.

CHAPTER 33

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 33

In this chapter we find Esau meeting Jacob in a friendly manner, contrary to his fears and expectation, having set his family in order in case of the worst, (^{<0330>}Genesis 33:1-4); putting questions to Jacob concerning the women and children with him, who make their obeisance to him as Jacob had done before, (^{<0335>}Genesis 33:5-7); and concerning the drove he met, which was a present to him, and which he refused at first to take, but at the urgency of Jacob accepted of it, (^{<0338>}Genesis 33:8-11); proposing to travel with him, unto which Jacob desired to be excused, he, with the women, children, and flocks, not being able to keep pace with him, (^{<0332>}Genesis 33:12-14), and to leave some of his men with him to guard him, which Jacob judged unnecessary, upon which they parted friendly, (^{<0335>}Genesis 33:15,16); and the chapter is concluded with an account of Jacob's journey, first to Succoth, then to Shalem, where he pitched his tent, bought a field and built an altar, (^{<0337>}Genesis 33:17-20).

Ver. 1. *And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked,* etc.] After he had passed over the brook, and was come to his wives and children; which was done either accidentally or on purpose, to see if he could espy his brother coming: some think this denotes his cheerfulness and courage, and that he was now not distressed and dejected, as he had been before:

and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men; (see ^{<0316>}Genesis 32:6);

and he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids; some think he made four divisions of them; Leah and her children, Rachel and her son, Bilhah and hers, and Zilpah and hers: but others are of opinion there were but three: the two handmaids and their children in one division, Leah and her children in another, and Rachel and her son in the third; which seems to be confirmed in (^{<0332>}Genesis 33:2), though the word for "divide" signifies to halve or divide into two parts; according to which, the division then must be of the two wives and their

children in one company, and of the two handmaids and theirs in the other: and this Jacob did partly for decency and partly for safety.

Ver. 2. *And he put the handmaids and their children foremost*, etc.] In the first division, as being less honourable and less beloved by him:

and Leah and her children after; still according to the degree of honour and affection due unto them; Leah being a wife that was imposed and forced upon him:

and Rachel and Joseph hindermost; being most beloved by him, and therefore most careful of them; Rachel being his principal and lawful wife, and who had the greatest share in his affection, and Joseph his only child by her.

Ver. 3. *And he passed over before them*, etc.] At the head of them, as the master of the family, exposing himself to the greatest danger for them, and in order to protect and defend them in the best manner he could, or to endeavour to soften the mind of his brother by an address, should there be any occasion for it:

and bowed himself to the ground seven times; in a civil way, as was the manner in the eastern countries towards great personages; and this he did to Esau as being his elder brother, and as superior to him in grandeur and wealth, being lord of a considerable country; and at the same time religious adoration might be made to God; while he thus bowed to the ground, his heart might be going up to God in prayer, that he would appear for him at this instant, and deliver him and his family from perishing by his brother; and so the Targum of Jonathan introduces this clause,

“praying, and asking mercies of the Lord, and bowed, etc.”

seven times, perhaps, may not design an exact number, but that he bowed many times as he came along:

until he came near to his brother; he kept bowing all the way he came until they were within a small space of one another.

Ver. 4. *And Esau ran to meet him*, etc.] If he rode on any creature, which is likely, he alighted from it on sight of his brother Jacob, and to express his joy on that occasion, and affection for him, made all the haste he could to meet him, as did the father of the prodigal, (^{<15>}Luke 15:20),

and embraced him; in his arms, with the greatest respect and tenderness:

and fell on his neck; laid his head on his neck, where it remained for a while, not being able to lift it up, and speak unto him; the word is in the dual number, and signifies, as Ben Melech thinks, the two sides of the neck, the right and the left; and he might lay his head first on one side, and then on the other, to show the greatness of his affection:

and kissed him; in token of the same: there are three pricks over this word in the original more than ordinary, directing the attention of the reader to it, as something wonderful and worthy of observation: the Jewish writers ^{f1547} are divided about it; some think that this points at the insincerity of Esau in kissing his brother when he hated him; others, on the contrary, to his sincerity and heartiness in it, and which was matter of admiration, that he who laid up hatred in his heart against his brother, and had bore him a grudge for so many years, and it may be came out now, with an intention to destroy him, should have his heart so turned toward him, as to behave in this affectionate manner, which must be owing to the power of God working upon his heart, changing his mind, and making him thus soft, flexible, and compassionate; and to Jacob's humble submission to him, subservient to divine Providence as a means; and thus as he before had power with God in prayer on this same account, the effect of which he now perceived, so he had power with men, with his brother, as it was intimated to him he should:

and they wept; they "both" wept, as the Septuagint version adds, both Jacob and Esau, for joy at the sight of each other, and both seriously; and especially there can be no doubt of Jacob, who must be glad of this reconciliation, if it was only outward, since hereby his life, and the lives of his wives and children, would be spared.

Ver. 5. *And he lift up his eyes, and saw the women and children*, etc.] After the salutation had passed between him and his brother Jacob, he looked, and saw behind him women and children, Jacob's two wives and his two handmaids, and twelve children he had by them,

and said, who [are] those with thee? who do those women and children belong to that follow thee? for Jacob had made no mention of his wives and children, when he sent his messengers to him, (^{ORIG}Genesis 32:5); and therefore Esau might very well ask this question, which Jacob replied to:

and he said, the children which God hath graciously given thy servant; he speaks of his children as gifts of God, and as instances and pledges of his favour and good will to him, which he thankfully acknowledges; and at the same time speaks very respectfully to his brother, and in great condescension and humility owns himself his servant, but says nothing of his wives; not that he was ashamed, as Abarbinel suggests, that he should have four wives, when his brother, who had less regard for religion, had but three; but he mentions his children as being near kin to Esau, and by whom he might conclude who the women were, and of whom also he might give a particular account, though the Scripture is silent about it; since Leah and Rachel were his own first cousins, (⁽¹²⁹⁰⁾Genesis 29:10,16); and who they were no doubt he told him, as they came to pay their respects to him, as follows.

Ver. 6. *Then the handmaids came near, they and their children*, etc.] Being foremost, and next to, Jacob, as Bilhah and her two sons, Dan and Naphtali, and Zilpah and her two sons, Gad and Asher:

and they bowed themselves; in token of respect to Esau, as Jacob had done before them, and set them an example, and no doubt instructed them to do it.

Ver. 7. *And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves*, etc.] Who were in the next division or company; their children were seven, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah, six sons and one daughter:

and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves; it is observed that Joseph is mentioned before his mother; it may be, because they might put him before her in the procession, for greater safety; or she might present him to Esau, being a child of little more than six years of age, and teach him how to make his obeisance to him, which she also did herself.

Ver. 8. *And he said, what [meanest] thou by all this drove which I met?* etc.] Not as being ignorant of the design of it; for no doubt the several drovers, according to their instructions from Jacob, had acquainted him with it; but he chose not to take the present on what they said, but was willing to have it from Jacob's own mouth, and that he might have the opportunity of refusing it:

and he said, [these are] to find grace in the sight of my lord; to gain his favour and good will; and which, as it was a token of Jacob's good will to him, so, by his acceptance of it, he would know that he bore the same to him also. It was usual in the eastern countries to carry presents to friends, and especially to great men, whenever visits were paid, as all travellers in general testify to be still the usage in those parts, to this day.

Ver. 9. *And Esau said, I have enough, my brother*, etc.] Or "I have much"^{f1548}, and stand in no need of this present, or have much more than thou hast:

keep that thou hast unto thyself; for the use of himself and family, which is large; in this Esau showed himself not only not a covetous man, but that he was truly reconciled to his brother, and needed not anything from him, to make up the difference between them.

Ver. 10. *And Jacob said, nay, I pray thee*, etc.] Do not say so, as the Targum of Jonathan supplies it, or do not refuse my present:

if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand; signifying, that the acceptance of his present would be a token to him, and give him full satisfaction that he bore a good will to him, and did not retain anger and resentment against him:

for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God; or of princes, as Onkelos, as the face of some great personage, as he was; or as the face of an angel, very pleasant and lovely; or as the face of God himself, he observing the love and favour of God to him, in working upon the heart of Esau, and causing him to carry it so lovingly to him; wherefore for this reason receive it, because I have had such an agreeable sight of thee:

and thou wast pleased with me; accepted of me, and kindly received me:

Ver. 11. *Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee*, etc.] The present he had sent him, now carrying home to his house, which was a part of what God had blessed Jacob with; and which he from a beneficent generous spirit gave his brother, wishing the blessing of God to go along with it; it was an insinuation, and so he would have it taken, that he wished him all happiness and prosperity;

because God hath dealt graciously with me; in giving him so much substance, and now in giving him so much favour in the sight of Esau, whom he dreaded:

and because I have enough; a sufficiency of all good things, being thoroughly contented with his state and circumstance; or “I have all things” ^{f1549}, all kind of good things, everything that was necessary for him; the expression is stronger than Esau’s; and indeed Jacob had besides a large share of temporal mercies, all spiritual ones; God was his covenant God and Father, Christ was his Redeemer, the Spirit his sanctifier; he had all grace bestowed on him, and was an heir of glory:

and he urged him, and he took [it]: being pressing on him, or importunate with him, he accepted of his present.

Ver. 12. *And he said, let us take our journey, and let us go*, etc.] To Seir, where Esau lived, and whither he invited Jacob to stop a while, and refresh himself and his family:

and I will go before thee; to show him the way to his palace, and to protect him on the road from all dangers; or “besides thee” ^{f1550}, alongside of him, keeping equal pace with him, thereby showing great honour and respect, as well as in order to converse with him as they, travelled.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto him, my lord knoweth the children [are] tender*, etc.] The eldest being but thirteen years of age, and the youngest about six; and Esau might easily perceive by their stature that they were young and tender, and not able to bear either riding or walking very fast:

and the flocks and herds with young [are] with me; or “upon me” ^{f1551}; the charge of them was upon him, it was incumbent on him to take care of them, and especially in the circumstances in which they were, being big with young, both sheep and kine; or “suckling”, giving milk to their young, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, and so having lambs and calves, some of them perhaps just yeaned and calved, they required more attendance and greater care in driving them, not being able to travel far in a day:

and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die; if he, and the servants under him, should push them on too fast, beyond their strength, even but one day, all in the above circumstances would be in danger of being lost through overmuch fatigue and weariness.

Ver. 14. *Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant,* etc.] He desired in a very respectable manner that he would not keep his pace in complaisance to him, but proceed on in his journey, and go on with his men, and he with his family and flocks would follow after as fast as he could, and their circumstances would admit of:

and I will lead on softly; slowly, gently, easily, step by step:

according as the cattle that goeth before me, and the children be able to endure; or “according to the foot” ^{f1552} of them; of the cattle, whom he calls the “work” ^{f1553}, because his business lay in the care of them, and these were the chief of his substance; and of the children, as the feet of each of them were able to travel; or because of them, for the sake of them, as Aben Ezra, consulting their strength, he proposed to move on gently, like both a wise, careful, and tender father of his family, and shepherd of his flock:

until I come unto my lord unto Seir; whither, no doubt, he intended to come when he parted with Esau; but for reasons which after appeared to him he declined it: or more probably he did go thither then, or quickly after; though the Scripture makes no mention of it, he might go with some of his servants directly, and send his family, flocks, and herds, under the care of other servants, forward on their journey, and quickly come up to them again; for that he should tell a lie is not likely, nor does he seem to be under any temptation to it: and besides, it would have been dangerous to have disobliged his brother when on his borders, who could easily have come upon him again with four hundred men, and picked a quarrel with him for breach of promise, and destroyed him and his at once.

Ver. 15. *And Esau said, let me now leave with thee [some] of the folk that [are] with me,* etc.] To show him the way, and guard him on the road, and he appear the more honourable when he entered into Seir:

and he said, what needeth it? Jacob saw not the necessity of it; he knew the direct way very probably; he thought himself in no danger, since he was at peace with Esau, and he did not affect the grandeur of an equipage:

let me find grace in the sight of my lord; having his favour and good will, that was enough for him; and among the rest of the favours he received from him, he begged this might be added, that he might be excused retaining any of his retinue with him.

Ver. 16. *So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.*] Took his leave of Jacob the same day he met him, and proceeded on in his journey towards Seir; whether he arrived there the same day is not certain, probably it was more than a day's journey.

Ver. 17. *And Jacob journeyed to Succoth,* etc.] Perhaps after he had been at Seir, and stayed there some little time. Succoth was on the other side of Jordan, so called by anticipation, for it had its name from what follows; as yet there was no city built here, or at least of this name; afterwards there was, it lay in a valley, and belonged to Sihon king of Heshbon, and was given to the tribe of Gad, (⁶³⁷Joshua 13:27); it is mentioned along with Penuel, and was not far from it, (⁶³⁸Judges 8:8). It is said to be but two miles distant from it ^{f1554}, but one would think it should be more:

and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle; an house for himself and family, and booths or tents for his servants or shepherds, and for the cattle they had the care of, some for one, and some for the other. This he did with an intention to stay some time here, as it should seem; and the Targum of Jonathan says he continued here a whole year, and Jarchi eighteen months, a winter and two summers; but this is all uncertain:

therefore the name of the place is called Succoth; from the booths or tents built here, which this word signifies.

Ver. 18. *And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem,* etc.] Not Salem, of which Melchizedek was king, much less Jerusalem, for it was forty miles from it ^{f1555}; more likely Salim near Aenon, where John was baptizing, (⁶³⁹John 3:23); though it perhaps is the same with Shechem; for the words may be read, he “came to Shalem, the city Shechem”, a city which Hamor had built, and called by the name of his son Shechem, the same with Sychar, (⁶⁴⁰John 4:5); this was on this side Jordan, and therefore Jacob must have passed over that river, though no mention is made of it; it is said to be about eight miles from Succoth ^{f1556}: though some think Shalem is not the name of a place, but an appellative, and to be rendered “safe [and] sound”, or “whole”; and so the Jewish ^{f1557} writers generally understand it of his coming in peace, health, and safety:

which [is] in the land of Canaan; it belonged to that tribe of the Canaanites called Hivites; for Hamor, the father of Shechem, from whom it had its name, was an Hivite, (⁶⁴¹Genesis 34:2), so that Jacob was now got into the land of Canaan, his own country, and where his kindred dwelt:

when he came from Padanaram; from Mesopotamia, from Haran there; Shechem was the first place in the land of Canaan he came to, when he came from thence, and whither he came in the greatest safety, he himself, wives, children, and servants, in good health, without any loss of any of his cattle and substance; and without any ill thing befalling: him all the way thither, being delivered from Laban and Esau, and from every danger, and from every enemy: and to signify this is this clause added, which may seem otherwise superfluous:

and pitched his tent before the city; the city of Shechem, not in it, but near it.

Ver. 19. *And he bought a parcel of a field*, etc.] Not the whole, but a part of it; this he did, though he was heir of the whole country, because, as yet, the time was not come for him or his to take possession of it:

where he had spread his tent; the ground that it stood upon, and what was adjoining to it, for the use of his cattle: this he bought

at the hand of the children of Hamor; of some one of them, in whose possession it was, and perhaps with the consent of the rest, and before them, as witnesses:

for an hundred pieces of money; Onkelos, the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Samaritan, Syriac, and Arabic versions render it a hundred lambs or sheep, cattle being used to be given in exchange for things in trade and commerce; but as money was in use before the times of Jacob, and Stephen expresses it as a “sum of money”, (^{<4716>}Acts 7:16); and this best agrees with the use of the word in (^{<1821>}Job 42:11), the only place besides this, excepting (^{<1242>}Joshua 24:32), in which it is used, it seems best so to interpret it here; and the pieces of money might be such as were of the value of a lamb or sheep, or rather had the figure of one impressed upon them. Laban, from whom Jacob might have them, or his neighbours, and also Jacob himself, being shepherds, might choose thus to impress their money; but the exact value of these pieces cannot be ascertained: the Jewish writers generally interpret them of a “meah”, which was the value of one penny of our money, and twenty of them went to a shekel; so that a hundred of these must make a very small and contemptible sum to purchase a piece of ground with.

Ver. 20. *And he erected there an altar*, etc.] To offer sacrifice upon to God, by way of thanksgiving, for the many mercies he had received since

he went out of the land of Canaan, whither he was now returned; and especially for his safety in journeying hither from Padanaram, and for deliverance from Laban and Esau, and for all other favours that he and his had been partakers of. And this he also erected for the sake of religious worship, to be continued in his family; he intending to reside here for some time, as appears by the purchase he had made, and as it is certain he did:

and called it Elelohe-Israel: God, the God of Israel; that is, he called the altar the altar of God, who is the God of Israel, who had been his God, his preserver and protector; and had lately given him the name of Israel, and had made good what answered to it, and was designed by it, that as he had had power with God, and prevailed, so he should with man; and as a memorial of all these favours and mercies, he erected this altar, and devoted it to God and his service, and called it by this name: or “he called upon God, the God of Israel”, as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin versions; he prayed unto him at the time he offered sacrifice on the altar, and gave him praise for all the great and good things he had done for him. Jacob must have stayed at Succoth, and at this place, many years, especially at the latter; since, when he came into those parts, Dinah was a child of little more than six years of age, and Simeon and Levi were very young, not above eleven or twelve years of age; and yet, before he left Shechem, Dinah was marriageable, and Simeon and Levi were grown strong and able bodied men, and did a most strange exploit in slaying all the males in Shechem, as recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 34

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 34

This chapter gives an account of the ravishment of Dinah by Shechem, (^{<0340>}Genesis 34:1-5); of his father Hamor and him treating with Jacob and his sons about the marriage of her, (^{<0340>}Genesis 34:6-12); of the condition proposed by Jacob's sons, circumcision of all the males in Shechem, which was agreed to by Shechem and his father, (^{<0343>}Genesis 34:13-19); of the men of Shechem being persuaded to yield to it, (^{<0340>}Genesis 34:20-24); and of the destruction of them on the third day by Simeon and Levi, and of the plunder of their city and field, and of the captivity of their wives and children by Jacob's sons, which gave Jacob great offence, and in which they justified themselves, (^{<0325>}Genesis 34:25-31).

Ver. 1 *And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob*, etc.]

Who is supposed to be at this time about fourteen or fifteen years of age: for that she was but about nine or ten years old is not to be credited, as some compute it ^{f1558}: she is observed to be the daughter of Leah, partly that the following miscarriage might bring to mind her forwardness to intrude herself into Jacob's bed, and be a rebuke unto her; and partly to account for Simeon and Levi being so active in revenging her abuse, they being Leah's sons: of Dinah it is said, that she

went out to see the daughters of the land; of the land of Canaan, to visit them, and contract an acquaintance with them; and she having no sisters to converse with at home, it might be a temptation to her to go abroad. According to the Targum of Jonathan, she went to see the manners, customs, and fashions of the women of that country, to learn them, as the Septuagint version renders the word; or to see their habit and dress, and how they ornamented themselves, as Josephus ^{f1559} observes; and who also says it was a festival day at Shechem, and therefore very probably many of the young women of the country round about might come thither on that occasion; and who being dressed in their best clothes would give Dinah a good opportunity of seeing and observing their fashions; and which, with the diversions of the season, and shows to be seen, allured Dinah to go out of her mother's tent into the city, to gratify her curiosity. Aben Ezra's note

is, that she went of herself, that is, without the leave of either of her parents: according to other Jewish writers ^{f1560} there was a snare laid for her by Shechem, who observing that Jacob's daughter dwelt in tents, and did not go abroad, he brought damsels out of the city dancing and playing on timbrels; and Dinah went forth to see them playing, and he took her, and lay with her, as follows.

Ver. 2. *And when Shechem the son of Hamor*, etc.] From whom the city had its name, near which Jacob and his family now were:

the Hivite, prince of the country; Hamor was an Hivite, which was one of the nations of the land of Canaan, and this man was the prince or a principal man of that nation, as well as of Shechem. Josephus ^{f1561} calls him a king: when the son of this man

saw her; that is, Dinah, what a beautiful person she was, and was enamoured with her:

he took her: by force, as the Targum of Jonathan:

and lay with her, and defiled her; or “humbled” or “afflicted her” ^{f1562}; and it is a rule with the Jews, that every such act, which is done by force, is called an humiliation and affliction ^{f1563}: the child begotten in this act of fornication is said ^{f1564} by them to be Asenath, who was had into Egypt, and brought up by Potipherah's wife as her daughter, and afterwards married to Joseph, (^{<0445>}Genesis 41:45,50).

Ver. 3. *And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob*, etc.] His inclination was to her, she was always in his thoughts; it was not a mere lustful desire that was suddenly raised, and soon over, but a constant and continued affection he bore to her, as follows:

and he loved the damsel; sincerely and heartily:

and spake kindly unto the damsel; or “to the heart” ^{f1565} of her, such things as tended to comfort her, she being sad and sorrowful; or to soften her mind towards him, and take off the resentment of it to him, because of the injury he had done her, and to gain her good will and affection, and her consent to marry him; professing great love to her, promising her great things, what worldly grandeur and honour she would be advanced to, and how kindly he would behave towards her; which might take with her, and

incline her to yield to his motion, which having obtained, he took the following method.

Ver. 4. *And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor*, etc.] And told him the whole affair, at least what a strong affection he had for Dinah:

saying, get me this damsel to wife; by which he meant not only that he would give his consent that he might marry her, but that he would get her parents' consent unto it, and settle the matter with them; by which it appears how early, and that even among Heathen nations, consent of parents on both sides was judged necessary to marriage. It seems by this as if Dinah was now detained in the house of Hamor or Shechem, and was upon the spot, or near at hand, when Shechem addressed his father about her, (see ^{403B}Genesis 34:26).

Ver. 5. *And Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter*, etc.] That is, that Shechem had defiled her; the report of this was brought him very probably by one of the maids which attended her to the city; for it was hardly to be thought that she should go thither alone, and which must be very distressing to Jacob to hear of: this was his first affliction in his own family, but it was not the only one, nor the last, others quickly followed:

now his sons were with his cattle in the field; he had bought, or in some other hired by him for his cattle, feeding and keeping them, being arrived to an age fit for such service; here they were when the above report was brought to Jacob:

and Jacob held his peace until they were come; neither murmuring at the providence, but patiently bearing the chastisement; nor reflecting upon Leah for letting Dinah go out, or not keeping a proper watch over her; nor saying anything of it to any in the family; nor expressing his displeasure at Shechem, nor vowing revenge on him for it, nor taking any step towards it until his sons were come home from the field; with whom he chose to advise, and whose assistance he would want, if it was judged necessary to use force to get Dinah out of the hands of Shechem, or to avenge the injury done her.

Ver. 6. *And Hamor, the father of Shechem, went out unto Jacob*, etc.] Unto the tent of Jacob without the city:

to commune with him; to talk with him about the affair of Dinah, to pacify him, and endeavour to gain his consent, that his son might marry her, and to settle the, terms and conditions of the marriage.

Ver. 7. *And the sons of Jacob came out of the field, when they heard [it]*, etc.]. Either by a messenger Jacob sent to them, to acquaint them with it, or by some other hand: however, be it as it will, as soon as they heard of the abuse of their sister, they immediately left their flocks to the care of their servants, and came to their father's tent:

and the men were grieved and were very wroth; they were grieved for the sin committed against God, very probably, as well as for the injury done to their sister, and they were wroth against Shechem the author of it:

because he had wrought folly in Israel, in lying with Jacob's daughter; all sin is folly, being a transgression of the law of God founded in the highest wisdom, and particularly uncleanness, and that branch of it, deflowering a virgin; and this action being committed on Jacob's daughter, whose name was Israel, is said to be "in", or rather "against" Israel ^{f1566}, to his grief, and to the reproach of him and his family: though these words may be rather the words of Moses, than of the sons of Jacob; or however are expressed not in the language used by them, but in what was in use in the times of Moses, when Israel was the name of a nation and church, whereas it was now but a personal name, and at most but the name of a family; and though this was done to one of the family, yet not in it, but in the house of Hamor or Shechem:

which thing ought not to be done; being against the law and light of nature to do such an action by force and violence, and against the law of nations to suffer it to go with impunity.

Ver. 8. *And Hamor communed with them*, etc.] With Jacob and his sons, who came in just at that time:

saying, the soul of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: the daughter of the family, and the only daughter in it; for her Shechem had a vehement affection, a strong desire to marry her, and could not be satisfied without her:

I pray you, give her him to wife; he not only requests the consent of the parents of the damsel, but of her brothers also, which in those times and

countries seems to have been usual to ask and have, (see ^{<125>}Genesis 24:50,51,55,59).

Ver. 9. *And make ye marriages with us*, etc.] There was no objection on their side, it lay on the other; Abraham's servant was charged by him not to take a wife of the Canaanites to his son Isaac; and the same charge was given Jacob by Isaac, (^{<124>}Genesis 24:3 28:1); and therefore Jacob would never agree that his children should marry any of that nation; and marriages with them were afterwards forbidden by the law of Moses, (^{<123>}Deuteronomy 7:3);

[and] give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you; for though at present there were no other daughters in Jacob's family, yet there might be hereafter; and the request is, that for the future there might be intermarriages between them, as would be practicable in a course of time.

Ver. 10. *And ye shall dwell with us*, etc.]. Peaceably and quietly, not as sojourners only, but as inhabitants:

and the land shall be before you; to choose what part of it they pleased to dwell in, and which they should have in their own power and possession:

dwell and trade you therein; in any sort of traffic and commerce the land would admit of, and they should best choose:

and get you possessions therein; buy houses and land, and enjoy them, they and their posterity; these are the arguments used by Hamor to gain the consent of Jacob and his family that his son might marry Dinah; and the proposals are honourable and generous.

Ver. 11. *And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren*, etc.]. To the father and brethren of Dinah; he addressed them after his father Hamor had done speaking:

let me find grace in your eyes; forgive the offence committed, the injury done to Dinah, and grant the request of her marriage, and it will be considered as a great favour:

and what ye shall say unto me, I will give; to her, to her parents, to her brethren and relations; let what will be fixed, shall be given; which showed great affection for her, and that he was willing to do any thing to make

amends for the injury done; he cared not what it was that might be demanded of him, so be it that she became his wife.

Ver. 12. *Ask me never so much dowry and gift*, etc.] Or “multiply [them] exceedingly”, ^{f1567}, fix them at as high a rate as may be thought fit; the “dowry” was what a man gave to a woman at her marriage; for in those times and countries, instead of a man having a portion with his wife, as with us in our times, he gave one to his wife, or to her parents for her; and especially in after times this was used, and became a law in Israel, in the case of a vitiated virgin, (see ^{<0226>}Exodus 22:16,17); and “the gift” was either of jewels and clothes to the women, or of such like precious things to her brethren and friends, (see ^{<0243>}Genesis 24:53);

and I will give according as ye shall say unto me; determine among yourselves whatever shall be the dowry and gift, and it shall be punctually observed:

but give me the damsel to wife; only agree to that, and I care not what is required of me.

Ver. 13. *And the sons of Jacob answered Shechem and Hamor deceitfully*, etc.] Proposing the marriage of their sister on terms after mentioned, when they never intended it should ever be: Onkelos, Jonathan, and Jarchi interpret it, “with wisdom”, as if they answered wisely and prudently, but the word is never used in a good sense; and if it was wisdom, it was carnal wisdom and wicked cunning, and was disapproved of by plain hearted Jacob:

and said: or spoke in this deceitful manner:

because he had defiled Dinah their sister; and therefore were filled with indignation at him, and fired with resentment against him, and vowed within themselves revenge upon him.

Ver. 14. *And they said unto them*, etc.] Levi and Simeon, to Hamor and Shechem:

we cannot do this thing, to give our sister to one that is uncircumcised; not that there was any law against it at that time; and there were, on the other hand, precedents for it both in Isaac and Jacob, who had married the daughters of uncircumcised persons; nor indeed do they plead any law,

only that it was not becoming their character, nor agreeably to their religion, nor honourable in their esteem:

for that [were] a reproach unto us; and they should be reflected upon for slighting the institution of circumcision, which was of God: so they pretend it might be interpreted, should they enter into affinity with uncircumcised persons.

Ver. 15. *But in this will we consent unto you*, etc.] Upon the following condition, that Dinah should be given in marriage:

if ye will be as we [be], that every male of you be circumcised; as the sons of Jacob were, according to the command given to Abraham their great grandfather, (^{<0170>}Genesis 17:10).

Ver. 16. *Then will we give our daughters unto you*, etc.] Meaning Dinah, whom they call their daughter, (^{<0347>}Genesis 34:17); because she was the daughter of their family, and because they were entreating in the name of their father, and in conformity to the language used by those they were treating with, (^{<0349>}Genesis 34:9);

and we will take your daughters to us; in marriage for wives:

and we will dwell with you; not as sojourners but as fellow citizens:

and we will become one people; being so nearly related by marriage, and professing one religion, alike submitting to circumcision, which was the distinguished badge of Abraham's seed.

Ver. 17. *But if ye will not hearken to us to be circumcised*, etc.] Will not agree to this condition, circumcision:

then will we take our daughter; by force, as the Targum of Jonathan adds:

and we will be gone: depart from this part of the country, and go elsewhere.

Ver. 18. *And their words pleased Hamor, and Shechem Hamor's son.*] The condition proposed was acceptable to them both, and they agreed to comply with it; Hamor, because of the great love he had for his son; Shechem, because of the great love he had for Dinah.

Ver. 19. *And the young man deferred not to do the thing*, etc.] To be circumcised himself, and to get all the males of the city circumcised; he

delayed not a moment, but made all the haste he could to get it accomplished:

because he had delight in Jacob's daughter; he really loved her, and delighted in her person and company: it was not the effect of a brutish lust, but a true affection he bore to her, that he desired her in marriage:

and he [was] more honourable than all the house of his father; for though he had done a base thing in defiling Jacob's daughter, yet in this he was honourable, that he sought to marry her, and to do any thing that was in his power to recompence the injury; and he was honourable in keeping covenant and compact with men; and was honest, upright, and sincere, to fulfil the condition imposed on him, and he had agreed to, as well as he was in greater esteem among the citizens than any of his father's house, which made it the more easy to him to get their consent to be circumcised; they having a very high and honourable opinion of him, and ready to oblige him in anything they could.

Ver. 20. *And Hamor and Shechem his son went unto the gate of their city*, etc.] Where courts of judicature were held, and all public affairs respecting the common interest of the city were transacted: here, no doubt, Hamor their prince summoned them to come, by the usual method in which the citizens were convened on certain occasions:

and communed with the men of their city; upon the subject of entering into an alliance with Jacob's family, of admitting them to be fellow citizens with them, and of their being incorporated among them, and becoming one people with them, taking no notice of the true reason of this motion:

saying, as follows.

Ver. 21. *These men [are] peaceable with us*, etc.] Meaning Jacob and his sons, pointing to their tents which were near their city; and no doubt more was said than is here expressed, and that these words were introduced with a preface, in which notice was taken of Jacob and his family, and their names mentioned, as here their character is given; that they were men of peaceable dispositions, harmless and inoffensive, as appeared they had been ever since they came into these parts; and there was a great deal of reason to believe they still would be, and which was an argument in their favour, to admit them to a residence among them:

therefore let them dwell in the land, and trade therein; give them leave to dwell where they please, and carry on what trade and traffic in the land they think fit; since they are not likely to be quarrelsome and troublesome, but will deal honestly and honourably, and pay duly for what they agree for or merchandise in:

for the land, behold, [it is] large enough for them; there is room enough for them to dwell in, and pasturage enough for their cattle, and land enough to manure and till, without in the least incommoding the inhabitants: yea, it is likely to be to their advantage, since they would pay for what they should purchase or hire, and would improve the land which lay uncultivated:

let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters; this was the thing principally aimed at; and the rest, both what goes before, and what follows after, were in order to this.

Ver. 22. *Only herein will the men consent unto us*, etc.] The only term or condition insisted upon, to come into an alliance and affinity with us, and

for to dwell with us, to be one people, to become one body politic, is the following one:

if every male among us be circumcised, as they [are] circumcised; submitting to this rite, they agree to take up their residence with us, and be incorporated among us, and become one people.

Ver. 23. *Shall not their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, [be] ours?* etc.] Which would in course come into their families in process of time, by intermarrying with them, or, being more numerous and powerful than they, could seize upon them when they pleased, and take all they had: thus they argue from the profit and advantage that would accrue to them by admitting them among them, upon their terms; and this argument, taken from worldly interest, they knew would have great influence upon them:

only let us consent unto them; in the affair of circumcision:

and they will dwell with us; and what by trading with them, and marrying among them, all their wealth and riches will come into our hands.

Ver. 24. *And unto Hamor and unto Shechem his son hearkened all that went out of the gate of his city*, etc.] That is, all the inhabitants of the city

who came to the gate of it, upon the summons given them, and departed from thence to their habitations, having a great opinion of their prince and his son; and moved either with awe of them or love to them, and influenced both by their arguments and example, they agreed to what was proposed to them:

and every male was circumcised, all that went out of the gate of his city; all the men citizens; and not only the adult, and who now went out by the gate of the city, but all their male children likewise were circumcised.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore,* etc.] Or in “pain”^{f1568}, when their pains were strong upon them, as the Targum of Onkelos; or when they were weak through the pain of circumcision, as the Targum of Jonathan; for it seems that the pain of circumcision was more intense on the third day^{f1569}, and the part the more inflamed, and the person more feverish, and which is observed by physicians of other wounds; and therefore Hippocrates^{f1570} advised not to meddle with wounds on the third or fourth days, or do anything that might irritate them, for on those days they were apt to rankle or be inflamed, and bring on fevers; and in this case, not only the wound was sore in itself and distressing, but being in such a part of the body, motion must give great uneasiness: nor could persons in such circumstances easily arise and walk, and go forth to defend themselves; and of this Jacob’s sons availed themselves: so

that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brethren; by the mother’s side as well as the father’s, being Leah’s children, and so most provoked at this indignity and abuse of their sister:

took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly; not fearing the inhabitants of it, and their rising up against them to defend themselves, knowing in what circumstances they were: or “upon the city that dwelt securely”; as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; for the men of the city had no suspicion of any such attempt that would be made upon them, and therefore were quite easy and secure, not expecting nor fearing anything of this kind:

and slew all the males; the males that were grown up, for the little ones are after said to be carried captive, (^{Q1329}Genesis 34:29); Josephus^{f1571} takes no notice of this circumstance of their being circumcised, but represents them as surprised in the night of their festival, overcharged with feasting, and

their watch asleep, who were first killed. Though only two of Jacob's sons were mentioned, they might be assisted by the rest; at least, no doubt, they were attended with servants, who were aiding: in accomplishing this cruel and bloody attempt.

Ver. 26. *And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword*, etc.] Whom they had been just treating with in a seeming friendly manner: Shechem was the chief aggressor, and his crime was very heinous; but considering that he did all he could, after the fact was committed, to make recompence for the injury done, he deserved other treatment, at least mercy should have been shown him. Hamor, perhaps, was too indulgent to his son, connived at his sin, and did not punish him for it; and, it may be, approved of it, and now dies for it:

and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out; where she was kept from the time of her being ravished by Shechem, with an intention to marry her, could the consent of her parents and relations be obtained; for it does not appear that he kept her to carry on a criminal conversation with her, but a courtship in order to marriage.

Ver. 27. *The sons of Jacob came upon the slain*, etc.] That is, the rest of them, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it; understanding what their two brothers had done, they came and joined them, and partook of stripping the slain of their clothes, or from them what they found of any worth about them:

and spoiled the city; plundered it of all its goods and substance, spoiled all the inhabitants of it of their wealth:

because they had defiled their sister; one of them had done it, which is imputed to them all, they not restraining him from it, when it was in their power; and perhaps approving of it, and made a laugh of and jest at it; or however did not punish him for it.

Ver. 28. *They took their sheep, their oxen, and their asses*, etc.] The Shechemites hoped to have the cattle and substance of Jacob's family, and in a hypocritical manner submitted to circumcision, for the sake of worldly advantage; for that, and pleasing their prince, seem to be the only views they had in it; wherefore, in this there is a just retaliation of them in Providence:

and that which [was] in the city, and that which [was] in the field; the cattle that were kept at home, and those that were brought up in the field, all became a prey.

Ver. 29. *And all their wealth*, etc.] Or “power” ^{f1572} or “strength”; every thing that made them mighty and powerful; their gold and silver, their jewels, and rich furniture of their houses, their arms and weapons of war, their goods and substance, in which they trafficked:

and all their little ones and their wives took theft captive: they spared the women and children, as was usual war, and in the plunder of towns and cities:

and spoiled even all that [was] in the house; of Shechem or Hamor, or in any of the houses of the inhabitants; they rifled and plundered everyone, and took away whatsoever they found in them; but as Jacob disapproved of this unjust, cruel, bloody, and perfidious action, so no doubt, as he set the captives at liberty, he restored to them their cattle and substance.

Ver. 30. *And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi*, etc.] who were the principals concerned in this affair:

ye have troubled me; because of the sin they had committed, because of the dishonour brought upon religion, and because of the danger he and his family were hereby exposed unto; it greatly disquieted him, made him very uneasy, he was at his wit’s end almost, knew not what to do, what course to take to wipe off the scandal, and to defend himself and family; since it served, he says,

to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land; to make him odious and abominable, to be hated and abhorred by all the people round about, and to be looked upon and treated as a deceitful, treacherous, and perfidious man, that had no regard to his word, to covenants and agreements made by him; as a cruel and bloodthirsty man that spared none, made no difference between the innocent and the guilty; and as a robber and plunderer, that stopped at nothing, committing the greatest outrages to get possession of the substance of others:

amongst the Canaanites and the Perizzites: who were the principal inhabitants of the land, the most numerous, and the most rustic and barbarous, and perhaps nearest, and from whom Jacob had most to fear:

and I [being] few in number; or men of number^{f1573}; he and his sons and servants, in all, making but a small number in comparison of the nations about him:

they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house; not that Jacob was afraid that this would be really the case, for he knew and believed the promises of God to him, of the multiplication of his seed, and of their inheriting the land of Canaan, and of the Messiah springing from him; but this he said to aggravate the sin and folly of his sons, in exposing him and themselves to so much danger, which not only on the face of things appeared probable, but even certain and inevitable, without the interposition of divine power and Providence.

Ver. 31. *And they said*, etc.] Simeon and Levi, in a very pert and unseemly manner:

should he deal with our sister as with an harlot? make a whore of her, and then keep her in his house as such? is this to be borne with? or should we take no more notice of his behaviour to our sister, or show no more regard to her than if she was a common prostitute, whom no man will defend or protect? so say the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem,

“nor let Shechem the son of Hamor mock at us, or boast and say, as an harlot whom no man seeks after, or no man seeks to avenge her; so it is done by Dinah the daughter of Jacob:”

they tacitly insinuate as if Jacob had not that regard for the honour of his daughter and family, and showed his resentment at the wicked behaviour of Shechem, as he ought to have done. It is observed that there is a letter in the word for “harlot” greater than usual, which may either denote the greatness of the sin of Shechem in dealing with Dinah as an harlot, or the great impudence and boldness of Jacob’s sons, in their answer to him, and their audaciousness in justifying such baseness and cruelty they had been guilty of. The whole of this history, as related in this chapter, is given by Polyhistor out of Theodotus the poet^{f1574}.

CHAPTER 35

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 35

This chapter gives an account of Jacob's going to Bethel, and building an altar there by the order and direction of God, (^{<0351>}Genesis 35:1-7), where Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died and was buried, (^{<0358>}Genesis 35:8), and where God appeared to Jacob, confirmed the new name of Israel he had given him, and renewed to him the promises of the multiplication of his seed, and of their inheriting the land of Canaan, (^{<0359>}Genesis 35:9-13); all which is gratefully acknowledged by Jacob, who erected a pillar in the place, and called it Bethel, in memory of God's gracious appearance to him there, (^{<0354>}Genesis 35:14,15); from hence he journeyed towards his father's house, and on the way Rachel his wife fell in travail, and bore him a son, and died, and was buried near Ephrath, (^{<0356>}Genesis 35:16-21); near this place Reuben committed incest with Bilhah, (^{<0352>}Genesis 35:22), and the names of the twelve sons of Jacob are given, (^{<0353>}Genesis 35:23-26); and the chapter is closed with an account of Jacob's arrival at his father's house, of the death of Isaac, and of his burial at the direction of his two sons, (^{<0357>}Genesis 35:27-29).

Ver. 1. *And God said unto Jacob*, etc.] When he was in great distress, on account of the slaughter of the Shechemites by his sons, not knowing what step to take, or course to steer for the safety of him and his family; then God, for his comfort and direction, appeared and spoke to him, either in a dream or vision, or by an impulse on his mind, or by an articulate voice: perhaps this was the Son of God, the second Person, who might appear in an human form, as he often did; since he afterwards speaks of God as of another divine Person, distinct from him, even his divine Father:

arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; which is said to be twenty eight miles from Shechem^{f1575}; hither he is bid to go in haste, and where, it is suggested, he would be safe, and where it would be right and proper for him to dwell awhile:

and make there an altar to God; and offer sacrifice to him, praise him for salvation and deliverance wrought, pray to him for present and future

mercies that were needful, and pay the vows he had there made, even to that God,

that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother; who, resenting his getting the birthright and blessing from him, threatened to kill him; which obliged him to flee from his father's house, and go into Mesopotamia, and in his way thither God appeared to him, at the place called by him from thence Bethel, and gave him many precious promises; and Jacob there made a solemn vow, that if God would be with him, and keep him, and give him food and raiment, and return him to his father's house, the pillar that was then and there set up should be God's house, as well as he should be his God. Jacob had now been nine or ten years in the land of Canaan, and had all done for him he desired, and much more abundantly, and yet had not been at Bethel to make good his vow, either through forgetfulness or neglect; and therefore, as Jarchi thinks, was chastised for it in the affair of Dinah; or rather, for one can hardly think so good a man could forget, or would wilfully neglect such a vow as this, that he wanted opportunity of going thither, or waited for a divine order, and now he had both, which he readily embraced.

Ver. 2. *Then Jacob said unto his household*, etc.] His wives and children; *and to all that [were] with him*; his menservants and maidservants, and such as remained with him of the captives of Shechem, who might choose to continue with him:

put away the strange gods that [are] among you; meaning not the teraphim or images of Laban's, which Rachel had stolen from him; for it can hardly be thought that these should be retained so many years in Jacob's family, and used in an idolatrous manner; but rather such as might be among the Canaanitish servants that had been lately taken into Jacob's service, or that were among the captives of Shechem, or taken along with the spoil of that city; and so the Targum of Jonathan calls them the idols of the people, which they brought from the idols' temple at Shechem; and the words may be rendered, "the gods of the strangers"^{f1576}, that is, of the Shechemites, who were Heathens and aliens, strangers to the true God, the knowledge and worship of him:

and be clean; either by abstaining from their wives, as some interpret it, from (^{<290>}Exodus 19:10,15); or rather by washing their bodies, as Aben Ezra gives the sense of it; their hands were full of the blood of the

Shechemites, and needed to be washed and purified, as the Targum of Jonathan has it, from the pollutions of the slain, before they went to Bethel, the house of God; and these outward ablutions and purifications were significative of inward cleansing by the grace of God, and of outward reformation of life and manners; (see ^{<2015>}Isaiah 1:15,16);

and change your garments: which might be stained with blood, and therefore not fit to appear in before God, or were old and worn out, or sordid apparel: changing and washing of garments were also emblems of renewing of the mind, and cleansing of the soul, and of the change of heart and life, as well as of pleasure, delight, and cheerfulness in appearing before God.

Ver. 3. *And let us arise and go up to Bethel*, etc.] Thus prepared and purged, their tents clear of idols, their bodies washed with pure water, and their garments new, neat, and clean; all symbolical of inward purity, and of freedom from idolatry and evil works, as became those who go to the house of God, and are his worshippers, (see ^{<3022>}Hebrews 10:22).

I will make there an altar unto God; as he has directed, and sacrifice to him, and worship him, and give the tenth unto him, and so make it a Bethel, an house of God indeed, as he had vowed, (^{<0322>}Genesis 28:22);

who answered me in the day of my distress; on account of his brother Esau, from whose wrath he fled:

and was with me in the way which I went; from his father's house to Padanaram; in which journey he was alone and destitute, and exposed to many difficulties and dangers, but God was with him, and preserved him, and directed and brought him to Laban's house in safety.

Ver. 4. *They gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which [were] in their hands*, etc.] Whether in the hands of his servants or of the captives taken at Shechem, or in the hands of his sons, who had them along with the spoil they took there; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“they delivered, into the hand of Jacob all the idols of the people which were in their hands, which they had took of the idols of Shechem:”

and [all their] earrings which [were] in their ears; not the earrings that women wore in common, such as Abraham's servant gave to Rebekah, and

which Jacob's wives might wear, for such were not unlawful; but either which were worn in the ears of the strange gods or idols; for such used, it seems, according to some writers, to be decorated and ornamented after that manner; or rather in the ears of the idolaters themselves, worn by them in a superstitious way, having the images of these idols on them: so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and the earrings which were in the ears of the inhabitants of the city of Shechem, in which were formed the likeness of their idols:”

and Jacob hid them under the oak which [was] by Shechem; that is, the idols, which, after he had broke to pieces, perhaps, he dug a hole under an oak, and there buried them, that they might be no more made use of in an idolatrous way; and he chose to put them under an oak, because it is a tree which often stands many years before it is cut down, and besides was used for religious purposes, and had in great veneration, and therefore seldom felled. Those idols seem not to be made of anything valuable, perhaps of wood or stone, for had they been of gold or silver, Jacob would doubtless have melted them, and converted them to other uses, and not have buried them under ground. The Jews^{f1577} say, that the idol Jacob hid under the oak was in the form of a dove, which the Samaritans after some time found, and set it on the top of Mount Gerizim. Some take this oak to be the same with that mentioned in (~~Gen~~ Joshua 24:26); but of that there can be no certainty, since Jacob, as it is highly probable, laid these images alone, and never intended any should know anything of them where they were.

Ver. 5. *And they journeyed*, etc.] Jacob and his family, with all that were with them, from Shechem to Bethel:

and the terror of God was upon the cities that [were] round about them; an exceeding great panic seized the inhabitants of the cities of the land of Canaan, all about Shechem, which was from God himself impressing it on their minds, through what the sons of Jacob had done to that city:

and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob; as it might have been thought they would, and take revenge on them for their ill usage of the inhabitants of a neighbouring city; but instead of this, they were afraid they should be used in the same manner; wherefore Jacob and his family journeyed in safety, and came to Bethel in peace.

Ver. 6. *So Jacob came to Luz, which [is] in the land of Canaan, that [is] Bethel*, etc.] The place Jacob had called Bethel, when he was there before,

was formerly called Luz, (^{<0289>}Genesis 28:19); and is here said to be in the land of Canaan, that is, in that part of the land which was inhabited by those who were properly called Canaanites, to distinguish it from another Luz, which was in the land of the Hittites; (^{<0026>}Judges 1:26);

he and all the people that [were] with him; wives, children, servants, or whoever else came from Shechem, these all came safe to Luz without any molestation or loss.

Ver. 7. *And he built there an altar*, etc.] As he was bid to do, and as he promised he would, (^{<0316>}Genesis 35:1,3);

and called the place Elbethel; the God of Bethel; a title which God takes to himself, (^{<0313>}Genesis 31:13); or rather the sense is, that he called the place with respect God, or because of his appearance to him there, Bethel, confirming the name he had before given it, (^{<0339>}Genesis 36:19); (see ^{<0315>}Genesis 35:15); as the following reason shows:

because there God appeared; or the divine Persons, for both words are plural that are used; the Targum of Jonathan has it, the angels of God, and so Aben Ezra interprets it; but here, no doubt, the divine Being is meant, who appeared

unto him; to Jacob in this place, as he went to Mesopotamia, and comforted and encouraged him with many promises;

when he fled from the face of his brother; his brother Esau, who was wroth with him, and sought to take away his life, and therefore was forced to flee for it.

Ver. 8. *But Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, died*, etc.] That is, when, and quickly after they were come to Bethel; a nurse of Rebekah's came with her to Canaan, when she married Isaac, and is generally thought to be this Deborah, which is not improbable, (^{<0259>}Genesis 24:59), though she might have more nurses than one, as great personages sometimes have, and then it will not be so difficult to answer the objection made here; that Rebekah's nurse, whom Jacob is supposed to leave in Canaan when he went to Padanaram, should now be in his family when he returned from hence; since the reply would be, that that nurse and this Deborah were not the same; but supposing them to be the same, which is most likely, this is accounted for several ways: according to Jarchi, who had it from an ancient writer of theirs ^{f1578}, Rebekah sent her to fetch Jacob home,

according to her promise, (^{<0275>}Genesis 27:45); but it is not very probable that she should send a woman, and one so ancient, on such an errand: rather, this nurse of hers, after she had accompanied her to Canaan, and stayed awhile with her there, returned to Haran again, and being very useful in Jacob's large family, and having a great respect for them, returned again with them, and which she might choose in hopes of seeing Rebekah once more, whom she had a strong affection for; or, when Jacob was come into the land of Canaan to Shechem, he might send for her from Hebron to be assisting in his family; or going to visit his parents, which he might do before he went with his whole family to them, might bring her with him to Shechem, who travelling with him to Bethel died there: her name signifies a bee, as Josephus ^{f1579} observes:

and she was buried beneath Bethel; at the bottom of the hill or mountain on which Bethel stood:

under an oak; of which there were many about Bethel, (^{<1134>}1 Kings 13:14) (^{<1273>}2 Kings 2:23,24); and it was not unusual to bury the dead under trees, (see ^{<0813>}1 Samuel 31:13);

and the name of it was called Allonbachuth; the oak of weeping, because of the weeping and mourning of Jacob's family at her death, she being a good woman, an ancient servant, and in great esteem with them. The Jews have a tradition that the occasion of this weeping, or at least of the increase of it, was, that Jacob at this time had the news of the death of Rebekah his mother; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“there tidings were brought to Jacob of the death of Rebekah his mother, and he called the name of it another weeping;”

and so Jarchi.

Ver. 9. *And God appeared unto Jacob again*, etc.] At Bethel, as he had at Shechem, when he bid him go thither, (^{<0301>}Genesis 35:1); or rather as he had at the brook Jabbok, where he said to him the same things as here, (^{<0324>}Genesis 32:24,28), though Jarchi interprets it of his appearing again to him at the same place at Bethel, where he had appeared to him the first time, at his going to Haran, and now a second time:

when he came out of Padanaram; or returned from thence:

and blessed him; with the same blessings as before, renewing and confirming them. Jarchi says, with the blessing of mourners, because of the death of his mother, and her nurse.

Ver. 10. *And God said unto him, thy name [is] Jacob*, etc.] Which his parents gave him at his birth, and by, which he had been always called:

thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name; not Jacob only, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech interpret it, but Israel also, and that more commonly and frequently, and not only he himself personally, but his posterity also:

and he called his name Israel; confirmed the name he had before given him, (^{<0328>}Genesis 32:28); and by this confirmation of it signifying, that as he had prevailed over his brother Esau, and escaped his hands, so he should prevail over all that rose up against him, and opposed him, even as he had power with God, and prevailed: though some think this name was only promised him before, but now actually given him; but then they take the angel that appeared wrestling with him in the likeness of a man to be a created angel, and that what he promised in the name of God was now made, good by God himself; there is great reason to believe that that angel was the increased one, the Son of God, as here also.

Ver. 11. *And God said unto him, I [am] God Almighty*, etc.] And so able to protect and defend him, and to fulfil all promises made to him, and to supply him with everything he wanted; being, as some choose to render the word, “God all sufficient”, having a sufficiency of all good things in him to communicate to his people:

be fruitful and multiply; which carries in it a promise or prophecy that he should increase and multiply, though not he himself personally, he having but one son born after this, yet in his posterity:

a nation, and a company of nations, shall be of thee; the nation of Israel, called so after his name, and the twelve tribes, which were as so many nations, of which the above nation consisted:

and kings shall come out of thy loins; as Saul, David, Solomon, and, many others, who were kings of Israel and of Judah, and especially the King Messiah; yea, all his posterity were kings and priests, or a kingdom of priests, (^{<0916>}Exodus 19:6).

Ver. 12. *And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it,* etc.] Meaning the land of Canaan, which, as he had by promise given it to his grandfather, and father, so he would give it to him; thus renewing the grant of it for his comfort, and the encouragement of his faith, when he had been in danger of being destroyed by the inhabitants of it, and was obliged to remove from one part of it to another:

and to thy seed after thee will I give the land; and not only make a grant of it to them, but put them into the possession of it, as in process of time he did.

Ver. 13. *And God went up from him,* etc.] Or “from above” him ^{f1580}; by this it seems that there was a visible appearance of the glory of the Lord, as Onkelos, or of the Shechinah, as Jonathan; even of the Son of God in an human form, who either appeared just above him, or on the same spot with him, conversing with him as above related; and when he had done, ascended in a visible manner from him, till he disappeared:

in the place where he talked with him; whether it was over him, or by him; thence he removed from him, and ceased talking with him; for communion with a divine Person is not constant and uninterrupted in the present state.

Ver. 14. *And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him,* etc.] He had set up a pillar in this place before he went to Padanaram, (⁻⁰²⁸¹⁸Genesis 28:18); and some, think this pillar is here referred to, and render the words, “had set up a pillar” ^{f1581}; but as that was done thirty years ago, it is very likely it was demolished by the Heathens before this time, or was fallen to ruin, wherefore this must be at least a renewal or reparation of it: though it rather seems to be another pillar, and quite a new one, being set up in that very spot of ground, over or on which God had been talking with him: and the following account of it seems to confirm the same,

[even] a pillar of stone; made of several stones hewed and polished, and well put together; whereas the former was but a single stone, rude and unpolished, though it is probable it was one of these:

and he poured a drink offering thereon; of wine, of which drink offerings under the law were, thereby consecrating it to the worship and service of God. Aben Ezra says it was either of water or of wine, with which he washed it, and after that poured oil on it; and the Targum of Jonathan says, he poured a drink offering of wine, and a drink offering of water:

and he poured oil thereon; as he did before; (see Gill on “~~Q388~~Genesis 28:18”).

Ver. 15. *And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.*] He confirmed the name he had before given it, when he went to Mesopotamia, and now upon his return renews and establishes it; or he gave this name more especially to that particular spot where God conversed with him, and on which he erected a pillar, and consecrated it to religious worship, and so made it God’s house, as he promised he would, (~~Q32~~Genesis 28:22), both building an altar for sacrifice, and setting up a pillar, which was beginning an house for God.

Ver. 16. *And they journeyed from Bethel*, etc.] Jacob and his family; how long they stayed there is not certain, some say four months ^{f1582}; hence they removed towards Bethlehem, which was twelve miles from Bethel ^{f1583}, in their way to Hebron:

and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; or Bethlehem, as it was also called, (~~Q39~~Genesis 35:19); a mile off of it, according to the Targums of Onkelos and Jerusalem; or about a mile, as Saadiah Gaon; for it was not a precise exact mile, but something less than a mile, as Ben Melech observes; and so Benjamin of Tudela, who was on the spot, says ^{f1584}, that Rachel’s grave is about half a mile from Bethlehem. Ben Gersom thinks the word here used signifies cultivated land, and that the sense is, that there were only fields, vineyards, and gardens to go through to the city, (see ~~Q407~~Genesis 48:7 ~~Q159~~2 Kings 5:19):

and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour; the time of childbirth was come, and which came suddenly upon her, as travail does, even while journeying, which obliged them to stop; and her pains came upon her, and these very sharp and severe, so that she had a difficult time of it: pains and sorrow in childbearing are the fruit of sin, and more or less attend all in such a circumstance; but, in some, labour is more painful than in others, and more at one time than at another, and is the most painful in women than in other creatures.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour*, etc.] In the midst of it, and at the worst:

that the midwife said unto her, fear not; for Rachel big with child, it was necessary to take a midwife with them in the journey; and perhaps this might be one that was always kept in the family, and had been assisting to

all Jacob's wives and concubines at their labours; and this seems probable from what follows, since she not only bids her be of good courage, and not fear, comforting her under her pains, giving her hopes they would soon be over, and that she would have a safe delivery, and do well: but this she assures her of,

thou shalt have this son also; as she had one before, at whose birth she said, "the Lord shall add to me another son"; and therefore called his name Joseph, (^{<0324>}Genesis 30:24); this the midwife remembered, and endeavours to comfort her with the accomplishment of it.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, for she died*, etc.] In childbirth; she had most passionately desired children, without which she could not live with ease and peace of mind, and now she dies by having one; (see ^{<0301>}Genesis 30:1); and by this account of her death it appears, that death is the separation and disunion of soul and body; that at death the soul departs from the body; that the soul does not die with it, but goes elsewhere, and lives in a separate state, and never dies; it goes into another world, a world of spirits, even unto God that gave it, (^{<0317>}Ecclesiastes 12:7):

that she called his name Benoni; which signifies "the son of my sorrow", having borne and brought him forth in sorrow, and now about to leave him as soon as born, which might increase her sorrow; or "the son, of my mourning"; as Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom interpret it; or "the son of my strength", all her strength being exhausted in bringing him forth:

but his father called him Benjamin; that is, "the son of the right hand", being as dear to him, and as beloved by him as his right hand; or who would be as the right hand to him, his staff and support in his old age; or else as being the son of her who was as his right hand, dear and assisting to him. Some render it, "the son of days", or years, that is, the son of his old age, as he is called, (^{<0420>}Genesis 44:20); Jarchi and Ben Gerson interpret it, "the son of the south"; the right hand being put for the south; and they think this son was so called, because he only was born in the land of Canaan, which lay, they say, to the south with respect to Mesopotamia, where the rest were born; but be the etymology of the word as it will, the change of the name seems to be made by Jacob, because that which Rachel gave her son would have perpetually put Jacob in mind of the sorrow of his beloved Rachel, and therefore gave him a name more pleasant and

agreeable. The Jews say ^{f1585} he was born the eleventh of October, and lived one hundred and eleven years.

Ver. 19. *And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which [is] Bethlehem.* Hence called Bethlehem Ephratah, (^{<382>}Micah 5:2); with great pertinency is Rachel represented as if risen from her grave, and weeping for her children, when the children of Bethlehem, and thereabout, were slain by Herod, she being buried so near that place, (^{<4026>}Matthew 2:16-18); at what age she died is not said. Polyhistor, out of Demetrius ^{f1586}, reports, that she died after Jacob had lived with her twenty three years.

Ver. 20. *And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave,* etc.] A sepulchral monument erected in memory of her; this according to Benjamin of Tudela ^{f1587} was made of twelve stones, according to the number of the sons of Jacob, and over it was a vault or roof, supported by four pillars:

that [is] the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day; it continued to the times of Moses, the writer of this history, and to the times of Samuel, as appears from (^{<900>}1 Samuel 10:2); and even travellers of late times affirm it to be seen still, to the north of Bethlehem, on the right hand of the way as you go from Bethlehem to Jerusalem; but the present sepulchral monument, as Mr. Maundrel says ^{f1588}, can be none of that which Jacob erected, for it appears plainly to be a modern Turkish structure. Near the grave are found some little black stones, which strangers pick up, and are fancied to be helpful to women, to give them an easier birth, the same the above traveller says resemble peas. The Jews that pass by it were used to engrave their names on the stones, of the pillars ^{f1589}.

Ver. 21. *And Israel journeyed,* etc.] Having stayed near Bethlehem, as it is said, about two months ^{f1590}; this is the first time Jacob is by Moses called Israel, after this name, was given him; the reason of which the Jews say is, because he bore the death of Rachel with so much patience:

and spread his tent beyond the tower of Eder; which was a place of pasturage, and fit for his flocks, (see ^{<308>}Micah 4:8); it was about a mile from Bethlehem to the south ^{f1591}, and is supposed to be the place where the shepherds were watching their flocks, when the angel reported to them the birth of Christ, (^{<408>}Luke 2:8); pretty remarkable are the words added here in the Targum of Jonathan,

“the place from whence the King Messiah will be revealed in the end of days.”

Ver. 22. *And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land,* etc.] In that part of it near Bethlehem:

that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's concubine; his concubine wife; she was the maid that Rachel gave him, and this added to his affliction, and made it double, to lose Rachel by death, and to have her favourite maid, his concubine, defiled by his own son, and whom it is highly probable he abstained from hereafter. This, though a very heinous sin of his son's, yet might be suffered as a chastisement to Jacob, for making use of concubines:

and Israel heard [it]; though the crime was committed secretly, and was thought it would have been concealed, but by some means or other Jacob heard of it, and no doubt severely reproved his son for it; and though nothing is here related, as said by him on this occasion, it is certain it gave him great offence, grief and trouble, and he remembered it to his dying day, and took away the birthright from Reuben on account of it, (⁴⁴⁸Genesis 49:3,4); an empty space here follows in the original text, and a pause in it, denoting perhaps the amazement Jacob was filled with when he heard it; and the great grief of his heart, which was such, that he was not able to speak a word; the Septuagint version fills up the space by adding, “and it appeared evil in his sight”:

now the sons of Jacob were twelve; who were the heads of twelve tribes, Benjamin the last being born, and Jacob having afterwards no more children, they were all reckoned up under their respective mothers, excepting Dinah, a daughter, from whom there was no tribe, in the following verses.

Ver. 23. *The sons of Leah,* etc.] Jacob's first wife, which are six, and are reckoned in order, according to their birth, Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun.

Ver. 24. *The sons of Rachel,* etc.] Then Rachel's, Jacob's next wife, though in right his first and only one, who had two children, Joseph and Benjamin.

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Bilhah,* etc.] Then Bilhah's sons, who was Rachel's handmaid, and these were two, Dan and Naphtali.

Ver. 26. *And the sons of Zilpah*, etc.] And lastly, the sons of Zilpah, Leah's handmaid, which were two also, Gad and Asher; it is added,

these [are] the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padanaram, all excepting Benjamin; and because they were by far the greater part, even all but one, that were born there, this is said in general; and there having been given in the context such a particular account of the birth of Benjamin, and of the place of it, there was no need for the historian particularly to except him, since the reader would be in no danger of being led into a mistake.

Ver. 27. *And Jacob came unto Isaac his father*, etc.] No mention being made of his mother, it is very probable she was dead; and Isaac being alone, and very old, and the time of his death drawing nigh, he might send for Jacob to come with his family, and be with him; for it can hardly be thought that this was the first time of Jacob's visiting his father since he came into the land, of Canaan, which must be about ten years; but as yet he had not come with his family to him, and in order to abide with him:

unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which [is] Hebron; Mamre was a plain, so called from the name of a man, a friend and confederate of Abraham, (^{Q138}Genesis 13:18 14:13); where, or near to which, stood a city, called Kirjath Arbah, or the city of the four, Arbah and his three sons; so that it might be called Tetrapolls, and was later called Hebron:

where Abraham and Isaac sojourned; lived good part of their days, (see ^{Q138}Genesis 13:18 18:1 23:2); it was about twenty miles from Bethlehem, and the tower of Eder ^{f1592}, where Jacob was last.

Ver. 28. *And the days of Isaac were an hundred and fourscore years*.] He lived, forty years after he had made his will, and blessed his two sons. Jacob was now one hundred and twenty years of age, being born when his father was sixty; and Joseph was now twenty nine years of age, so that Isaac lived twelve years after the selling of Joseph into Egypt; he was five years older than his father Abraham was when he died.

Ver. 29. *And Isaac gave up the ghost, and died*, etc.] According to an Arabic writer ^{f1593}, he died at the end of the year 3,668, in the month Jiar, when Jacob was one hundred and twenty years old, and his children buried him in the cave in which Abraham was buried, in the city Chabil: According to Ussher this at about 1,716 B.C.

and was gathered unto his people; his soul was gathered to the righteous, his body was laid where Abraham and Sarah were buried:

[being] old, and full of days; the number of which is observed in
(~~GEN~~ Genesis 35:28);

and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him; in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, where he lived and died, and where his parents had been buried, and Rebekah his wife. Esau very probably was sent for upon his father's death, or a little before it. This shows that there was a reconciliation between Jacob and Esau, and that it continued; and that Jacob did not decline the visit of him at Seir, nor in a clandestine manner took his journey another way, and avoided going thither on his invitation.

CHAPTER 36

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 36

This chapter gives us a genealogical account of Esau's family, of his wives and sons, with whom he removed from Seir, (^{<0301>}Genesis 36:1-10); of his sons' sons, or grandsons, who were dukes in the land of Edom, (^{<0311>}Genesis 36:11-19); after which is inserted a genealogy of Seir the Horite, into whose family Esau married, and of his children, and the dukes among them, (^{<0320>}Genesis 36:20-30); then follows a list of the kings of Edom, before there were any in Israel, (^{<0331>}Genesis 36:31-39); and the chapter is closed with a brief narration of the dukes of Esau, according to their families, (^{<0340>}Genesis 36:40-43).

Ver. 1. *Now these [are] the generations of Esau, who [is] Edom.*] Who was surnamed Edom, from the red pottage he sold his birthright for to his brother Jacob, (^{<0250>}Genesis 25:30); an account is given of him, and his posterity, not only because he was a son of Isaac, lately made mention of as concerned in his burial; but because his posterity would be often taken notice of in the sacred Scriptures, and so their genealogy would serve to illustrate such passages; and Maimonides ^{f1594} thinks the principal reason is, that whereas Amalek, a branch of Esau's family, were to be destroyed by an express command of God, it was necessary that all the rest should be particularly described, lest they should all perish together; but other ends are answered hereby, as partly to show the fulfilment of the promise to Abraham, concerning the multiplication of his seed, and the accomplishment of the oracle to Rebekah, signifying that two nations were in her womb, one of which were those Edomites; as also to observe how the blessing of Isaac his father came upon him with effect, (^{<0217>}Genesis 22:17 25:23 27:39,40).

Ver. 2. *And Esau took his wives of the daughters of Canaan,* etc.] Of the Canaanites, the posterity of cursed Canaan, most of them were of them, though not all, the two following were, and so those, if different from them in (^{<0234>}Genesis 26:34), one of his wives was of the family of Ishmael, as after related:

Adah the daughter of Elon the Hittite; according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, this is the same with Bashemath, (^{<0234>}Genesis 26:34); and that she had two names:

and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon the Hivite; the daughter of the one, and the granddaughter of the other, it being usual in Scripture to call grandchildren children, for Zibeon and Anah were father and son, (^{<0334>}Genesis 36:24,25); and the Samaritan, Septuagint, and Syriac versions read here, “the daughter of Anah the son of Zibeon”: there are an Anah and a Zibeon who were brethren, (^{<0330>}Genesis 36:20); wherefore Aben Ezra supposes that these two brothers, or the father and son, lay with the same woman, and it could not be known whose child it was that was born of her, and therefore this was called the daughter of them both. Jarchi supposes this wife of Esau to be the same with Judith, (^{<0234>}Genesis 26:34); but not only the names differ, but also the names of their fathers, and of the tribe or nation they were of.

Ver. 3. *And Bashemath, Ishmael’s daughter, sister of Nebaioth*, etc.] The eldest son of Ishmael, (see ^{<0230>}Genesis 28:9); called there Mahalath.

Ver. 4. *And Adah bare to Esau Eliphaz*, etc.] This son of Esau, according to Jerom ^{f1595}, is the same with him mentioned in the book of Job, as one of his friends that came to visit him, (^{<0211>}Job 2:11); and so says the Targum of Jonathan on (^{<0330>}Genesis 36:10); but he rather was the grandson of this man, since he is called the Temanite:

and Bashemath bare Reuel; the name is the same with Reuel or Raguel, the name of Jethro; but cannot be the same person as is said by some, for he was a Midianite and not an Edomite, (^{<0218>}Exodus 2:18 ^{<0409>}Numbers 10:29).

Ver. 5. *And Aholibamah bare Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah*, etc.] In this genealogy mention is made of another Korah among the sons of Eliphaz, (^{<0336>}Genesis 36:16); which Jarchi thinks is the same with this, and takes him to be a bastard, and begotten in incest by Eliphaz, on his father’s wife Aholibamah; but Aben Ezra observes, that some are of opinion that there were two Korahs, one the son of Aholibamah, and the other the son of Adah; but he thinks there were but one, which was the son of Aholibamah, and is reckoned among the sons of Eliphaz, because he dwelt among them; or perhaps his mother died when he was little, and Adah brought him up

with her sons, and so was reckoned her son; such were the children of Michal, Saul's daughter:

these [are] the sons of Esau, which were born to him in the land of Canaan; and we do not read of any born to him elsewhere; so that of all his wives, which some think were four, others five, he had but five sons; what daughters he had is not related, though from (¹⁰³⁶Genesis 36:6), it appears he had some.

Ver. 6. *And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters*, etc.]

The names of his wives and sons are before given; but what were the names of his daughters, or their number, is not said:

and all the persons of his house: his menservants and maidservants that were born in his house, or bought with his money; the word for "persons" signifies "souls"^{f1596}, and is sometimes used for slaves that are bought and sold, (see ²⁵⁷³Ezekiel 27:13 ⁶⁶⁸³Revelation 18:13):

and his cattle, and all his beasts; his sheep and oxen, camels and asses:

and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan: before he went to Seir the first time, part of which he might leave behind in Canaan, with servants to improve it; and also that part of his father's personal estate which fell to him at his death, as well as what he might further acquire after his death, during his stay in Canaan:

and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob; not into another part of the same country; but into another country, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan supply it, and so the Arabic version, even unto Seir, as appears by what follows; and whither he had been before, and had obtained large possessions, and now having got all he could at his father's death, and collecting together all his other substance, thought fit to retire from thence to Seir, which he liked better, and for a reason afterwards given; God thus disposing his mind, and making the circumstances of things necessary, that he should remove in order to make way for Jacob, and his posterity, to dwell in a land which was designed for them: and so the Samaritan and Septuagint versions read it, "and he went out of the land of Canaan": and the Syriac version is, "and he went to the land of Seir". Some render the words to this sense, that he went thither "before the coming of Jacob"^{f1597}; and it is true that he did go thither before his brother came again into Canaan; but of this the text speaks not, for what follows

will not agree with it; others better, “because of Jacob”^{f1598}; not for fear of him, as the Targum of Jonathan, which paraphrases the words,

“for the terror of his brother Jacob was cast upon him;”

but because he knew, by the blessing of his father, and the oracle of God, and his concurring providence in all things, that the land of Canaan belonged to him, and also for a reason that follows.

Ver. 7. *For their riches were more than that they might dwell together,* etc.] And therefore it was proper to part, as Abraham and Lot had done before, (^{<0136>}Genesis 13:6);

and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them, because of their cattle; their cattle were so numerous that they could not get pasturage for them, there not being enough left them by the inhabitants of it for them to occupy; nor could they hire land of them sufficient for them both; they being not possessors but sojourners in it, and therefore could have no more of it than the inhabitants thought fit to let unto them.

Ver. 8. *Thus dwelt Esau in Mount Seir,* etc.] Before he is said to be in the land of Seir, (^{<0338>}Genesis 32:3); now to dwell in a mount of that name; from which driving the Horites, he seized upon and dwelt in it; it had not its name from his own rough, shaggy hair, as Josephus says^{f1599}, much less from the satyrs, and hairy demons that frequented it, as R. Abraham Seba^{f1600}, but rather from Seir the Horite who inhabited the land, (^{<0131>}Genesis 36:20); unless he had his name from the mountain which might be so called, from its being rough and rugged like shaggy hair, and being covered with bushes and brambles which carried such a resemblance; and so it stands opposed to Mount Halak near it, (^{<0117>}Joshua 11:17), which signifies the bald or smooth mountain, being destitute of shrubs, etc. The Targum of Jonathan calls this mountain Mount Gabla, and one part of the land of Edom, or Idumea, was called Gobolites, as Josephus^{f1601} relates, perhaps the same with Gebal, (^{<0307>}Psalms 83:7); hither Esau went and took up his residence, after things were amicably adjusted between him and his brother Jacob; the Jews say^{f1602}, that Isaac left, all he had to his two sons, and that after they had buried him, Esau said to Jacob, let us divide what our father has left us into two parts, and I will choose because I am the firstborn; so Jacob divided it into two parts; all that his father had left he made one part, and the land of Israel the other part, and Esau took what his father left, (see ^{<0136>}Genesis 36:6); and the land of Israel and the cave of Machpelah he

delivered to Jacob, and they drew up everlasting writings between them. Now this or something like it being the case, and those the circumstances of fixings, thus, and by that means, so it came to pass, that Esau dwelt in Seir; and Jacob remained secure and quiet in the land of Canaan;

Esau [is] Edom, so called from the red pottage he had of Jacob, which is repeated to fix the odium of that transaction upon him, as well as for the sake of what follows, showing the reason why his posterity were called Edomites.

Ver. 9. *And these are the generations of Esau*, etc.] Or the posterity of Esau, his children and grandchildren, as before and hereafter related:

the father of the Edomites in Mount Seir; from whom they of that mountain and in the adjacent country had the name of Edomites or Idumeans.

Ver. 10. *These are the names of Esau's sons*, etc.] In this and some following verses, an account is given of the sons of Esau, which agrees with what is before observed, and of his sons' sons:

Eliphaz the son of Adah the wife of Esau: who seems to be his first wife, and this his first son:

Reuel the son of Bashemath and wife of Esau; his second son by another wife, a daughter of Ishmael, (^{<033B>}Genesis 36:3,4).

Ver. 11. *And the sons of Eliphaz were Teman*, etc.] This was his firstborn, and from him the city of Teman in Edom or Idumea had its name, (see ^{<0407>}Jeremiah 49:7 ^{<000E>}Amos 1:12); and Eliphaz is called the Temanite from hence, (^{<82E1>}Job 2:11); four more sons are mentioned,

Omar, Zepho, and Gatam, and Kenaz; but I do not find that any towns or cities, or any part of the land of Edom, were denominated from any of them; only it may be observed that Zepho is called Zephi in (^{<1303>}1 Chronicles 1:36); the account seems fabulous and not to be depended on, which Josephus Ben Gorion ^{f1603} gives of him, of opposing the burial of Jacob, being taken by Joseph and carried into Egypt, and at his death fleeing to Carthage, and from thence to the Romans, and was king of them ^{f1604}.

Ver. 12. *And Timna was concubine to Eliphaz, Esau's son*, etc.] She is said to be the sister of Lotan, the eldest son of Seir the Horite, (^{<0352>}Genesis

36:22); in (^{<036>}1 Chronicles 1:36) mention is made of Timna among the sons of Eliphaz, and of Duke Timnah here, (^{<036>}Genesis 36:40); and Gerundins^{f1605} is of opinion, that Timnah the concubine of Eliphaz, after she had bore Amalek, conceived and bore another son, and she dying in childbirth, he called it by her name to perpetuate her memory: but Jarchi says, that Eliphaz lay with Lotan's mother, the wife of Seir the Horite, of whom was born Timna, and when she grew up she became his concubine, and so was both his daughter and his concubine:

and she bare to Eliphaz Amalek; from whence the Amalekites sprung, often mentioned in Scripture, whom the Israelites were commanded utterly to destroy, (^{<058>}1 Samuel 15:18):

these [were] the sons of Adah, Esau's wife; that is, her grandsons.

Ver. 13. *And these [are] the sons of Reuel*, etc.] Another son of Esau's; this man had four sons, as follow,

Nahath, and Zerah, Shammah and Mizzah: of whom we know no more than their names, unless Maps or Massa, which Ptolemy^{f1606} places in Idumea, should have its name from Mizzah:

these were the sons of Bashemath, Esau's wife; her grandsons, as before.

Ver. 14. *And these were the sons of Aholibamah, the daughter of Anah, the daughter of Zibeon, Esau's wife*, etc.] (See Gill on "^{<036>}Genesis 36:2"); here also the Samaritan and Septuagint versions read, "the daughter of Anah, the son of Zibeon":

and she bare to Esau, Jeush, and Jaalam, and Korah; this is repeated from (^{<036>}Genesis 36:5); no mention is made of her grandchildren, as of his other wives.

Ver. 15. *These were dukes of the sons of Esau*, etc.] Ben Melech says, the difference between a duke and a king was, that a king is crowned and a duke is not crowned; but Jarchi interprets the word of heads of families, which seems probable; so that as Esau's sons and grandsons are before related, here it is suggested that they had large and numerous families, of which they were the heads and governors; and in this and the following verses, (^{<036>}Genesis 36:16-19); the sons and grandsons of Esau by his several wives are rehearsed as in the preceding verses, with the title of "duke" given to each of them.

Ver. 16. *Duke Korah*, etc.] Only among the sons of Eliphaz is reckoned Duke Korah, not before mentioned among his sons, and is left out in the Samaritan version; (see Gill on “^{Q307}Genesis 36:7”); to which it may be added, that according to Gerundinsis ^{f1607}, this is the same with Timna, related among the sons of Eliphaz, (^{Q306}1 Chronicles 1:36); who was called by his father Korah: or this might be a grandson of Eliphaz.

Ver. 17. *And these [are] the sons of Reuel* etc.] (See Gill on “^{Q305}Genesis 36:15”).

Ver. 18. *And these [are] the sons of Aholibamah Esua’s wife*; etc.] (See Gill on “^{Q305}Genesis 36:15”).

Ver. 19. *These [are] the sons of Esua*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{Q305}Genesis 36:15”).

Ver. 20. *These [are] the sons of Seir the Horite, who inhabited the land*, etc.] “Before”, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, that is, before it was inhabited by Esau and his posterity, and called Edom, and had from him the name of Seir; but the Horites dwelt here before him, even in Abraham’s time, (^{Q146}Genesis 14:6); and who were so called from their dwelling under ground in holes and caves, with which the further part of the land of Edom abounded, and are the same the Greeks call Trogloditae: Jarchi says, from their Rabbins, these were very expert in the nature of the land, and knew what was fit for olives and what for vines. Now the genealogy of this man is here given, partly to show who were the ancient inhabitants of this land before they were drove out, and succeeded by Esau and his sons, (^{Q112}Deuteronomy 1:12,22); and partly because of the intermarriages of Esau and his posterity with them, whereby they more easily came into the possession of the country; for Esau married the daughter of Anah, the son of Zibeon, a son of Seir, (^{Q301}Genesis 36:11,24,25); and Eliphaz took Timna, a sister of Lotan the son of Seir, to be his concubine, (^{Q302}Genesis 36:12,22); the names of the sons of Seir follow,

Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah: the first of these is said ^{f1608} to be the same with Latinus, a king that reigned in Italy, which seems to be taken from the fancied resemblance of names. Zibeon and Anah are here spoken of as brethren, the sons of Seir; whereas in (^{Q304}Genesis 36:24); they are made mention of as father and son, (see Gill on “^{Q302}Genesis 36:2”); Zibeon, according to the Jewish writers ^{f1609}, committed incest with his mother, whence came Anah, and is called his brother, because of the

same mother, and his son, as being begotten by him. They seem to seek for such kind of copulations to reproach the Edomites.

Ver. 21. *And Dishon, and Ezer, and Dishan*, etc.] These were three others of the sons of Seir, which with the other four before mentioned made seven:

these [are] the dukes of the Horites, the children of Seir in the land of Edom; these were in the land of Edom before it was so called and possessed by the Edomites, and whose posterity afterwards became tributary to them.

Ver. 22. *And the children of Lotan were Hori and Heman*, etc.] The first of these seems to have his name from the general name of the tribe or nation, and the other is called Homam, (^{<1013>}1 Chronicles 1:39);

and Lotan's sister [was] Timna: whom Eliphaz the firstborn of Esau took for his concubine, (^{<0652>}Genesis 36:12); for the sake of which her relation to Lotan is here mentioned; and she is said to be the sister of this man particularly, though there were seven brethren of them, because she might be his sister both by father and mother's side, when she was not of the other only by the father's side.

Ver. 23. *And the children of Shobal [were] these*, etc.] Who was the second son of Seir, and whose sons were the five following:

Alvan, and Manahath, and Ebal, Shepho, and Onam; in (^{<1040>}1 Chronicles 1:40) Alvan is called Alian, and Shepho is Shephi.

Ver. 24. *And these are the children of Zibeon*, etc.] The third son of Self, and who had two sons;

both Ajah and Anah; of the latter it is observed:

this [was that] Anah that found the mules in the wilderness, as he fed the asses of Zibeon his father; who observed, while he was feeding his father's asses in the wilderness, that the he asses coupled with mares, or horses with the she asses, and produced another sort of creatures called mules; and by this means found out the way how such creatures might be produced, and practised it: so Aelianus says ^{f1610}, that mules are not the produce of nature, but you may call it an adulterous invention of human contrivance and boldness, and a theft: this is the common interpretation, and to which our version leads: but against it it may be observed, that the

word for “mules” is different from this here used, nor is this word ever used of mules, nor does it appear that there were any creatures of this sort before the days of David; nor is the word translated “found” ever used of that which before was not in being, but of what already existed; nor is there any mention of horses or mares in this account also; had it referred to a mixture of these creatures with asses, it would not have been omitted. Some think therefore the words are to be rendered, “he found waters in the wilderness”; sources and collections of waters which were not usual in a wilderness, and of great worth and use in desert lands, as Edom was, and in those hot countries, and the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “hot waters”; but then to the fixing of either of these versions, the word must be altered either in its points or letters, for which there is no authority. The Targum of Onkelos renders it mighty ones or giants, and may signify the “Emim”, the “aleph” being changed for “yod”, as Aben Ezra observes; and then the sense is, that these gigantic people, who were so called from the terror they taught upon their neighbours, and, who dwelt near the Horim in Seir, (^{Q320}Deuteronomy 2:10-12), as they used to steal from their flocks, Anah lighted on them in the wilderness, and fell upon them, and took them; and with this agrees the Samaritan version, “he found giants, in the wilderness”; and so Abendana interprets the words: Aben Ezra observes that many interpret the word of plants or herbs; and a very learned ^{f1611} man is of opinion that the word used is the name of an useful herb or plant, first discovered by Anah. This Anah, though a keeper of his father’s asses, is afterwards called Duke Anah; it being the custom of the sons of great personages to be the keepers of flocks and herds; (see Gill on “^{Q320}Genesis 29:9”).

Ver. 25. *And the children of Anah [were] these*, etc.]

Dishon, the name of one of his uncles. (^{Q320}Genesis 36:21);

and Aholibamah the daughter of Anah; Aben Ezra thinks this is not the same Anah that was mentioned in the beginning of this verse; since, if he was the same, there was no need to mention him again, but that he is the same that is mentioned in (^{Q320}Genesis 36:2); but if he is not the same that is spoken of in this verse and (^{Q324}Genesis 36:24), it is difficult to account for the mention of him at all in this place: that he is the same as in (^{Q320}Genesis 36:2) seems to be right, though it is attended with this difficulty, that the Anah and Aholibamah there are represented as of the Hivites, whereas here they are reckoned among the Horites; but it may be,

as Ainsworth observes on (^{<0350>}Genesis 36:20), that the Horites were of the race of the Hivites originally; and indeed this Aholibamah being the wife of Esau seems to be the reason of this particular notice taken of her here. She is omitted in (^{<0304>}1 Chronicles 1:41).

Ver. 26. *And these [are] the sons of Dishon*, etc.] Not of Dishon the son of Anah, but of Dishon the son of Seir, (^{<0351>}Genesis 36:21); and they are the four following:

Hemdan, and Eshban, and Ithran, and Cheran; the first of these is called Amram, or rather Chamram, (^{<0304>}1 Chronicles 1:41).

Ver. 27. *The children of Ezer are these*, etc.] Another son of Seir, who had the following sons:

Bilhan, and Zaavan, and Achan; the two last are called Zavan and Jakan, in (^{<0304>}1 Chronicles 1:42).

Ver. 28. *The children of Dishon are these*, etc.] The last of the seven sons of Seir, and who had two sons,

Uz and Aran; from the former of these the land of Uz, inhabited by the Edomites, had its name, (^{<0301>}Lamentations 4:21); some have taken this to be the country of Job, (^{<0300>}Job 1:1).

Ver. 29. *These [are] the dukes [that came] of the Horites*, etc.] Not that succeeded one after another, as the kings next mentioned did, but were together, at the same time, heads of respective families, and governors of them; and then the seven sons of Seir are rehearsed in this verse and (^{<0350>}Genesis 36:30) in their order, with the title of “duke” annexed to each of them, “Duke Lotan”, etc.

Ver. 30. *These [are] the dukes [that came] of Hori*, etc.] The ancestor of Seir, whence he is called the Horite, unless the singular is put for the plural, used in (^{<0352>}Genesis 36:29):

among their dukes in the land of Seir; not that there were other dukes besides them in the land of Seir until Esau got among them, but these were they whose habitations were before in the land of Gabla (or Seir); as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it; or “in”, or “according to their dukedoms”, as the Septuagint version; in their respective families where they had the government, and which became very numerous.

Ver. 31. *And these [are] the kings that reigned in the land of Edom,* etc.] In the land that was afterwards called the land of Edom; for this land was not so called when these kings began to reign: for, according to Bishop Cumberland^{f1612}, and those that follow him^{f1613}, these were Horite kings, who, after their defeat by Chedorlaomer, (^{<0145>}Genesis 14:5,6); in order to secure themselves the better from such a calamity for the future, set up a kingdom, and which appears, by the following account, to be elective; and so Maimonides^{f1614} observes, that not one of these kings were of Edom: and these were,

before there reigned any king over the children of Israel; and there being no kings over Israel until many years after the times of Moses, hence some have thought these words are inserted by some other writer after him; but there is no need to suppose that; for Moses knew, from foregoing prophecies and promises, that kings would arise out of them and reign over them, (^{<0175>}Genesis 17:6 35:11); and this he was so certain of, that he himself, by divine direction, gave laws and rules to the children of Israel respecting their future kings, (^{<0174>}Deuteronomy 17:14-20); besides Moses himself was king in Jeshurun or Israel, (^{<0135>}Deuteronomy 33:5), so that it is the same as if he had said, these are the kings that reigned in Edom, before this time.

Ver. 32. *And Bela the son of Beor reigned in Edom,* etc.] His name was not Balac, as the Septuagint version, which may lead to think of Balak king of Moab; nor is this the same with Balaam, the son of Beor, who lived ages after, as some in Aben Ezra: who he was we know no more of than what is here said; he was the first Horite king, and is placed by Mr. Bedford^{f1615} in A. M. 2002:

and the name of his city [was] Dinhabah, the place either where he was born, or where he had been governor before, but of it we read nowhere else.

Ver. 33. *And Bela died,* etc.] How long he reigned is not known with any certainty, nor whether he left any sons behind him; if he did, they did not succeed him in the throne; for

Jobab the son of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his stead: this king some have thought to be the same with Job, and from whom one of the books of Scripture has its name; but neither their names, nor age, nor country agree: who this Jobab and his father Zerah were cannot be said: they seem to be

of the same country in which Jobab reigned, since he is said to be of Bozrah, a famous city of Idumea, after spoken of in the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah and others, (²³⁴⁶Isaiah 34:6 63:1 ²⁴⁴³Jeremiah 48:24) (²⁴⁹³Jeremiah 49:13,22 ³⁰⁰⁰Amos 1:12 ³⁷¹²Micah 2:12); Jarchi takes it to be a city of Moab, and indeed it is sometimes placed in Moab, and sometimes in Edom, it being on the borders of both, and sometimes belonged to the one and sometimes to the other. According to Mr. Bedford ^{f1616}, this king began his reign, A. M. 2135, so that the former king must have reigned about forty two years; which is a space of time he allows to each successor, taking them one with another, the particular and exact time of each reign he not being able to fix.

Ver. 34. *And Jobab died*, etc.] According to Mr. Bedford, A. M. 2177:

and Husham of the land of Temani reigned in his stead; or of the land of the south, as the Targum of Jonathan, of the southern part of the land of Idumea, as it was afterwards called; the metropolis of which was the city of Teman, after spoken of in Scripture, which had its name from Teman the son of Eliphaz; (see Gill on “⁰³⁶¹Genesis 36:11”).

Ver. 35. *And Husham died*, etc.] As is thought, about A. M. 2219, above forty years after the death of Abraham, as computed by the above writer:

and Hadad the son of Bedad (who smote Midian in the field of Moab) reigned in his stead: who he or his father were we have no other account, nor of this warlike action of his; probably the Midianites came out to invade him, hearing of which, he went out against them, and met with him in the fields of Moab, which were near to Midian, and fought them and conquered them: Jarchi says, the Midianites came out to make war against the Moabites, and the king of Edom went out to help the Moabites, and hence, he says, we learn, that Midian and Moab were near each other; and in the days of Balaam they made peace, that they might combine against Israel: this battle is supposed to be fought in the twelfth year of his reign; and it is thought to be in his reign that Esau came with his family and dwelt in Seir ^{f1617}; though some place it later, either in the following reign, or in that of his successors ^{f1618}:

and the name of his city [was] Avith: where it was is not certain.

Ver. 36. *And Hadad died*, etc.] As is supposed, about A. M. 2241.

and Samlah of Masrekah reigned in his stead; but who he was, or the place he was of, cannot be said.

Ver. 37. *And Samlah died*, etc.] As is supposed, about A. M. 2283.

and Saul of Rehoboth [by] the river reigned in his stead; Rehoboth was one of the cities built by Ashur, (^{Gen}Genesis 10:11); and was situated near the river Euphrates; and so the Targum of Jonathan calls it Rehoboth which is by Euphrates; but Jerom ^{fl619}, from Eusebius, takes it to be another city by a river in Edom, and says, that there was in his days a garrison in the country of Gabalena (a part of Idumea), a large village called by that name.

Ver. 38. *And Saul died*, etc.] About A. M. 2325;

and Baalhanan the son of Achbor reigned in his stead: whose name, inverted, is observed by Grotius to be the same with Hannibal; it signifies a gracious lord or king.

Ver. 39. *And Baalhanan the son of Achbor died*, etc.] About A. M. 2367.

and Hadar reigned in his stead; the last of the Horite kings, when an end was put to this monarchy by the united families of Seir and Esau, and changed into dukedoms; of which there were seven of the race of Seir, and fourteen of the race of Esau, of whom an account is given in the preceding part of this chapter: as for this last king it is further said of him:

and the name of his city [was] Pau; but where it was cannot be said:

and his wife's name [was] Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab; this woman seems to be a person of note, by the particular mention made of her; but whether the names of her ancestors are the names of men or women it is not certain: some take Matred to be the name of her father, and Mezahab the name of her grandfather; but according to Aben Ezra, Marred was the name of her mother, who was the daughter of Mezahab her grandfather; whom the Targum of Jonathan interprets melter of gold, as does Saadiah Gaon.

Ver. 40. *And these [are] the names of the dukes [that came] of Esau*, etc.]

After the regal monarchy ceased, the government in Edom was by dukes, and of these there were two sons, one of which an account has been given of already, who were partly of the race of Seir, and partly of the race of Esau; and who were dukes not by succession, but together, in and over

their respective families: and it may be observed, that neither Esau, nor his sons by his two first wives, Eliphaz and Reuel, are called dukes, only his three sons by his last wife; all the rest are his grandsons and sons of the two former, which seems to give some light as to the time when those dukedoms took place; and very probably it was by the joint influence of Seir and Esau, whose families had intermarried, that an end was put to the regal power, and who, for a course of years, governed in the above manner: and they of Esau's race in those times are said to be "dukes in the land of Edom", as a learned man ^{f1620} has observed; whereas those that follow, which are a second race of them, are called "dukes of Edom", (⁰³⁶⁸Genesis 36:43); who took possession of the country and ruled in it, driving out the Horites and succeeding in their stead: these are described

according to their families; they were the heads of:

after their places, by their names; the places where they lived, which were called after their names, and are as follow:

Duke Timnah, Duke Alvah, Duke Jetheth; these were both the names of the dukes, and of the places where they governed, called after their names; so Timnah or Themna, as Jerom calls it, is by him said to be a city of the princes of Edom, the same he says of Jetheth ^{f1621}, so the like may be concluded of Alvah.

Ver. 41. *Duke Aholibamah, Duke Elah, Duke Pinon.*] The former is the name of a woman, (⁰³⁸²Genesis 36:2,25); here the name of a man, and also of the place of which he was duke; for Jerom observes ^{f1622}, that Oolibama is a city of the princes of Edom, and who also makes mention of Elath, a country of the princes of Edom, and a city of Esau, ten miles from Petra to the east ^{f1623}, and the seat of Duke Pinon was very probably Phinon, which lay between Petra and Zoar ^{f1624}.

Ver. 42. *Duke Kenaz, Duke Teman, Duke Mibzar.*] There was a Kenaz the son of Eliphaz, and so a Teman a son of his, who were both dukes; but these seem to be different from them, though the latter might be duke of the place called Teman from him: which, in Jerom's time ^{f1625}, was a village five miles distant from Petra, and where was a Roman garrison, and so Mabsar in his times ^{f1626}, was a large village in the country of Gabalena (a part of Idumea), and called Mabsara, and belonged to the city Petra.

Ver. 43. *Duke Magdiel, Duke Iram,* etc.] Magdiel also, Jerom ^{f1627} says, was in the country of Gabalena, formerly possessed by the dukes of Edom;

and the Targum of Jonathan says, this duke was called Magdiel from the name of his city, which was a strong “migdal” or tower: and Jarchi’s note upon this word is, this is Rome; so the Jewish writers elsewhere say ^{f1628}, that Esau had an hundred provinces from Seir to Magdiel; as it is said, “Duke Magdiel, Duke Iram”, this is Rome:

these [be] the dukes of Edom, according to their habitations, in the land of their possession; the former race of dukes, as has been observed, were dukes in the land of Edom, were sojourners in the land, at least had not sovereign dominion, or were not the only dukes in it; there were dukes of the race of Seir at the same time; but now these having driven out the Horites, were sole possessors and sovereign lords; and thus while Israel and his posterity were sojourners in a strange land, Esau and his family were possessors and lords of a country they could call their own:

he [is] Esau the father of the Edomites; that is, Edom, the dukes of whose race are before reckoned up; the same is Esau, who had the name of Edom from selling his birthright for a mess of red pottage: and this is the man from whom the Edomites or Idumeans sprung, often hereafter spoken of in the Scripture, though no more in this history. He is said ^{f1629} to be killed by the tribes of Israel, at the funeral of Jacob, he coming forth with a great army to hinder his interment in the cave of Machpelah: it is a tradition of the Jews ^{f1630}, he was slain by Judah.

CHAPTER 37

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 37

In this chapter begins the history of Joseph, with whom the remaining part of this book is chiefly concerned; and here are related the hatred of his brethren to him, because he brought an ill report of them to his father, and because his father loved him, and which was increased by the dream he dreamed, and told them of, (^{<01570>}Genesis 37:1-11); a visit of his to his brethren in the fields, whom he found after a long search of them, (^{<01572>}Genesis 37:12-17); their conspiracy on sight of him to slay him, but by the advice of Reuben it was agreed to cast him into a pit, which they did, (^{<01578>}Genesis 37:18-24); and after that, at the motion of Judah, sold him to the Ishmaelites, who were going to Egypt, (^{<01575>}Genesis 37:25-28); this being done, Reuben being absent, and not finding Joseph in the pit, was in great distress, (^{<01579>}Genesis 37:29,30); their contrivance to deceive their father, and make him believe that Joseph was destroyed by a wild beast, which on the sight of the coat he credited, and became inconsolable, (^{<01573>}Genesis 37:31-35); and the chapter concludes with the sale of Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, (^{<01576>}Genesis 37:36).

Ver. 1. *And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger,* etc.] And this stands opposed unto, and is distinguished from the case and circumstances of Esau and his posterity, expressed in the preceding chapter, who dwelt in the land of their possession, not as strangers and sojourners, as Jacob and his seed, but as lords and proprietors; and so these words may be introduced and read in connection with the former history; “but Jacob dwelt”, etc. ^{f1631}; and this verse would better conclude the preceding chapter than begin a new one. The Targum of Jonathan paraphrases the words, “and Jacob dwelt quietly”; or peaceably, in tranquillity and safety; his brother Esau being gone from him into another country, he remained where his father lived and died, and in the country that by his blessing belonged to him:

in the land of Canaan, and particularly in Hebron, where Isaac and Abraham before him had dwelt.

Ver. 2. *These [are] the generations of Jacob*, etc.] But no genealogy following, some interpret this of events or of things which befell Jacob, and his family, particularly with respect to his son Joseph, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech take the sense of the word to be from (~~אבות~~ Proverbs 27:1); but the words may refer to what goes before in the latter end of chapter 35, where an account is given of Jacob's sons, with regard to which it is here said, "these are the generations of Jacob"; the whole of chapter 36, which contains the genealogy of Esau, being a parenthesis, or at least an interruption of the above account, the history of Jacob and his posterity is here reassumed and carried on:

Joseph [being] seventeen years old, was feeding his flock with his brethren; or "in the flock"^{f1632}; he was with them in the pastures, where the flocks were fed, not so much to assist them in it, as to be taught by them how to feed, they being older than he:

and the lad [was] with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: his secondary wives or concubines, called his wives, because their children shared in the inheritance. These sons of theirs were Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Bilhah; and Gad and Asher, the sons of Zilpah; with these Jacob rather chose Joseph should be, than with the sons of Leah; and especially that he should be with the sons of Bilhah, who was the handmaid of Rachel, Joseph's mother, and she being dead, it might be thought that Bilhah and her sons would have the most respect for Joseph:

and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report; for not being able to bear with their evil deeds, and yet not having authority enough, being a junior, to reprove, correct, and check them, he reported them to his father: what the things were reported is not said, perhaps their quarrels among themselves, their contempt of Joseph, their neglect of their flocks, etc. Some of the Jewish writers make them to be abominable acts of uncleanness^{f1633}, others eating of the member of a creature alive, particularly the flesh of the tails of lambs while living^{f1634}.

Ver. 3. *Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children*, etc.] He being the firstborn of his beloved Rachel, and a lovely youth, of a beautiful aspect, very promising, prudent and pious: the reason given in the text follows,

because he [was] the son of his old age; being ninety one years of age when he was born; and the youngest children are generally most beloved,

and especially such as are born to their parents when in years. Benjamin indeed was younger than Joseph, and is described in like manner, (^{<0440>}Genesis 44:20); and for this reason one would think had the greatest claim to his father's affections; wherefore some give a different sense of this phrase, and render it, the "son" or disciple of "elders", "senators", i.e. a wise and prudent man: and indeed, if being the son of his old age was the reason of his affection, Benjamin had the best claim to it, being the youngest, and born to him when he was still older; and this sense is countenanced by Onkelos, who renders it,

"because he was a wise son to him:"

and so the reason why he loved him more than the rest was, because of his senile wisdom; though a child in years, he was old in wisdom and knowledge. Abendana observes, that it was a custom with old men to take one of their little children to be with them continually, and attend upon them, and minister to them, and lean upon their arm; and such an one was called the son of their old age, because he ministered to them in their old age:

and he made him a coat of [many] colours; that is, had one made for him, which was interwoven with threads of divers colours, or painted, or embroidered with divers figures, or made with different pieces of various colours: according to Jerom ^{f1635}, it was a garment which reached down to the ankles, and was distinguished with great variety by the hands of the artificer, or which had long sleeves reaching to the hands; and so the Jewish writers ^{f1636} say it was called "passim", because it reached to the palms of the hands: this might be an emblem of the various virtues which early appeared in him; or rather of the several graces of the Spirit of God implanted in him, and of the raiment of needlework, the righteousness of Christ, with which he was clothed, (^{<0954>}Psalm 45:14); and of the various providences which Jacob, under a spirit of prophecy, foresaw he would be attended with.

Ver. 4. *And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren*, etc.] Which they perceived by various things in his behaviour to him, by his words, his looks, his gestures, and particularly by the coat he had made him, which distinguished him from the rest:

they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him; they not only inwardly hated him, but they could not conceal their hatred, but betrayed it

by their speech unto him; they could not speak to him on any occasion, but in a cross, surly, ill natured manner; they could not salute him, or give him the common salutation, Peace be to thee, as Aben Ezra suggests.

Ver. 5. *And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told [it] his brethren*, etc.] As a dream, in the simplicity of his heart; not understanding it, or imagining there was any meaning in it; he told it not with any design to affront them, but as an amusement, and for their diversion, there being something in it odd and ridiculous, as he himself might think:

and they hated him yet the more; not only because he had carried an ill report of them to his father, and because he loved him more than they, but still more because of this dream; the meaning of which they at once understood, though he did not, which yet they supposed he did, and that he told them it in a boasting manner, and to irritate them.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto them, hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed.*] Hear now, so the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, immediately, directly, lest he should forget it, having perhaps dreamt it the night before; though our version expresses more modesty and submission. The dream follows:

Ver. 7. *For, behold, we [were] binding sheaves in the field*, etc.] So it was represented in his mind in a dream, as if it was harvest time, and he and his brethren were at work together in the field binding up sheaves of corn that were reaped, in order to be carried home:

and, lo, my sheaf arose, and stood upright; it seemed to him, that after he had bound and laid it on the ground, that it rose up of itself, and stood erect:

and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf; the sheaves which his brethren bound up, they also stood upright, and all around his sheaf, and bowed unto it; so it appeared to him in his dream. This was a fit emblem of their coming to him into Egypt for corn, and bowing to him, when their sheaves were empty, and his was full. In an ancient book of the Jews ^{f1637} Joseph's sheaf is interpreted of the Messiah, whom they call the son of Ephraim. Joseph no doubt was a type of the true Messiah, and in this of his exaltation and glory, and of that honour given him by all his saints who come to him, and receive from him all the supplies of grace.

Ver. 8. *And his brethren said unto him*, etc.] After he had told his dream, being highly offended with him, understanding the dream, and the meaning of it, better than he did:

shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shall thou indeed have dominion over us? denying that he ever should, and reproving him for his vanity, in concluding from hence that he would have the dominion over them. So the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, dost thou think, suppose, or imagine that thou shalt rule over us? it looks as if by telling us this dream that such a whim and fancy has got into thine head:

and they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words; for it seems by this that he had dreamt, and told them more dreams besides this, and they hated him both for them, and for his telling them to them; though Jarchi thinks the phrase, “for his words”, refers to the ill report he gave of them to his father, (^{QEST}Genesis 37:2).

Ver. 9. *And he dreamed yet another dream*, etc.] Relating to the name subject as the former, and, for the confirmation of it, only the emblems are different, and more comprehensive:

and told it his brethren, and said, behold, I have dreamed a dream more; another dream, and which he told, either as not knowing fully the resentment of his brethren at his former dream, or in order to clear himself from any charge of feigning the dream, or having any ill intention in telling it; seeing he had another to the same purpose, and therefore thought fit to acquaint them with it, that they might more seriously consider of it, whether there was not something divine in it, which he himself began to think there was:

and, behold, the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars, made their obeisance to me: in his dream it seemed to him, either that he was taken up into the starry heaven, and these luminaries bowed unto him, or else that they descended to him on earth, and paid their respects unto him.

Ver. 10. *And he told [it] to his father, and to his brethren*, etc.] After he had told it to his brethren, he told it to his father a second time in their hearing, that he might pass his judgment on it, and give his sense of it before them:

and his father rebuked him; not as being ignorant of the meaning of the dream, for by what follows he had a clear understanding of it, or as if he

thought it was an idle dream, and would never have any accomplishment: but he thought fit, in his great wisdom and prudence, to put on such an air, partly to check young Joseph, lest he should grow proud, and haughty, and insolent upon it, and behave in a disagreeable manner to himself and to his brethren; and partly to conciliate the minds of his brethren to him, which he perceived were exasperated by his dreams:

and said unto him, what [is] this dream that thou hast dreamed? what dost thou take to be the meaning of it? canst thou imagine that it is of God? is it not a mere whim and imagination of thine own wandering brain in thy sleep? why dost thou tell such an idle dream as this, as if there were something divine in it, when it appears the most absurd and irrational?

shall I, thy mother, and thy brethren, indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? whereby it plainly shows he understood the meaning of the dream, though he would not seem to countenance it. By the “sun” he understood himself, the principal and head of the family, the active instrument of the generation of it, the light, life, and support of it; and by the “moon” his wife, the passive instrument of generation, who had the lesser share of rule in the family, yet contributed much to its good and welfare; by whom is meant not Rachel, the real mother of Joseph, who was dead, unless this is observed to show the seeming absurdity of it, from whence the whole might appear ridiculous; but rather Leah, who was now Jacob’s only true wife, and the stepmother of Joseph; or else Bilhah, Rachel’s handmaid, who since her death was a mother to Joseph; and by the eleven “stars” he understood the eleven brethren of Joseph, who were as stars that receive their light from the sun; and in allusion to the twelve constellations in the Zodiac, to which Joseph and his eleven brethren answered. This had its fulfilment, in some measure, when Jacob sent presents to Joseph when governor of Egypt, though unknown to him, and when he and his family went thither, when, no doubt, Jacob showed a civil respect according to his dignity, and in regard to the office he bore: and so his wife, if he then had any, that went with him, and if not personally, yet in her posterity paid a deference to him, as it is certain all his brethren did. Grotius observes from the Oneirocritics or interpreters of dreams, particularly Achmes, that according to the doctrine of the Persians and Egyptians, that if anyone should dream that he rules over the stars, he shall rule over all people.

Ver. 11. *And his brethren envied him*, etc.] Notwithstanding all the precaution Jacob took to prevent it; they suspecting and fearing that these dreams portended the pre-eminence of Joseph over them, or however served to fill his mind with the hopes and expectation of it:

but his father observed the saying; what Joseph had said in relating his dream; he laid it up in his mind and kept it there, often thought of it, and waited to see its accomplishment.

Ver. 12. *And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem.*] Very probably some considerable time after the telling of the above dreams; it was usual to remove flocks from place to place for the sake of pasturage; and sometimes at a great distance, as Shechem was from Hebron, where Jacob now dwelt, said ^{f1638} to be about sixty miles; but this is not so much to be marvelled at as the place itself, whither they went, for though Jacob had bought a parcel of a field in this place, (~~OE39~~ Genesis 33:19); which might be a reason for their going thither to feed their father's flocks in his own field; yet it was the place where they had committed a most outrageous action in destroying all, the males there, and therefore might fear the inhabitants of the neighbouring cities would rise upon them and cut them off.

Ver. 13. *And Israel said unto Joseph*, etc.] After his brethren had been gone some time to Shechem:

do not thy brethren feed [the flock] in Shechem? this question is put, not as ignorant of it, or doubting about it, but to put Joseph in mind of it, and in order to what follows:

come, and I will send thee unto them; which is pretty much he should, considering the length of the way, sixty miles, the dangerous place in which they were feeding their flocks, and especially seeing his brethren envied and hated him; but Jacob might think that by this time things had wore off of their minds; and it is certain he had no suspicion of their hatred rising so high as to attempt his life; and it is plain he had none concerning them, when his coat was brought to him, but believed it was wild beasts that had devoured him:

and he said unto him, here [am I]; showing his readiness to obey his father, and go on this errand, though it was a long journey, and he to go it alone, and his brethren also bore no good will to him.

Ver. 14. *And he said to him, go, I pray thee*, etc.] Or “now”^{f1639}, directly, immediately, which is more agreeable to the authority of a father:

see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; it having been many days, and perhaps months, since he had heard anything of them; and the rather Jacob might be under a concern for them, because of the danger they were exposed to from the neighbouring tribes and nations of the Canaanites, on account of their having some time ago destroyed the Shechemites; so the Targum of Jonathan, paraphrasing on the preceding part, makes Jacob to say,

“I am afraid, lest the Horites should come and smite them, because of their smiting Hamor and Shechem, and the inhabitants of that city; come, and I will send thee, etc.”

and bring me word again; of their welfare, and of the state of their flocks:

so he sent him out of the vale of Hebron: the same with the plains of Mamre near the city of Hebron, which was built on a hill:

and he came to Shechem: after he had travelled sixty miles.

Ver. 15. *And a certain man found him*, etc.] Many of the Jewish writers^{f1640} say, this was an angel, the angel Gabriel, in the likeness of a man; but according to Aben Ezra, it was a traveller he met on the road; but it is more probable, as Schimdt observes, that it was some man at work in the field that came upon him and took notice of him:

and, behold, [he was] wandering in the field; in some field near Shechem, perhaps the same his father Jacob had purchased, and where he expected to have found his brethren, and was looking out for them, going to and fro in search of them; which the labouring man in the field observed:

and the man asked him, saying, what seekest thou? seeing him walking about, and first looking one way, and then another, concluded he was in search of something, either of some man or of some creature, a sheep or an ox that was lost; and therefore put this question to him, with a view to give him what direction and assistance he could.

Ver. 16. *And he said, I seek my brethren*, etc.] Whom, no doubt, he described to the man, and told him who they were, and to whom they belonged; or otherwise the man would have been at a loss to know who he

meant, and what further to say to him, and without which Joseph would never have made the following request to him:

tell me, I pray thee, where they feed [their flocks]; in what part of the country they are, what field they are in, how far to it, and which the way.

Ver. 17. *And the man said, they are departed hence,* etc.] They had been there, in the field where he and Joseph were, and which was probably the field before mentioned; but for good reasons, perhaps for want of pasture, or in order to find better feeding for their cattle, they were gone from thence, from the fields about Shechem:

for I heard them say, let us go to Dothan; this was, as some say, four miles from Shechem, others eight ^{f1641}; according to Brochardus ^{f1642}, it was a plain country between fruitful hills, contiguous to fountains, was pasture ground, and very fit for feeding cattle; and its very name, as Hillerus ^{f1643} notes, signifies grassy, or a place of tender grass: here, afterwards, was a city built, not far from Samaria, (^{<1083>}2 Kings 6:13); about twelve miles to the north of it, as says Jerom ^{f1644}; it was in the tribe of Manasseh, about forty four miles from Jerusalem to the north, and six miles from Tiberias to the west ^{f1645}:

and Joseph went after his brethren, and found them in Dothan; which shows that he had a real desire to see them, and know their state and condition, that he might report it to his father; since he might have returned on not finding them at Shechem, that being the place he was sent to, and would have been sufficient to have shown obedience to his father's commands, though perhaps it might not have come up to his full sense and meaning.

Ver. 18. *And when they saw him afar off,* etc.] They knew him as soon as they saw him, by his stature, his gesture or manner of walking, and especially by his coat of various colours he now had on, (^{<10372>}Genesis 37:23);

even before he came near unto them; the distance he was from them when they first spied him is particularly remarked and repeated, not to show the quickness of their sight, but for the sake of what follows; to observe how soon their passions were raised, how intense and prepense their malice, and which put them upon devising ways and means to destroy him, for it follows:

they conspired against him, to slay him; they entered into a consultation, and devised the most crafty methods they could think of to take away his life, and yet conceal the murder.

Ver. 19. *And they said one to another*, etc.] According to the Targum of Jonathan, Simeon and Levi said what follows: nor is it unlikely, since they were hot, passionate, cruel, and bloody minded men, as appears by the affair of Shechem; and perhaps this may be the reason why Joseph afterwards, when governor of Egypt, took Simeon and bound him, (^{<0124>}Genesis 42:24); which was but a just retaliation for his advice to cast him into a pit when slain:

behold, this dreamer cometh; or “master of dreams” ^{f1646}; not of the interpretation of them, but of dreaming them; that had them at his command when he pleased, as they jeeringly flouted him; as if he was a framer and contriver of them, and only pretended to them when he had none, or else that he was frequently dreaming and telling his dreams; this they said in a sarcastic way, and, perhaps, as pleased, and rejoicing that such an opportunity offered to take their revenge on him: this shows that it was on the account of his dreams chiefly that they bore such a grudge against him, that this was uppermost on their minds, and was revived at first sight of him, and from whence their malice sprung.

Ver. 20. *Come now therefore, and let us slay him*, etc.] Agree to do it, and actually do it:

and cast him into some pit; or, “one of the pits” ^{f1647}, which were near, and were dug for the collection of rainwater, as was usual in those countries where water was scarce:

and we will say, some evil beast hath devoured him; which would seem plausible, since wild beasts were frequent in those parts, as lions and bears, (see ^{<1134>}1 Kings 13:24 ^{<1174>}2 Kings 2:24);

and we shall see what will become of his dreams; who will be the lord then, and reign, and have the dominion, he or we.

Ver. 21. *And Reuben heard [it]*, etc.] Overheard what they said, not being in the consultation; perhaps knowing his temper and disposition to be more mild and gentle, and being the elder brother, might fear he would overrule matters against them, and therefore Simeon and Levi did not choose to have him in the debate; or he might be at some distance and entirely absent

when the consultation was held, and their intention was reported to him by some of them:

and he delivered him out of their hands; from slaying him; that is, he endeavoured to do it by proposing another scheme:

and said, let us not kill him; or let us not smite the soul ^{f1648}; the dear soul, or take away life.

Ver. 22. *And Reuben said unto them, shed no blood*, etc.] Innocent blood, as the Targum of Jonathan; the blood of a man, a brother's blood, one that had not done anything wherefore it should be shed, and which would involve in guilt, and bring vengeance on them: he seems to put them in mind of the original law in (~~Gen~~ Genesis 9:6);

[but] cast him into this pit that [is] in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him: which might seem to answer the same purpose, namely, by depriving him of his life in another way, by starving him; but this was not Reuben's intention, as appears by the next clause, and by his going to the pit afterwards, as it should seem, with a view to take him out of it privately; this advice he gave,

that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again; safe and sound, in order, as it is thought by many interpreters, to reconcile his father to him, whose bed he had abused.

Ver. 23. *And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren*, etc.] To the very place where they were, and had, in a kind and obliging manner, asked of their welfare, and related their father's concern for them, who had sent him on this errand:

that they stripped, Joseph out of [his] coat; his coat of [many] colours, that [was] on him; according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, this was not one and the same coat, but divers, and that the sense is, that with his coat of many colours, and besides that, they stripped him of his lower garment, which was next to his skin, his shirt; so that he was quite naked when they cast him into the pit, and this they did as soon as he came up to them, so cruel and hardhearted were they.

Ver. 24. *And they took him, and cast him into a pit*, etc.] Into the same that Reuben pointed to them, whose counsel they gladly took and readily

executed, supposing he meant the same thing they did, starving him to death:

and the pit [was] empty, [there was] no water in it; only serpents and scorpions, as the Targum of Jonathan; and Jarchi adds, this remark, that there was no water in it, seems to be made either to furnish out a reason why Reuben directed to it, that he might be the more easily got out of it, and not be in danger of losing his life at once, or of being drowned in it; or else to show the uncomfortable situation he was in, having not so much as a drop of water to refresh him; (see ^{3891E} Zechariah 9:11). Dothan is said to remain to this day, and the inhabitants of it show the ancient ditch into which Joseph was cast ^{f1649}.

Ver. 25. *And they sat down to eat bread*, etc.] Not at all concerned at what they had done, nor in the least grieved for the affliction of Joseph, and without any pity and compassion for him in his distress, but joyful and glad they had got him into their hands, and like to get rid of him for ever:

and they lifted up their eyes, and looked, after they had eaten their food, or while they were eating it:

and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead; a place of merchandise for spices and balm, and such like things after mentioned. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan call them Arabians; and the Targum of Jerusalem, Saracens; these were the posterity of Ishmael, who came out of Arabia to Gilead, where they took up their merchandise, at least part of it, and were travelling to Egypt with it, and their way thither lay by Dothan; these travelled in companies, now called “caravans”, partly on the account of robbers, and partly by reason of wild beasts, with both which they were sometimes beset in the deserts through which they travelled:

with their camels bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh; the first word is general according to our version, and others, and signifies various spices, a collection of them; and so Jarchi takes it; but Aquila translates it “storax”; and Bochart ^{f1650}, by various arguments, seems to have proved, that this is particularly intended; though the Targum of Jonathan renders it “wax” ^{f1651}; and so other versions: and “balm” is by some taken to be “rosin”, since there was no balm or balsam in Gilead, on the other side Jordan, nor indeed any in Judea, until it was brought thither from Arabia Felix, in the times of Solomon; and what we render “myrrh”, is in the Hebrew called “lot”, and is by some thought to be the same with “laudanum”: this their merchandise

was carried on camels, very fit for their purpose every way, as they were strong creatures made to carry burdens, and could travel many days without water, which they were sometimes obliged to do in the deserts:

going to carry [it] down to Egypt; where these things grew not, and were much in use, at least some of them, both in medicines, and in embalming dead bodies, much practised in Egypt; an Arabic writer^{f1652} makes this merchandise to consist of, nuts, turpentine, and oil.

Ver. 26. *And Judah said unto his brethren*, etc.] In sight of the Ishmaelites, a thought came into his mind to get Joseph sold to them;

what profit [is it] if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? it could be no advantage to them even if they could have concealed his blood from men; and if it was discovered, as it would, in all likelihood, by some means or another, then they must be answerable for it; and if not, God would take vengeance on them, from whom they could never conceal it; and therefore it would be most profitable and advantageous to them to sell him, and not destroy him, or take away his life; and to suffer him to lie in the pit and die was the same thing.

Ver. 27. *Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites*, etc.] For a slave, and that will defeat his dream; and as these were going down to Egypt, where they would sell him, he would be far enough from them, and there would be no probability of his ever being lord over them:

and let not our hand be upon him; to take away his life, either by stabbing or starving him:

for he [is] our brother, [and] our flesh; they had all one father, though different mothers, and therefore, as the relation was so near, some sympathy and compassion should be shown; some degree of tenderness at least, and not savageness and cruelty:

and his brethren were content; they agreed to the motion, inasmuch as they supposed it would answer their end as well, which was to prevent his dominion over them.

Ver. 28. *Then there passed by Midianites, merchantmen*, etc.] The same with the Ishmaelites before mentioned, as appears from the latter part of this verse; for as these were near neighbours, so they might join together in merchandise, and travel in company for greater safety, and are sometimes

called the one, and sometimes the other, as well as they might mix together in their habitations and marriages; and are hence called Arabians by the Targums, as before observed, and so by Josephus, which signifies a mixed people:

and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit: not the Midianites, but his brethren:

and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty [pieces] of silver; for twenty shekels, which amounted to twenty five shillings of our money. The Jews ^{f1653} say, they each took two shekels apiece, and bought with them a pair of shoes, according to (^{<3186>}Amos 8:6); but there were but nine of them, Reuben was absent:

and they brought Joseph into Egypt; some think these Midianites were different from the Ishmaelites, and that Joseph was sold many times, first to the Midianites, and then by them to the Ishmaelites, and by the latter to Potiphar. Justin ^{f1654}, an Heathen writer, gives an account of this affair in some agreement with this history;

“Joseph (he says) was the youngest of his brethren, whose excellent genius they feared, and took him secretly, and sold him to “foreign merchants”, by whom he was carried into Egypt.”

Ver. 29. *And Reuben returned unto the pit,* etc.] It is very probable he had pretended to go somewhere on business, with an intention to take a circuit, and come to the pit and deliver his brother, and go home with him to his father. The Jews say ^{f1655} he departed from his brethren, and sat down on a certain mountain, that he might descend in the night and take Joseph out of the pit, and accordingly he came down in the night, and found him not. So Josephus ^{f1656} says, it was in the night when Reuben came to the pit, who calling to Joseph, and he not answering, suspected he was killed:

and, behold, Joseph [was] not in the pit; for neither by looking down into it could he see him, nor by calling be answered by him, which made it a clear case to him he was not there:

and he rent his clothes; as a token of distress and anguish of mind, of sorrow and mourning, as was usual in such cases; Jacob afterwards did the same, (^{<0374>}Genesis 37:34).

Ver. 30. *And he returned unto his brethren*, etc.] From the pit, and whom he suspected had took him and killed him, as was their first design, not being with them when they proposed to sell him, and did:

and said, the child [is] not; not in the pit, nor in the land of the living, but is dead, which is sometimes the meaning of the phrase, (²⁸¹⁵Jeremiah 31:15); he calls him a child, though seventeen years of age, because the youngest brother but one, and he himself was the eldest, and also because of his tender concern for him:

and I, whither shall I go? to find the child or flee from his father's face, which he could not think of seeing any more; whom he had highly offended already in the case of Bilhah, and now he would be yet more incensed against him for his neglect of Joseph, who, he might have expected, would have taken particular care of him, being the eldest son: he speaks like one in the utmost perplexity, not knowing what to do, what course to steer, being almost distracted and at his wits' end.

Ver. 31. *And they took Joseph's coat*, etc.] After they had told Reuben what they had done with him, who being willing to make the best of things as it was, joined with them in the following scheme: by this it appears, that when they took Joseph out of the pit they did not put his coat on him, but sold him naked, or almost so, to the merchants:

and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; that being, as the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi observe, most like to human blood.

Ver. 32. *And they sent the coat of [many] colours*, etc.] Which was what they dipped in the blood of the kid; this they sent to Jacob in such a condition, by the hand of some messenger; the Targum of Jonathan says, the sons of Zilpah and Bilhah; but more probably some of their servants, whom they instructed what to say to their father when they presented it to him; not caring to appear in person at first, lest they be thrown into such commotion and confusion at their father's distress, as might tend to lead on to a discovery of the whole affair:

and they brought [it] to their father, and said, this we have found; that is, the messengers carried to the father of Joseph's brethren, who were sent with it, and taught to say, that they found it in some field in this condition, but found no man near it, only that by itself, and suspected it might be the coat of his son Joseph, if he had sent him out in it:

know now whether it [be] thy son's coat or no; look upon it, see if any marks can be observed in it, by which it may with any certainty be known whether it his or not.

Ver. 33. *And he knew [it], and said, [it is] my son's coat*, etc.] He took it, and examined it, and was soon convinced, and well assured it was his son's coat; read the words without the supplement "it is", and the pathos will appear the more, "my son's coat!" and think with what a beating heart, with what trembling limbs, with what wringing of hands, with what flowing eyes, and faltering speech, he spoke these words, and what follow:

an evil beast hath devoured him; this was natural to conclude from the condition the coat was in, and from the country he was sent into, which abounded with wild beasts, and was the very thing Joseph's brethren contrived to say themselves; and in this view they wished and hoped the affair would be considered, and so their wickedness concealed:

Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces; or "in rending is rent"^{f1657}; he is most certainly rent in pieces, there is no question to be made of it; it is plain, and it must be the case.

Ver. 34. *And Jacob rent his clothes*, etc.] As expressive of his grief and mourning for the death of his son, as he supposed:

and put sackcloth upon his loins; put off his usual apparel, and put on a coarse garment on his loins next to his flesh, as another token of his great trouble and affliction for the loss of his son; which though afterwards was frequently done in times of public or private mourning, yet this is the first time we read of it; whether Jacob was the first that used it, whom his posterity and others imitated, is not certain; however it appears that this usage, as well as that of rending clothes on sorrowful occasions, were very ancient:

and mourned for his son many days: or years, as days sometimes signify; twenty two years, according to Jarchi, even until the time he went down to Egypt and saw him alive.

Ver. 35. *And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him*, etc.] His sons must act a most hypocritical part in this affair; and as for his daughters, it is not easy to say who they were, since he had but one daughter that we read of, whose name was Dinah: the Targum of Jonathan calls them his sons wives; but it is a question whether any of his sons were

as yet married, since the eldest of them was not more than twenty four years of age; and much less can their daughters be supposed to be meant, as they are by some. It is the opinion of the Jews, that Jacob had a twin daughter born to him with each of his sons; these his sons and daughters came together, or singly, to condole his loss, to sympathize with him, and speak a word of comfort to him, and entreat him not to give way to excessive grief and sorrow:

but he refused to be comforted; to attend to anything that might serve to alleviate his mind, and to abstain from outward mourning, and the tokens of it; he chose not to be interrupted in it:

and he said, for I will go down into the grave unto my son, mourning; the meaning is, not that he would by any means hasten his own death, or go down to his son in the grave, strictly and literally taken; since, according to his apprehension of his son's death he could have no grave, being torn to pieces by a wild beast; but either that he should go into the state of the dead, where his son was, mourning all along till he came thither; or rather that he would go mourning all his days "for [his] son" ^{f1658}, as some render it, till he came to the grave; nor would he, nor should he receive any comfort more in this world:

thus his father wept for him; in this manner, with such circumstances as before related, and he only; for as for his brethren they hated him, and were glad they had got rid of him; or, "and his father", etc. ^{f1659}; his father Isaac, as the Targum of Jonathan, he wept for his son Jacob on account of his trouble and distress; as well as for his grandson Joseph; and so many Jewish writers ^{f1660} interpret it; and indeed Isaac was alive at this time, and lived twelve years after; but the former sense seems best.

Ver. 36. *And the Midianites sold him into Egypt*, etc.] Or Medanites, who sprung from Medan, a brother of Midian, and son of Keturah, (¹²⁴¹Genesis 24:2); and were distinct from the Midianites, though they dwelt near them, and were now in company with them, and with the Ishmaelites, and were all concerned in the buying and selling of Joseph, and therefore this is sometimes ascribed to the one, and sometimes to the other:

unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh; the word is sometimes used for an eunuch, but cannot design one here, since Potiphar had a wife, and some say a child; but he either was a chamberlain, or however some officer at court, besides what follows:

[and] captain of the guard; of Pharoah's guard, his bodyguard; some render it, "of the slaughterers"^{f1661}; meaning either cooks or butchers, of whom he was the chief; or rather executioners, he having the charge of prisoners, and the care of executing them, like our sheriffs. Joseph was a most eminent type of Christ, and there are so many things in this chapter which show an agreement between them that cannot be passed over. Joseph was the son of his father's old age, Christ the son of the Ancient of days; Joseph was in a peculiar manner beloved by his father, Christ is the dear son of his Father's love; Jacob made for Joseph a coat of many colours, God prepared a body in human nature for Christ, filled and adorned with the various gifts and graces of the Spirit without measure. Joseph was hated by his brethren, and they could not endure to think he should have the dominion over them. The Jews, of whom Christ was according to the flesh, hated him, and would not have him to reign over them; Joseph was sent by his father a long journey to visit his brethren, and know the welfare of them and their flocks, Christ was sent from heaven to earth to seek and save the lost sheep of the house of Israel; Joseph's brethren, when they saw him come to them, conspired to take away his life, the Jews, who were Christ's own, when he came to them, received him not, but said, this is the heir, let us kill him, and they consulted to take away his life; Joseph was stripped of his clothes, and sold for twenty pieces of silver at the motion of Judah, and Christ, by one of the same name, was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and was stripped of his clothes by the Roman soldiers; Joseph was delivered into the hands of foreigners, and Christ into the hands of the Gentiles; Joseph being reckoned as dead by his father, and yet alive, may be herein an emblem of Christ's death, and his resurrection from the dead.

CHAPTER 38

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 38

This chapter is wholly taken up with matters relating to Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, from whom the Jews have their name, and from whom Christ sprung: it treats of his marriage with a Canaanitess, his children by her, their character and end, (^{<0181>}Genesis 38:1-11); of his incest with his daughter-in-law, though unknown by him, (^{<0182>}Genesis 38:12-23); of his resentment against her, when he heard she was with child, and his confusion when he found it was by himself, (^{<0184>}Genesis 38:24-26); and of the birth of twins by her, named Pharez and Zarah, (^{<0187>}Genesis 38:27-30).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass at that time*, etc.] This some refer to the time of Jacob's coming from Padanaram into Canaan, soon after he came to Shechem, and before the affair of Dinah; but to this may be objected the marriage of Judah at an age that may seem too early for him, his separation from his brethren, and having a flock of his own to keep, which seems not consistent with the above history: wherefore it is better to connect this with the history of Joseph's being sold into Egypt; for though there were but twenty three years from hence to Jacob's going down into Egypt, Joseph being now seventeen, and was thirty years when he stood before Pharaoh, after which were seven years of plenty, and two of famine, at which time Jacob went thither with two of Judah's grandsons, Hezron and Hamul, (^{<0462>}Genesis 46:12), which make the number mentioned; yet all this may be accounted for; at seventeen, Er, Judah's firstborn, might marry, being the eighteenth from the selling of Joseph, and the marriage of his father; and Onan at the same age, which was the nineteenth; and allowing two or three years for Tamar's staying for Shelah, there was time for her intrigue with Judah, and bearing him two sons at a birth, before the descent of Jacob into Egypt; as for his two grandsons, they may be said to go into Egypt; as Benjamin's sons did in their father's loins, being begotten there during Jacob's abode in it:

that Judah went down from his brethren: not from Dothan to Adullam, as Ben Melech observes, as if this separation was at the time and place of the selling of Joseph; but rather from Hebron thither, after he and his brethren

were come home to their father, and had reported and condoled the death of Joseph; and Judah is said to go down, because he went from the north to the south, as Aben Ezra notes; whether this departure from his brethren was owing to a misunderstanding or quarrel between them on account of the affair of Joseph, or on any account, is not certain:

and turned in to a certain Adullamite; an inhabitant of Adullam, a city which afterwards fell to the tribe of Judah, and where was a famous cave, that had its name from thence in David's time; it was ten miles from Eleutheropolis to the east ^{f1662}, and eight from Jerusalem to the southwest ^{f1663}; hither he turned, or stretched out ^{f1664}; that is, his tent, with his flock, which he extended to Adullam, as Ben Melech interprets it, and joined to this man,

whose name [was] Hirah; whom the Jews ^{f1665} fabulously report to be the same with Hiram king of Tyre, in the days of David and Solomon, and that he was the husband of Nebuchadnezzar's mother, and lived twelve hundred years.

Ver. 2. *And Judah saw there a daughter of a certain Canaanite*, etc.] Onkelos and Jonathan, and so Jarchi and Ben Gersom, interpret it a “merchant”, to take off the disgrace of his falling in love with, and marrying a Canaanitish woman, which was forbidden by his ancestors Abraham and Isaac, and which his father avoided:

whose name [was] Shuah; not the name of the woman he married, but the name of her father, as appears from (^{<01382>}Genesis 38:12); and who very probably was a man of note in the country:

and he took her; to be his wife, with her and her father's consent, not by force:

and went in unto her; cohabited with her as his wife.

Ver. 3. *And she conceived, and bare a son, and he called his name Er.*] Which signifies a “watchman”: but the reason of the name given by the Targum of Jonathan is,

“because he should die without children;”

as if it was the same with Ariri, “childless”.

Ver. 4. *And she conceived again, and bare a son*, etc.] As soon as she well could:

and she called his name Onan; the first son Judah gave the name to, but his wife named this, so called from grief or sorrow; the reason of it, according to the above Targum, was,

“because his father would mourn for him;”

he was a Benoni, (see ^{<0ES18>}Genesis 35:18), whose sin and immature death caused sorrow.

Ver. 5. *And she conceived, and bare a son*, etc.] A third son:

and called his name Shelah; which signifies tranquil, quiet, peaceable and prosperous, and is a word that comes from the same root as Shiloh, that famous son of Judah that should spring from him, (^{<0490>}Genesis 49:10) the reason of the name, as given by the Targum, is,

“because her husband forgot her:”

and she was at Chezib when she bare him; Chezib is the name of a place, by some taken to be the same with Achzib or Ecdippe, now Zib, (see ^{<3001>}Micah 1:14); it seems to be a city in the tribe of Judah; and Jerom ^{f1666} says, in his time there was a desert place of this name near Adullam, on the borders of Eleutheropolis; the reason of her being here at the time of her delivery, and of this circumstance being related, is not certain.

Ver. 6. *And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn*, etc.] Chose one for him, and presented her to him for his liking, whom he approving of married:

whose name [was] Tamar; which signifies a “palm tree”: the Targum of Jonathan says, she was the daughter of Shem; but it is altogether improbable that a daughter of his should be living at this time, and young enough to bear children: it is much more probable that she was daughter of Levi, Judah’s brother, as an Arabic writer ^{f1667} asserts; but it is more likely still that she was the daughter of a Canaanite, who was living in the same place, though his name is not mentioned, (^{<0ES11>}Genesis 38:11).

Ver. 7. *And Er, Judah’s firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord*, etc.] That is, exceedingly wicked, as this phrase signifies, (^{<0ES13>}Genesis 13:13), was guilty of some very heinous sin, but what is not mentioned;

according to the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi, it was the same with his brother Onan's, (^{<1030>}Genesis 38:9), which it is suggested he committed, lest his wife should prove with child, and lose her beauty; but if it had been the same with his, it would have been expressed as well as his. An Arabic writer^{f1668} says, that he cohabited with his wife not according to the course of nature, but in the "sodomitical" way:

and the Lord slew him; by his immediate hand, striking him dead at once, as Ananias and Sapphira were stricken, (^{<415>}Acts 5:5,10); or by sending some distemper, which quickly carried him off, as a token of his displeasure at his sin.

Ver. 8. *And Judah said unto Onan*, etc.] Some time after his brother's death:

go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her; Moses here uses a word not common for marriage, but which was peculiar to the marrying of a brother's wife according to a law given in his time: it appears to have been a custom before, and which the patriarch might be directed to by the Lord, in such a case when a brother died, and left no issue, for the sake of multiplication of seed, according to the divine promise, and which in the time of Moses passed into a law, (see ^{<625>}Deuteronomy 25:5);

and raise up seed unto thy brother; that might bear his name, and enjoy his inheritance. For this law or custom was partly political, to continue the paternal inheritance in the family, and partly typical, to direct to Christ the firstborn among many brethren, (^{<489>}Romans 8:29), who in all things was to have the preeminence, (^{<5018>}Colossians 1:18); and this was not taken from the Canaanites, among whom Judah now was, but from the ancient patriarchs, which they had no doubt from divine revelation, and was taught in the school of Shem, and handed down from father to son; for as to this being a law among the Egyptians in later times, and which continued to the days of Zeno Augustus^{f1669}, it is most likely they took it from the Jews.

Ver. 9. *And Onan knew that the seed should not be his*, etc.] Should not be called a son of his, but a son of his brother Er; this is to be understood only of the firstborn; all the rest of the children born afterwards were reckoned the children of the real parent of them; this shows this was a custom in use in those times, and well known, and was not a peculiar case:

and it came to pass, when he went in unto his brother's wife; to cohabit with her, as man and wife, he having married her according to his father's direction:

that he spilled [it] on the ground, lest he should give his seed to his brother: lest his brother's wife he had married should conceive by him, and bear a son that should be called his brother's, and inherit his estate; and this is the sin, which from him is called Onania, a sin condemned by the light of nature, as well as by the word of God, and very prejudicial to mankind, as well as displeasing to God, as follows:

Ver. 10. *And the thing which he did displeased the Lord*, etc.] Being done out of envy to his brother, and through want of affection to the memory of his name; and it may be out of covetousness to get his estate into his own hands, and especially as it frustrated the end of such an usage of marrying a brother's wife; which appears to be according to the will of God, since it afterwards became a known law of his; and it was the more displeasing, as it was not only a check upon the multiplication of Abraham's seed as promised, but since the Messiah was to come from Judah. This was doing all to hinder it that lay in his power:

wherefore he slew him also; in like manner as he had slain his brother, (^{<0837>}Genesis 38:7).

Ver. 11. *Then said Judah to Tamar his daughter in law*, etc.] After the death of his two sons, who had successively married her:

remain a widow at thy father's house till Shelah my son be grown: who was his third and youngest son, though perhaps not more than a year younger than Onan; but he might not choose he should marry so soon as his brethren had done, for a reason following: according to the custom and law of marrying a brother's wife, who died without issue, she in course was to be the wife of Shelah; since if there were ever so many brothers, they all married such an one in turn, until there was issue by one of them, (see ^{<0225>}Matthew 22:25); as Judah knew this, he pretended at least to give her to his son for wife, only would have it put off till he was at age of maturity, or was more grown; and therefore desires her to keep herself unmarried to any other person until that time; and advises her to go to her father's house, and continue there, which he did to prevent any intrigues between them, lest his son should be tempted to marry her sooner than it was his will, and she should solicit him to it:

for he said; not to Tamar, but within himself:

lest peradventure he die also as his brethren [did]; by which it seems, that he was ignorant of the true cause of their death, but thought it was either owing to their marrying too young, or to something in the woman unfortunate and unhappy; and he might not really intend he should marry her at all, only made use of an excuse for the present:

and Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house; she had dwelt in Judah's house in the time of her two husbands, but now by his advice she removed to her own father's house; which very probably was in the same place, and her father yet living, who received her, and with whom she continued, (see ^{<18213>}Leviticus 22:13).

Ver. 12. *And in process of time the daughter of Shuah, Judah's wife, died*, etc.] Shuah was his wife's father, who was a Canaanite, (^{<18302>}Genesis 38:2); what her name was is not certain, nor the exact time of her death; it was some time after Tamar was sent home to her father's house; and some take the death of Judah's wife to be a correction and reproof to him for his ill usage of his daughter-in-law, in neglecting to give her to his son, or not designing to do it at all:

and Judah was comforted: he mourned awhile for the death of his wife, according to the custom of the country, and of those times, and then he laid aside the tokens of it, and his sorrow wore off, and he appeared in company and conversed with his friends:

and went up unto his sheepshearers to Timnath; a city in the tribe of Judah, (^{<18157>}Joshua 15:57), said ^{f1670} to be six miles from Adullam, where Judah lived; here he had his flocks of sheep, at least this was judged a proper place for the shearing and washing of them, and this time of the year a proper time for it, at which it was usual to have a feast; and Judah went up to his shearers, not only to see how they went on with their work, but with this view to make an entertainment for them, (see ^{<18218>}1 Samuel 25:3,4,36):

he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite; he took him along with him for a companion, and to partake of the entertainment.

Ver. 13. *And it was told Tamar*, etc.] By some of her neighbours, or by some of Judah's family;

saying, behold, thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep; which might be told her as an indifferent thing, without any design in it; but she took notice of it, and it gave her an opportunity she wanted.

Ver. 14. *And she put her widow's garments off from her,* etc.] By which it appears that in those times and countries it was usual for widows to have a different apparel from others, especially in the time of their mourning, as it has been since in other nations, and with us at this day, and which is commonly called "the widow's weed":

and covered herself with a veil, and wrapped herself; in it, or in a cloak, or some such like garment, which the Arabs now call "hykes"; this she did that she might not be known, and not that she might appear as an harlot; for it was common to all women in those countries to go abroad with their veils: and on the contrary, whatever might be the custom here in those early times, which cannot be said what it was; in other countries, and in later times, harlots have been used to appear unveiled^{f1671} and open to the view of all; though Juvenal^{f1672} represents the Empress Messalina as covering herself with a night hood, and hiding her black hair under a yellow bonnet or peruke, that she might appear as an harlot going to the stews: and so the Arabs now, their whores as well as other women, veil themselves in the streets, but in Egypt they are used to sit at the door, or walk in the streets unveiled^{f1673}:

and sat in an open place, which [is] in the way to Timnath; the Septuagint version renders it, "at the gates of Aenan"; some take it to be the name of a place, and suppose it had its name, as Aben Ezra observes, from two fountains of water that were in the way, like a door, through which Judah passed when he returned home: so Philo the Jew^{f1674} reads, (~~Gen~~ Genesis 38:21); "where is the harlot which was in Ainan by the way?" and Jerom^{f1675} speaks of Aenan as you go to Timnath, now a desert place, and near to the great village Timnath, which is between Aelia and Diospolis (i.e. Jerusalem and Lydia), and there is a fountain in the above place, from whence it has its name: the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it,

"in the division of the ways where all eyes look;"

for the word has the signification of eyes as well as of fountains; and seems to design a place where two ways or more met, which were not only open and obvious to every eye, but required persons to make use of their eyes, and look about them, and consider which way they should go; and where

perhaps a way mark was set up for them to look to, to direct them; and here Tamar placed herself as harlots used to do: hence Catullus ^{f1676} calls common prostitutes “semitariae moechae”, pathway whores; and on the contrary, such an one as was a secret whore, and less exposed, Horace ^{f1677} calls “devium scortum”, an whore that was at some distance from the public road, not so common as others: so in the Apocryph,

“The women also with cords about them, sitting in the ways, burn bran for perfume: but if any of them, drawn by some that passeth by, lie with him, she reproacheth her fellow, that she was not thought as worthy as herself, nor her cord broken.” (Baruch 6:43)

whorish women are represented as sitting in the ways and by the roadside, girt with cords (of bulrushes, and so easily broken), to be picked up by men as they passed by; referring to what Herodotus ^{f1678} reports of the women in the temple of Venus at Babylon. This method Tamar took:

for she saw that Shelah was grown: was at least at the age of her former husbands when, married, if not older: this might be two or three years after his brother’s death: for it was in process of time, or when there had been a multiplication of days after this, that Judah’s wife died, and now his mourning for her was over, (^{Q382}Genesis 38:12);

and she was not given unto him for wife: as he had given her reason to expect, (^{Q381}Genesis 38:11), and as was usually done.

Ver. 15. *When Judah saw her, he thought her [to be] an harlot*, etc.] By her posture and the place she was in:

because she had covered her face; with her veil, that he did not know her; for this is not given as a reason why he took her to be an harlot; the reason of this was, because she sat in the public road; but having covered her face he could not discern who she was, and therefore, from the other circumstance, concluded that she was an harlot, and sat there to prostitute herself to any that passed by.

Ver. 16. *And he turned unto her by the way*, etc.] Which led to her; he turned out of the way in which he was to that where she sat; and very probably it was at some little distance from the way, and therefore he turned aside to it, his lust towards her being excited at the sight of her; perhaps he left his friend Hirah the Adullamite, and sent him on his way, while he committed the following crime:

and said, go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; that is, lie with her:

for he knew not that she [was] his daughter in law; or otherwise, it is suggested by the historian, he would not have offered such a thing to her; but though this may excuse him from wilful incest, yet not from fornication; for he took her to be an harlot, and however knew she was not his wife, and whom he ought not to have had any concern with in such a manner:

and she said, what wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me? perhaps she said this with a very low voice, that he might not know her by it; and she behaved like an harlot by requiring an hire, on condition of which she consented: she knew Judah though he did not know her, and therefore cannot be excused from wilful incest: some indeed extenuate her crime, by supposing that she, though a Canaanite, was become a proselyte to the true religion by marrying into Judah's family, and had knowledge of the Messiah being to be born of Jacob's line; and therefore was desirous of being the mother or ancestor at least of that great Person, and so took this method; that since she could not have the son for her husband, was desirous of enjoying the father, not for the gratification of her lust, but in hopes of the promised seed; and accordingly she has a place in the genealogy of the Messiah, (~~400B~~ Matthew 1:3).

Ver. 17. *And he said, I will send [thee] a kid from the flock*, etc.] Either from Timnath, where his flock was shearing, or rather from Adullam, where he lived; since it is probable he was now returning from Timnath, where he had been feasting and making merry with his shearers, and so in a disposition to commit such an action:

and she said, wilt thou give [me] a pledge, till thou send [it]? she made no objection to the hire or present, only required a pawn, or security for it till she had it; and this was her view indeed in asking an hire that she might have something to produce, should she prove with child by him, to convince him by whom it was.

Ver. 18. *And he said, what pledge shall I give thee?* etc.] Being willing to part with anything for the gratification of his lust:

and she said, thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that [is] in thine hand; she asks all these, that if one should be lost, or fail of being sufficient proof, the other might: the first of these the Septuagint version renders, "thy ring"; the ring upon his finger, which had a seal on it, and was the

signet of his right hand; so Onkelos and Ben Melech: the second word seems not so well rendered, since “bracelets” were wore by women and not men: Jarchi takes it to be a garment with which he was covered; so Ben Melech and the Targum, a cloak, which is not likely, that she should desire him to strip off his clothes: it seems to be either a covering of his head, a wrap of linen such as the Turks wear, or else a handkerchief he had in his pocket; and the staff in his hand was either his walking staff or a shepherd’s crook or staff:

and he gave [it] her, all the above things as a pledge:

and came in unto her; not on the public road, but in some private place at some distance, to which they retired. Maimonides ^{f1679} says, before the law was given, if a man met a woman in the street, and he and she agreed, he gave her hire, and he lay with her, and went away, and such an one was called “Kedeshah”, a harlot, the word used afterwards for Tamar:

and she conceived by him; she proved with child upon it.

Ver. 19. *And she arose and went away*, etc.] To her father’s house immediately, as soon as ever she had parted with Judah; and lest she should be found by the person that would be sent with the kid, and be discovered, she made all the haste she could:

and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood; that it might not be known or suspected that she had been abroad.

Ver. 20. *And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite*, etc.] Who went with him to Timnath, and was privy to all this wickedness, and kept the secret; but would have acted the more friendly and faithful part had he dissuaded him from it: him he employed to carry the kid he had promised, and not any of his servants, for the greater secrecy: and

to receive [his] pledge from the woman’s hand; his signet, bracelets, and staff, or whatever they were:

but he found her not; she was gone from the place where she sat, or where she retired to with Judah.

Ver. 21. *Then he asked the men of that place*, etc.] Or “of her place” ^{f1680}, of the woman’s place, supposing that she dwelt somewhere thereabout:

saying, where [is] the harlot that [was] openly by the wayside? that sat there very publicly some little time ago: the word for “harlot” ^{f1681} comes from another, which signifies to sanctify or separate to holy uses; and harlots were so called, either by an antiphrasis, by way of contradiction, being unholy; or because, as Jarchi observes, they were separated and destined to whoredom; or because they were such as were devoted to Venus, and the worshippers of her, and prostitutes in her temple, and in the temples of other Heathen deities; but it is questionable whether such practices as yet were used;

and they said, there was no harlot in this [place]; they had not known any harlot to frequent that place lately, and Tamar sat there so small a time as not to have been observed by them.

Ver. 22. *And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her,* etc.] That is, the Adullamite returned to him, and informed him that he could not find the harlot to whom he was sent to deliver the kid and receive the pledge, after he had made the strictest inquiry for her he could:

and also the men of the place said, [that] there was no harlot in this [place]; by which it appears, that near the place where Tamar was, there was a town or city, and which was so free from such infamous persons, that there was not one in it that was known to be of such a character, at least, that in such a public manner exposed herself: it would be well if the same could be said of many other places.

Ver. 23. *And Judah said, let her take [it] to her,* etc.] The pledge, and make no further inquiry after her;

lest we be shamed; Judah for committing fornication, which even among Heathens, at least at that time of day, was reckoned a shameful action; and be laughed at also, for committing such a pledge to an whore, who had tricked him out of it; and his friend Hirah for conniving at the sin, and being employed on such an errand:

behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her: who could be a witness for him, if there should be any occasion, that he was faithful to his promise.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass about three months after,* etc.] The above affair happened, and when the pregnancy of Tamar began to be somewhat visible, as it does in women with child about that time:

that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot: her being with child being observed by some of the family, or her neighbours, and knowing that she did not cohabit with Shelah, who, according to custom, ought to have been her husband, concluded that she had had a criminal conversation with some other person, which they were officious enough to report to Judah:

and also, behold, she [is] with child by whoredom; which was judged to be a plain proof and evidence that she had played the harlot:

and Judah said, bring her forth, and let her be burnt: not that Judah can be thought to be a civil magistrate in a Canaanitish and Heathen city where he sojourned, and as such pronounced this sentence on her at once, or even had the power of life and death in his own family; and besides Tamar was not in his, but in her own father's house: but the sense seems to be, that as he was a man of credit and esteem in the neighbourhood, and had an influence and interest in it; he moved that she might be brought out of her father's house, and take her trial before the civil magistrates, and be committed to prison until she was delivered, for it would have been barbarous, and contrary to the law and light of nature, to have burnt her when quick with child, and then indeed to be burnt to death, according to the usage of this country; and as we find adultery in later times was punished with this kind of death, even among Heathens, (~~200~~ Jeremiah 29:22,23); as it was in Egypt in the times of Sesostris the second ^{f1682}; so Salaethus, prince of Croton in Italy, made a law that adulterers should be burnt alive, as Lucian ^{f1683} relates; as did also Macrinus the emperor, that those that were guilty of adultery should be burnt alive together, their bodies joined to each other ^{f1684}: and this criminal action of Tamar was judged adultery, because she was, of right, and according to a custom or law then in use, the wife of Shelah: the Targum of Jonathan intimates, she was judged deserving of this death, because the daughter of a priest; the same law obtaining among the patriarchs as did in the times of Moses, (~~200~~ Leviticus 21:9); and some, as Jarchi relates, say she was the daughter of Shem ^{f1685}, the same with Melchizedek, priest of the most high God: one reason why Judah was in haste to have the sentence pronounced on her, and as soon as could be executed, was not only the disgrace she brought upon his family, but that she might be dispatched, and so his son Shelah freed from being obliged to marry her, which he did not care he should, and was glad of this opportunity to prevent it.

Ver. 25. *When she [was] brought forth*, etc.] From her father's house, not to the place of execution, or in order to be burnt, but to the court of judicature, in order to take tier trial:

she sent to her father in law, saying, by the man whose these [are, am] I with child; she sent a messenger to him, and by him the signet, bracelets, and staff, be they what they may, she had received from him as a pledge for the kid he promised her; and ordered the messenger to say, at the same time he showed him these things, that she was with child by the person to whom they belonged; which was a very modest way of laying it to his charge, and yet very striking and convincing:

and she said; by the messenger she sent:

discern, I pray thee, whose [are] these, the signet, and bracelets, and staff; which were the things given her as a pledge till she received the kid, the hire she was to have for his lying with her.

Ver. 26. *And Judah acknowledged [them]*, etc.] He knew them, and owned them to be his:

and said, she hath been more righteous than I; he means, not with respect to the sin of uncleanness committed by them, in which she was the greatest criminal; she sat not only in the way to tempt him to it, but she knew who he was, and wilfully committed incest with him; whereas he thought and knew of nothing else but simple fornication; but with respect to the affairs in connection between them: she had on her part, according to his direction, kept herself a widow, in expectation of being given to his son Shelah for a wife; but he had not made good his part, he had not fulfilled his promise, he had neglected to give her to his son, which he ought to have done, according to the usage of those times, and as he had suggested to her he would; and his neglect of this had been the cause and occasion of this criminal conversation between them; and this is the reason he himself gives of her being more righteous than he:

because I gave her not to Shelah my son; as he ought to have done, and as he promised he would:

and he knew her again no more; in a carnal way; he did not repeat the sin, but abstained from it having, no doubt, true repentance for it; though Jarchi observes, that some interpret the words, and Ben Melech says some copies read, "he did not cease to know her"; but took her for his wife and married

her, which is supposed to be as justifiable as other things done before the law of Moses; but this is not likely, and it looks as if he never married any wife after, or, if he did, had no more children, since we read of no other but Shelah, and the twins he had by Tamar; and it seems as if Shelah also did not marry Tamar upon this, such an incest being committed with her, since he appears to have had children by another woman, (⁴⁰⁷Numbers 26:20).

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass in the time of her travail*, etc.] When her time to bring forth was come, and her pains were on her, and her midwife with her:

that, behold, twins [were] in her womb; which the midwife could discover before the birth of either.

Ver. 28. *And it came to pass when she travailed*, etc.] Her birth throes came strong and quick upon her:

that [the one] put out [his] hand; which showed that she was like to have a difficult and dangerous time of it; that the birth was not like to be according to the usual and natural order, which may be considered as a correction for her sin:

and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, this came out first; she tied this to his wrist, that she might know whose hand it was, and so which was the firstborn; which, to know was a matter of consequence, since to the firstborn there were some special and peculiar privileges.

Ver. 29. *And it came to pass as he drew back his hand*, etc.] Into the “uterus” again;

that, behold, his brother came out; out of his mother’s womb, and so was properly born first:

and she said; either Tamar, or rather, her midwife:

how hast thou broken forth? it was astonishing to her how it could be, having never met with the like in her practice before; she could not imagine how it was possible for him to come forth first, when his brother lay in the way of him, and nearest the birth, as appeared by his putting out his hand:

[this] breach [be] upon thee; if any damage comes either to the mother or to the brother, and so carries in it the nature of an imprecation; or rather,

that the memory of so strange an event might be preserved, she imposed a name on him that should continue it:

therefore his name was called Pharez: or “therefore he called”, etc. ^{f1686}; Judah called his name Pharez, agreeably to what the midwife had related. From him, in a line of succession, sprang the Messiah, the Pharez or breaker, (^{<3123>}Micah 2:13); for the sake of which the whole history of this chapter seems to be recorded, (^{<4008>}Matthew 1:3).

Ver. 30. *And afterward came out his brother that had the scarlet thread upon his hand*, etc.] By which it was known that he so far came out first; which confirms the remarkable birth of his brother, who notwithstanding got the start of him:

and his name was called Zarah; not from “rising”, or his coming forth like the rising sun, as is usually observed; but rather from his return, or drawing back his hand, and as it were returning to his mother’s womb; and so, according to Hillerus ^{f1687}, Zarah, by a transposition of letters, comes from **rzj** “Chazar”, to return: but Jarchi thinks he had his name from the refulgent appearance of the scarlet thread on his wrist.

CHAPTER 39

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 39

In this chapter the history returns to Joseph again, who being brought down to Egypt was sold to Potiphar, with whom he found favour, and who set him over his house, the Lord prospering everything in his hands, (^{<0301>}Genesis 39:1-6); and being a young man of a comely aspect, his mistress lusted after him, and tempted him to lie with her from time to time, but he as constantly refused it, as being both ingratitude to his master, and a sin against God, (^{<0307>}Genesis 39:7-10); at a certain time they being alone in the house, she renewed her solicitations, and laid hold on his garment, which he left in her hand and fled, (^{<0311>}Genesis 39:11,12); upon which she called to her servants without, and accused Joseph of an ill design upon her, and reported the same to her husband when he came home, (^{<0313>}Genesis 39:13-19); upon which his master put him into prison, but he found favour also with the keeper of it, who committed the prisoners and all things relative to them into his hands, (^{<0320>}Genesis 39:20-23).

Ver. 1. *And Joseph was brought down to Egypt*, etc.] By the Ishmaelites, (^{<0328>}Genesis 37:28); as in a following clause:

and Potiphar an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian; as his name also shows, which signifies the fruit of Pot or Phut, that is, the son or grandson of one of that name ^{f1688}; which might be common in Egypt, since it was the name of a son of Ham, (^{<0106>}Genesis 10:6), from whom the land of Egypt is called the land of Ham, (^{<0323>}Psalms 105:23,27 106:22); of this man and his offices, (see Gill on "^{<0336>}Genesis 37:36");

he bought him: that is, "Joseph",

of the hands of the Ishmaelites, who had brought him down thither; what they gave for him we know, but what they sold him for to Potiphar is not said; no doubt they got a good price for him, and his master had a good bargain too, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 2. *And the Lord was with Joseph*, etc.] Blessing him with his gracious presence, with discoveries of his love, and communion with himself, though destitute of the means of grace and ordinances of worship he enjoyed in his father's house; favouring him with bodily health, and protecting him from all evils and enemies:

and he was a prosperous man; in worldly things, and which was owing to the presence of God with him, and his blessing on him:

and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian; he continued there, and did not attempt to make his escape; or his employment lay chiefly, if not altogether, in the house, and herein he was prosperous, and continued to be so as long as he was in it; the Jews ^{f1689} say, he remained here twelve months. Near the pyramids built in the neighbourhood of Memphis, as is affirmed unanimously by the ancients, to this day is shown a hill, on which they say the house of Potiphar was built, whose servant the patriarch Joseph was, and some of the rubbish of the bricks are yet to be seen ^{f1690}.

Ver. 3. *And his master saw that the Lord [was] with him*, etc.] He knew nothing of the spiritual and gracious presence of God that was with him, he was no judge of that; but he perceived by the ingenuity of his mind, by his ready and speedy learning the Egyptian language, by his dexterity in business, and by the prudence and faithfulness with which he did everything, that he was highly favoured by the divine Being, and had great endowments bestowed upon him, and was an extraordinary person for his age:

and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand; and though Potiphar might have no knowledge of the true Jehovah, whose name he uses, yet he might have a notion of a supreme Being, and that all outward prosperity was owing to him; and knowing Joseph to be an Hebrew, as it is plain his wife did, (^{<1394>}Genesis 39:14); and Jehovah to be the God of the Hebrews, he imputes all the prosperity that attended Joseph and his services unto his God.

Ver. 4. *And Joseph found grace in his sight*, etc.] In the sight of his master, as he did in the sight of God, he had favour both with God and man; his master had a high esteem of him, and a great value for him, and showed him much kindness and respect:

and he served him; readily, willingly, cheerfully, and faithfully; or he served him personally; his master took such a liking to him, that he selected him

from the rest of his servants to wait on his person, and to be what we now call a “valet de chambre”, whose business was to dress and undress him, to wait upon him at table, etc.

and he made him overseer over his house, and all [that] he had he put into his hand; that is, after he had served him some time, in the capacity of a valet, he advanced him, and made him the head servant, or steward of his house, and committed all his business, cash, and accounts to his care, and put all his servants under him.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had*, etc.] How long he was in this office is not certain; there must be some time for the following observation; and during all the time he was in it, it was easily discerned,

that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; that is, much more than before; everything under his hands succeeded before, but now much more abundantly; Potiphar's family was blessed with health, his substance increased, he grew rich and wealthy, and abounded with all good things:

and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field; his domestic affairs prospered, his fields brought forth plentifully, his cattle were fruitful and stood well; every thing belonging to him within doors and without happily succeeded, through the blessing of God upon it, and all for Joseph's sake.

Ver. 6. *And he left all he had in Joseph's hand*; etc.] His master took no care of anything, but committed all to him, trusted him with his money and with his accounts, and with the management of all his affairs; such confidence did he put in him;

and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat; some understand this of Joseph, that though he had all his master's substance in his hands, yet he made no use of it for himself, enjoyed nothing of it but the bread he ate; and it is the observation of a Jewish writer^{f1691}, that he ate nothing but dry bread, and yet, like Daniel and his companions, was well favoured and of a goodly countenance, as in the next clause: but it is better to interpret it of Joseph's master, who was so satisfied with Joseph's good management and fidelity, that he never concerned himself about his affairs, how they stood or what money he had in his house, or what effects he was possessed of; all that he regarded was his food, and perhaps he knew not

what that would be till it came to his table; though some take the expression in this light, that he gave himself unto a luxurious life, regarding nothing but eating and drinking, and taking his pleasure, having so good and faithful a servant: but according to Aben Ezra the sense is, that Joseph had all committed to his care, excepting the bread, or making provision of that for him and his family, which he might not touch being an Hebrew, and had all things common with him but that, (see ^{<0482>}Genesis 43:32); which is a much better sense than what the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi give, who interpret bread of his wife, whom only he reserved for himself of all things in his house;

and Joseph was [a] goodly [person], and well favoured; being like his mother, as Aben Ezra observes, (see ^{<01217>}Genesis 29:17); this is remarked for the sake of what follows, and as leading on to that.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after these things,* etc.] After he was the overseer of his house; in which office, after he had been some time, so it was

that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; he being a handsome young man, caught her eye, and that her heart, and led her on to lust after him, and frequently fed her eyes with amorous glances at him;

and at length being fired with lust, and having an opportunity,

she said, to him, in a bold and impudent manner, in plain words, having given signs and hints, and dropped expressions tending thereto before, as it is probable:

lie with me; now directly, there being both opportunity and convenience, perhaps her chamber was near: this was a very great temptation to a young man in single life and living well, from his mistress, who had it greatly in her power to make him should he consent, or ruin him should he deny.

Ver. 8. *But he refused, and said unto his master's wife,* etc.] Reasoning with her about the evil nature of the crime she tempted him to, which to commit would be ingratitude, as well as injury to his master, and a sin against God; by which it appears that Joseph was a partaker of the grace of God, and that this was in strong exercise at this time, by which he was preserved from the temptation he was beset with:

behold, my master wotteth not what [is] with me in the house; what goods or money are in it:

and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand: such confidence did he repose in him, wherefore to do such an injury to him as to commit adultery with his wife, would be making a sad return, and acting a most ungrateful part for such favour shown him.

Ver. 9. [*There is none greater in this house than I*, etc.] Not any of the servants of the house, he was the chief of them, who had all the rest under him; or rather, “he himself is not greater^{f1692} in this house than I”; that is, his master was not greater than he: he had a greater propriety in the house and the things of it, and he had the original power and authority in it, but had not a greater use of it; Joseph had authority over all the servants, and everything in the house at his command, and the free use of everything his master had, excepting what follows:

neither hath he kept back anything from me but thee, because thou [art] his wife; and is a reason not only why his master retained her for his own use, but why he should not touch her, and why she should not solicit him to it:

how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God? the words are emphatic in the original, “this! this wickedness! this great one!” adultery was reckoned a great sin among all nations, and this, had Joseph committed it, would have been greatly aggravated by the favours his master had conferred upon him; and not only a sin against himself, his soul and body, and against his master, but, above all, a sin against God, contrary to his holy nature, revealed will, and righteous law; all which prevailed upon Joseph to refuse the offer made him, which he could not comply with, in honour or with a good conscience.

Ver. 10. *And it came to pass, that as she spake to Joseph day by day*, etc.] Continually, incessantly, hoping in time to prevail upon him to comply with her desires; so that the temptation, as it was strong, and very ensnaring, it was urgent, and frequent, and pressed with great importunity; which required the more grace and spiritual strength to resist:

that he hearkened not unto her; not only did not yield to her, but would not give her an hearing, at least as little as possible he could, lest he should be overcome by her persuasions:

to lie by her, [or] to be with her; she might tempt him to lie by her, if he would not lie with her; or to lie, as Aben Ezra interprets it, in a place near her, in a chamber next to hers, in hopes by degrees to gain her point; but he would not yield to either, nor to be in her company, and have any conversation with her, at least as little as possible, that he might not be in the way of temptation, and be led into it; though these phrases may all signify carnal copulation with her, which was what his mistress solicited, and he would not hearken to her in, and comply with her.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass about this time*, etc.] About a week, or a month, or rather a year, as Aben Ezra thinks, after she first began her solicitations to him. According to Josephus^{f1693}, it was a public festival, at which women used to attend; but she excused herself, pretending illness; and so Jarchi takes it to be some noted day at the idol's temple, to which all used to go; but she pretended she was sick, and could not go, knowing that Joseph would not be there, but at home, and therefore judged this a fit opportunity to attack him once more: and so it was,

that [Joseph] went into the house to do his business: to inspect the accounts, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it, and settle them:

and [there was] none of the men of the house there within; being all gone to the public festival, or however there were none in that part of the house where Joseph was.

Ver. 12. *And she caught him by his garment, saying, lie with me*, etc.] It is very probable that before this time, as soon as ever she began to speak to him, he got away as fast as he could, and would not hear her; wherefore she now laid hold on his garment, in order to detain him, that she might have time to parley with him, and so prevail:

and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out; it was his outward loose garment she laid hold on, out of which he slipped himself, and so got clear of her, and ran away, and got out of the house as fast as he could: this he did, because he would not struggle with his mistress for his garment, which no doubt by his strength he could have got from her; and partly lest he should by handling of her have carnal desires excited in him, and so be overcome with her temptation.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand*, etc.] And so all hopes of succeeding in her addresses to him were over:

and [he] was fled forth; into the streets, or into some out house, where business was carried on by servants under him.

Ver. 14. *That she called unto the men of her house*, etc.] Of that part of the house which belonged to her; her eunuchs that waited upon her, or that were in another part of the home, at some distance:

and spake unto them; when they came to her:

saying, see, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us: she means her husband, whom through contempt, and in her passion, she names not, having lost all affection for him, as her addresses to Joseph showed; and so the Targum of Jonathan supplies it,

“your master hath brought, etc.”

and Joseph she calls an Hebrew by way of reproach, and with a view to set her servants against him; who before this might not have any great regard to him through envy at him, for the favours he enjoyed, and the authority he had; and because he prevented their doing wrong things to serve themselves, and hurt their master: and holding up his garment in her hand, which they knew full well, bid them look at it, and observe, that this was the issue of his Being brought into the house by their master; that though it was not with such an intention, which can hardly be thought to be her sense, yet this was the event of it; an attempt to abuse, vitiate, and corrupt her, and so bring contempt upon the whole family, and expose them to the scorn and mockery of men, for their mistress to be abused by a base foreigner: she explains herself more fully by saying,

he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice; both of them lies; for it was she that solicited him to lie with her, and not he; nor did she cry out at all; and if she did, how came it she was not heard by them, as well as when she called unto them; thus her impure love was turned into hatred, which put her upon framing lies and calumnies; and which has been also done in cases similar to this ^{f1694}, as Sthenobaea against Bellerophon.

Ver. 15. *And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried,* etc.] He attempting to ravish her, as she would have it understood, but afraid, lest upon her outcry those that were in the house should come in to her assistance, and seize on him:

that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out: but why should he strip himself of his garment, and leave that behind him? he might have fled with it.

Ver. 16. *And she laid up his garment by her,* etc.] As a proof of what she laid to his charge, and as a testimony against him:

until her lord came home; or until his lord came home, for the pronoun refers to Joseph, and so Jarchi interprets it; who either was gone a journey, or gone to court that day, being an officer of Pharaoh's, or to the public place where the festival was kept that day, if it was such an one.

Ver. 17. *And she spake unto him according to these words,* etc.] When her husband came home she related to him the above affair, according to the purport of the above words, and in much the same manner, and to the same import as she had to the men of her house:

saying, the Hebrew servant which thou hast brought unto us came in unto me to mock me; in an obscene manner, using filthy words and actions, contrary to the rules of chastity as well as good manners; or, in other words, to lie with her, which she pretended he solicited.

Ver. 18. *And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried,* etc.] For help from the servants, and frightened at his insolent attempt:

that he left his garment with me, and fled out; and then she brought it forth, and showed him it.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife,* etc.] The story she related concerning Joseph, which was her own invention, and a lie:

which she spake unto him, saying, after this manner did thy servant to me; attempting to violate her chastity, as she pretended:

that his wrath was kindled; that is, against Joseph, without strictly examining her words, which they would not bear, her story being but ill put together, and without hearing Joseph's defence.

Ver. 20. *And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison*, etc.] Which was in or adjoining to his house, (^{<04B>}Genesis 40:3); of himself he had power to do this, as the captain of the guard; and as he was the chief of the executioners, as some take his office to be, it is much he did not in his passion deliver him up into their hands to put him to death at once; but it may be through the great respect he had had for Joseph, which was not wholly extinguished by this impeachment of him; and especially if he heard Joseph's apology for himself before he committed him, his passion might subside a little, though for the credit of his wife he might take this step; or however things were so overruled by the providence of God, who has the hearts of all men in his hands, that he should do what he did. The word for "prison" has the signification of roundness, and may be rendered the "round house" ^{f1695}, or "round tower"; and some Jewish writers, as Mercer observes, take it to be in this form, that it was made under ground, and at the top of it was an hole which let in light, and at which they went into it. Aben Ezra is at a loss to say whether it is an Hebrew or Egyptian word, and inclines to the latter, because he thinks it is explained in the next clause:

a place where the king's prisoners [were] bound; such as were guilty of high treason, or however of high crimes and misdemeanours against him; and so was a prison in which men were strictly kept and used hardly, as was Joseph at first, as appears from (^{<0A518>}Psalms 105:18):

and he was there in the prison; he continued there, some of the Jewish writers say ^{f1696} ten years, others twelve ^{f1697}; and so long he must be, if he was but one year in Potiphar's house; for there were thirteen years between his being sold into Egypt, and his appearance before Pharaoh; he was seventeen when he was sold, and he was thirty when he stood before Pharaoh, being took out of prison, (see ^{<01302>}Genesis 37:2 41:46); but it is more likely that he was a longer time in Potiphar's house, and a lesser time in prison.

Ver. 21. *And the Lord was with Joseph*, etc.] Comforting him with his presence under his afflictions; supporting him with his right hand; sanctifying all his troubles to him, and so causing him to bear them patiently and cheerfully:

and showed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison; who was the underkeeper to Potiphar; God so wrought upon the heart of this man, that he was merciful to him, and took off the iron

fetters, which hurt his feet, and gave him liberty to walk about; and many other favours and kindnesses he showed unto him, as follow.

Ver. 22. *And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that [were] in the prisons,* etc.] Who, as they were state prisoners, were a considerable charge; and this gave Joseph great honour, credit, and influence in the prison:

and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer [of it]; not that he learned and exercised every trade the prisoners were of, to get a living by, which is the sense of some, as Aben Ezra relates; or that he in fact did everything that was done in the prison: but the meaning is, that he gave orders for the doing of everything, and there was nothing done without him; all that was done, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it, he commanded it to be done; or, as Onkelos, all that was done was done by his word, that is, by his authority and command.

Ver. 23. *The keeper of the prison looked not to anything [that was] under his hand,* etc.] Under the hand of Joseph; he did not inquire into and examine his conduct and management of things; he took no account of what was in his hands, nor required any of him; so satisfied was he with what he did, and had such an opinion of his prudence and faithfulness. The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan paraphrase it,

“he saw no crime in him,”

either in the management of affairs he committed to him, or for which he was put into prison, and therefore did not use him as he did other prisoners:

because the Lord was with him; supplying him with his grace, giving him wisdom to do everything in the best manner committed to him, which caused the keeper of the prison to respect him as he did:

and [that] which he did the Lord made [it] to prosper; every method he took to secure the prisoners, every scheme he formed to bring them to confession of their crimes, or to clear those that were innocent; and every other thing relative to prison affairs, all through the good hand of God upon him, guiding, directing, and blessing him, succeeded well, which gained him the favour and good will of the keeper and the prisoners.

CHAPTER 40

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 40

The history of this chapter is, the imprisonment of two of Pharaoh's officers, his chief butler and chief baker, who by the captain of the guard were made the charge of Joseph, (^{<040>}Genesis 40:1-4); they both dreamed in prison, which made them sad; Joseph taking notice of their sadness, asked the reason of it, and encouraged them to tell him their dreams, (^{<040>}Genesis 40:5-8); the chief butler told his dream of the vine and three branches, which Joseph interpreted of his restoration to his office within three days, and desired him to remember him unto Pharaoh when he stood before him, telling him his case, (^{<040>}Genesis 40:9-15); then the chief baker told his dream of three white baskets of food on his head, which the birds ate, and this Joseph interpreted of his being hanged within three days, (^{<040>}Genesis 40:16-19); and the events answered to the interpretation, but Joseph was forgot by the chief butler, (^{<040>}Genesis 40:20-23).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass after these things*, etc.] After Joseph had been accused and cast into prison, where he had been for some time:

[that] the butler of the king of Egypt and [his] baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt; committed some fault, at least were accused of one, which raised his displeasure at them. The Targum of Jonathan says, that they consulted to put poison into his drink and food; which, it is not improbable, considering their business and office, they might be charged with; at least it is much more probable than what Jarchi suggests, that the one put a fly into his cup, and the other a little stone or sand into his bread.

Ver. 2. *And Pharaoh was wroth against two [of] his officers*, etc.] The same above mentioned:

against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers; for as there were several butlers and bakers that belonged unto him, who were employed in providing wine and food for him, there was one of each who was over the rest; and as their business was to see that those under them did their work well, when they were faulty the principal officers were answerable for it: wherefore, if in this case they had not been guilty of

anything criminal themselves personally, yet they might have neglected to look after those that were under them, and so were culpable, and drew upon them the wrath and resentment of their lord and sovereign.

Ver. 3. *And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard,* etc.] Who is generally thought to be Potiphar, since this was the office he was in, (~~Gen~~ Genesis 39:1); unless he was dead, and there was another put into his room, or there were more than one in the same office:

into the prison, the place where Joseph [was] bound; that is, where he had been bound, and where he was still a prisoner, though not fettered and in that close confinement he had been in.

Ver. 4. *And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them,* etc.] Committed them to his care and custody, he being very probably recommended to him by the keeper of the prison for his prudence and fidelity; and if it was Potiphar, he knew his character full well, and might be now reconciled unto him, as having had a more full and clear account of the affair between him and his wife from the keeper of the prison; and therefore though he might not think fit for his own and his wife's reputation to remove him from prison as yet, nevertheless might be inclined to do him what service he could, as well as honour, as this was, to have two such state prisoners committed to his care. Some render it, "he committed Joseph with them"^{f1698}; to be with them, as Jarchi interprets it; they were put together, not merely for the sake of company, but that Joseph might wait upon them, which might be beneficial as well as creditable, as it follows:

and he served them; he ministered unto them, and brought them every thing they wanted:

and they continued a season in ward; or "days"^{f1699}; some certain days, many days, a year, as Jarchi and Ben Gersom interpret it, and which is sometimes the use of the word. The story of the butler and baker is told, partly to show the divine faculty of interpreting dreams Joseph was possessed of; and partly to observe the remarkable steps in Providence, though secret, towards his advancement in Pharaoh's court.

Ver. 5. *And they dreamed a dream both of them,* etc.] Not one and the same dream:

each man his dream in one night; which made it the more remarkable, and the more impressed their minds, concluding from hence there must be something of importance in their dreams:

each man according to the interpretation of his dream; they dreamed each what was suitable to his office and character, and which portended what should hereafter befall them, as the interpretation of them by Joseph afterwards, and the event showed; so that it was not a vain idle dream, but divine and certain:

the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which [were] bound in the prison; this is added for explanation's sake, showing who were the persons spoken of that dreamed the dreams.

Ver. 6. *And Joseph came in unto them in the morning*, etc.] For though Joseph and they were in the same prison, yet not in the same ward. Aben Ezra thinks that Joseph lodged in the dungeon in the night, (^{40:15}Genesis 40:15); and was let out in the morning to wait on these prisoners; but the great interest he had in the keeper of the prison, and the favour shown him by the captain of the guard, in putting such prisoners under his care, will easily make one conclude, that Joseph now had a better lodging than that; though it had been his case, he was now provided with a better apartment in the prison; and when he arose in the morning, like a careful and faithful servant, he came to the ward where the prisoners under his care were, to see that they were safe, and what they wanted:

and looked upon them, and, behold, they [were] sad; they looked sorrowful, dejected, and uneasy.

Ver. 7. *And he asked Pharaoh's officers that [were] with him*, etc.] The chief butler and baker that were committed to his care, and with whom he now was,

in the ward of the lord's house; this seems to confirm what is before observed, that the captain of the guard that charged Joseph with them was Potiphar his master; though indeed the keeper of the prison that was under Potiphar, the captain of the guard, might be called Joseph's lord or master, but the house could not with so much propriety be called his:

saying, wherefore look ye [so] sadly today? as they were officers, who had been in lucrative places, they lived well and merrily, and expected very probably they should be released in a short time, nothing appearing against

them; but now there was a strange alteration in them, which was very visible to Joseph, and for which he expresses a concern, being of a kind, tender, and benevolent disposition, as the question he puts to them shows.

Ver. 8. *And they said unto him, we have dreamed a dream*, etc.] Each of them:

and [there is] no interpreter of it; in that place in which they were, the prison; otherwise there were persons enough in the land that pretended to the interpretation of dreams, (^{<0408>}Genesis 41:8); but they could not come at them, being in prison:

and Joseph said unto them, [do] not interpretations [belong] to God? that is, of dreams, and to him only, meaning the true God whom he worshipped; for as dreams themselves, which are of importance, and predict things to come, are of God; for none can foretell future events but he, and such to whom he imparts the gift of prophecy; so none can interpret dreams with any certainty but God himself, and those to whom he gives the faculty of interpretation of them; this Joseph said to take off their minds from the magicians and wise men, and interpreters of dreams among the Egyptians, these officers were hankering after, and wished they had them with them to interpret their dreams to them; and to suggest unto them, that though he did not arrogate such a power to himself, as having it of himself, yet intimates that he doubted not, but upon an address to his God, he would favour him with the interpretation of their dreams, and therefore encourages them to relate them to him:

tell me [them], I pray you; or “now”^{f1700}, directly, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; signifying, that he would immediately interpret them to them; no doubt Joseph said this under a divine impulse.

Ver. 9. *And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph*, etc.] He listened to what Joseph said, and paid a regard to it, and began to think he might be able to interpret his dream, and therefore was forward, and the first to tell him it at once; whereas the chief baker did not seem disposed to do it, until he observed the good interpretation given of the butler’s dream, (^{<0406>}Genesis 40:16):

and said unto him, in my dream, behold, a vine [was] before me; it appeared to him in his dream, as if a vine sprung up at once, and stood before him; which was very suitable to his office as a butler, wine being the

fruit of the vine, which he provided for the king his master, and presented to him at table.

Ver. 10. *And in the vine [were] three branches*, etc.] Which shot out from the root or body of it:

and it [was as] though it budded; the branches seemed to sprout out:

[and] her blossoms shot forth; it knotted, and the flowers of the vine appeared, which blowing off, the tender grapes were seen:

and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes; all which is agreeably to the order nature observes, from the first putting forth of the vine, to its producing ripe fruit; and which in this dream immediately followed one another, as it seemed according to the representation of things to the, mind of the butler, and which he perfectly remembered, it having made a strong impression upon him.

Ver. 11. *And Pharaoh's cup [was] in his hand*, etc.] So it seemed to him in his dream, as it often had been when in his office:

and I took the grapes; from off the vine that was before him:

and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup; which some think was the custom of those times, to take a bunch of grapes and squeeze them into a cup, especially when they would make trial of what sort of wine they would produce; for it can hardly be thought that this was usually done, or that it was customary to drink such new wine; but it is more probable that the grapes were first pressed into another vessel, and so made wine of, and then poured into Pharaoh's cup, or mixed in it, though this circumstance is omitted. Indeed Herodotus^{f1701} relates of the Egyptian priests, that wine pressed out of the vine is given them:

and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand; as he had used to do.

Ver. 12. *And Joseph said unto him, this [is] the interpretation of it*, etc.] Of the dream:

the three branches [are] three days; signify three days, or, as Jarchi expresses it, are a sign of three days; which Joseph could know only by divine revelation; for there is no more likeness between branches and days, than between them and months or years, and bid as fair to signify one as the other, if the interpretation depended on similarity, or bare conjecture.

Ver. 13. *Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head*, etc.] The Targum of Jonathan adds, with glory; and the sense is, either that Pharaoh would raise him up from the low estate in which he now was, to the same exalted station in which he had been before; or that he would reckon and number him among his servants, when he should take a catalogue of them, or make a new list, so Jarchi and Aben Ezra; and this phrase is used of taking the sum of persons, or the number of them, and is so rendered, (⁽⁻⁰³⁰²⁾Exodus 30:12 ⁽⁻⁰⁴⁰²⁾Numbers 4:2,22); the allusion is thought to be to a custom used by great personages, to have the names of their servants called over on a certain day, as Pharaoh perhaps used to do on his birthday, (⁽⁻⁰⁴⁰²⁾Genesis 40:20); when they struck out of the list or put into it whom they pleased, and pardoned or punished such as had offended; and this sense is the rather inclined to, because Pharaoh is said to lift up the head of both the butler and the baker, (⁽⁻⁰⁴⁰²⁾Genesis 40:20); yet it may be observed, that the phrases used by Joseph concerning them differ; for of the baker he says, “Pharaoh shall lift up thy head from off thee”, (⁽⁻⁰⁴⁰²⁾Genesis 40:19); wherefore, though the heads of them both were lift up, yet in a different sense: the one was lifted up to the gallows, and the other to his former dignity, as follows:

and restore thee unto thy place: to his office in ministering: to Pharaoh as his cup bearer:

and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh’s cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler; which was signified in the dream, by squeezing the grapes into Pharaoh’s cup he had in his hand, and gave unto him.

Ver. 14. *But think on me, when it shall be well with thee*, etc.] He desires no reward for the interpretation of his dream, only that he would remember him in adversity, when he should be in prosperity in Pharaoh’s court, and speak a good word for him, which was the least he could do; and though Joseph knew by his own dreams that he should be raised from his low estate to a very high and advanced one, yet he thought proper, in a dependence on God, to make use of all lawful means for his deliverance; nor is he to be blamed, as if he sought help of man and not of God, as he is by some writers, both Christian and Jewish, particularly by the Targum of Jonathan,

“Joseph lost his superior confidence, and retained the confidence of men;”

whereas means are always to be used in order to the end, in subordination to the divine will; and what Joseph asked of the butler was but reasonable, and what he ought to have done for him, and was prudently moved by Joseph, as a rational method of his deliverance, and in which he was, no doubt, guided and directed by the providence of God, as the event shows:

and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me; he pleads no merit for what he had done in interpreting his dream, but puts the good office he desires him to do for him upon the foot of kindness to a man in distress, and asks it as a favour, by way of entreaty and request:

and make mention of me and bring me out of this house: the prison in which he was; for though he had much favour shown him, and had more liberty granted him than other prisoners had, yet a prisoner he was, and a prison he dwelt in, and deliverance from it was desirable, could it be had; and this was a likely way to obtain it, if the butler would speak a good word for him to Pharaoh, which he would have an opportunity to do, being often in his presence, and frequently when cheerful.

Ver. 15. *For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews*, etc.] Not the whole land of Canaan, so called, either from the Hebrews sojourning: in it, or from its being given unto them by God; neither of which could be a reason why Joseph, when talking with an Egyptian, should give it this name, and which, it must be supposed, was known to him; but that part of the land of Canaan where the Hebrews had sojourned for three generations, where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had lived, even at or near Hebron; and being persons of great note, and having done great exploits, their names were well known, and the country where they lived, and particularly among the Egyptians: now Joseph does not expose the sin of his brethren in selling him to the Ishmaelites, by whom he was brought into Egypt and sold there; only relates that he was stolen out of his native country, being taken from it without his own or his father's consent:

and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon; since he had been in the land of Egypt, he had not been guilty of any criminal action wherefore he should be put into a prison, and especially into a dungeon, a dark and filthy place under ground, as dungeons usually were, and into which Joseph was put when first in confinement, though since took out of it: he makes no mention of the wickedness of his mistress, and of her false accusation of him, nor of the injustice of his master in putting him into prison without hearing him; only asserts his own

innocence, which was necessary to recommend himself to the butler, that he might not think he was some loose fellow that was committed to prison for some capital crime, and so it would have, been a disgrace to him to have spoken for him.

Ver. 16. *When the chief baker saw that the interpretation was good*, etc.]

Meaning not that it was right and just, though it was; but that it was agreeable and pleasing, and portended good in the event; and therefore hoped a like interpretation would be given of his dream, and this encouraged him to tell it, which perhaps otherwise he would not have done:

he said unto Joseph, I also [was] in a dream; or had a dream, and in it things were represented to his mind as follows:

and, behold, [I had] three white baskets on my head; which were made of wicker, of rods that had the bark pulled off, and so were white; or which had holes in them, baskets wrought with holes, after the manner of network; though some think this denotes not the colour or form of the basket, but of the bread in them, and interpret the words, baskets of white bread, as Saadiah Gaon, and so the Targum of Jonathan, baskets of most pure bread, and the Targum of Jerusalem, baskets of hot bread; this dream was very agreeable to his office and business as a baker.

Ver. 17. *And in the uppermost basket [there was] of all manner of bakemeats for Pharaoh*, etc.] All sorts of pastry, as tarts, pies, etc.

Josephus^{f1702} says, two of the baskets were full of bread, and the third had various sorts of food, such as is usually, prepared for kings:

and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head; all the three baskets were upon his head, but this seems to be the uppermost, which the birds could more easily come at; though if the baskets were full of holes, they might through them peck the bread with their bills.

Ver. 18. *And Joseph answered and said*, etc.] Immediately, directly, without any further thought and meditation, being divinely instructed:

this [is] the interpretation thereof; of the above dream:

the three baskets [are] three days; signify three days.

Ver. 19. *Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head from off thee*, etc.] Order thee to be beheaded; so the Targum of Jonathan and Ben Melech interpret it,

“Pharaoh shall remove thy head from thy body with a sword:”

and shall hang thee on a tree; his body after his head was severed from it, this should be hung upon a gallows or gibbet, and there continue:

and the birds shall eat the flesh from off thee; as they usually do when bodies are thus hung up, (see ^{<1200>}2 Samuel 21:9,10); this was signified by the birds eating the bakemeats out of the uppermost basket when upon his head, as it seemed to him in his dream.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass the third day, [which was] Pharaoh’s birthday*, etc.] The third day from the time the dreams were told, and the interpretation of them given, was the birthday of Pharaoh; either the day in which a son of his was born, or in which he himself was born, as Ben Melech observes; but the latter is more probable, since the former could not with propriety be called Pharaoh’s birthday; and this might be either the day of his natural birth, or of his political birth, the time of his accession to the throne, which with the Romans was called “natalis imperii”, and was observed with feasting and rejoicing ^{f1703}, as well as the former, both among them and other nations: it is most likely this was Pharaoh’s natural birthday, which was observed among the Egyptians as birthdays were among the Persians ^{f1704}, and as Herod’s was at his court in the days of Christ, (^{<1046>}Matthew 14:6); and as is usual in our times in most countries:

that he made a feast unto all his servants; his ministers of state, his courtiers, and all in his palace:

and he lifted up the head of his chief butler and of his chief baker, among his servants; that is, among his servants, when their names were called over; or at this festival, these two were taken notice of, as being charged with crimes, and their cases were looked into and examined, and their heads were lifted up in a different sense: they were both lifted out of prison, but the one was lifted up to his former post and place in Pharaoh’s court, and the other was lifted up to a gallows or gibbet, as follows; though perhaps this lifting of them both may only signify the trial of them, when they were set on high to be seen by the judge and all the court, (see ^{<1200>}1 Kings 21:9).

Ver. 21. *And he restored the chief butler unto his butlership again*, etc.] Put him into the same office he was in before:

and he gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand; ministered to him in his office the same day, according to his dream and the interpretation of it: the Targum of Jonathan adds this as a reason of his being restored,

“because he found that he was not in that counsel,”

in which it was consulted to poison Pharaoh, (see Gill on “~~40:1~~Genesis 40:1”).

Ver. 22. *But he hanged the chief baker*, etc.] The is, he ordered him to be hanged; because, as the same Targum says, he consulted to kill him (Pharaoh):

as Joseph had interpreted to them; the events as to both answered to the interpretation Joseph had given of their several dreams.

Ver. 23. *Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph*, etc.] To speak of him to Pharaoh, neither on that day in which he was restored, nor for a long time after, even for the space of two years, as seems from the following chapter:

but forgot him; never more thought of him, of the favour he had done him in interpreting his dream; of the request he made to him, and of the promise which he had probably given him; which was an instance of great ingratitude, and is frequently the case and character of courtiers, who being in high places themselves, neglect others, their petitions to them, and their own promises to do all they can for them.

CHAPTER 41

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 41

In this chapter are related Pharaoh's dreams, which his magicians could not interpret, (^{<0400>}Genesis 41:1-9), upon which the chief butler now remembering Joseph, recommended him to Pharaoh as an interpreter, having had an happy experience of him as such himself, (^{<0410>}Genesis 41:10-13), when Joseph was sent for out of prison; and Pharaoh having related his dreams, he interpreted them of seven years of plenty, and seven years of famine, that should be in the land of Egypt, (^{<0414>}Genesis 41:14-32); and having done, he gave his advice to provide in the years of plenty against the years of famine, and proposed a scheme for doing it, which was approved of by Pharaoh and his ministers, (^{<0433>}Genesis 41:33-37); and Joseph himself was pitched upon as the most proper person to execute it, and was appointed chief over the kingdom next to Pharaoh, who gave him a new name and a wife upon this occasion, (^{<0438>}Genesis 41:38-45); accordingly, in the years of plenty he took a tour throughout the whole land, and gathered and laid up food in vast quantities in every city, (^{<0446>}Genesis 41:46-49); an account is given of two sons born to Joseph, and of their names, (^{<0450>}Genesis 41:50-52); and of the seven years of famine, beginning to come on at the end of the seven years of plenty, which brought great distress on the land of Egypt, and the countries round about, who all came to Joseph to buy corn, (^{<0453>}Genesis 41:53-57).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass at the end of two full years*, etc.] It is not a clear case, as Aben Ezra observes, from whence these years are to be reckoned, whether from the time of Joseph's being put into prison, or from the time that the chief butler was taken out of it; the latter seems more probable, and better connects this and the preceding chapter:

that Pharaoh dreamed, and, behold, he stood by the river; it seemed to him, in his dream, as if he stood near the river Nile, or some canal or flow of water cut out of that river.

Ver. 2. *And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine, and fatfleshed*, etc.] Seven cows or heifers, sleek, fat, and plump,

goodly to look at; these seemed in the dream, as if they came out of the river, because they were fed with the fruits of the earth, which the overflowing of the river Nile, and its canals, produced:

and they fed in a meadow; adjoining to the river, where there was good pasture for them, and gives a reason of their being in so good a condition.

Ver. 3. *And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured, and leanfleshed*, etc.] Thin and haggard, their bones stuck out, having scarce any flesh upon them, and made a wretched figure:

and stood by the [other] kine; and looked so much the worse, when compared with them:

upon the brink of the river; it not being overflowed, so that there was no grass to be had, but just upon the bank, where these kept for that purpose; for the fruitfulness of Egypt was owing to the river Nile; as that overflowed or did not, there was plenty or famine; hence both these sorts of creatures came up out of that.

Ver. 4. *And the ill favoured and leanfleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine*, etc.] So it seemed in the dream as if this was done, was very strange and surprising that animals should devour one another; and especially that tame ones, cows or heifers, should eat those of their own species, which was never known to be done:

so Pharaoh awoke; through surprise at the strange sight he had in his dream.

Ver. 5. *And he slept, and dreamed the second time*, etc.] He fell asleep again quickly, and dreamed another dream the same night, and to the same purpose, being much of the like kind with the former:

and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good; which were very uncommon even in those fruitful countries; though Dr. Shaw^{f1705} observes of Barbary, which vied with Egypt for fruitfulness, that it sometimes happens that one stalk of wheat will bear two ears, while each of these ears will as often shoot out into a number of lesser ones, thereby affording a most plentiful increase.

Ver. 6. *And, behold, seven thin ears, and blasted with the east wind*, etc.] Which is very fatal to corn, to dry, burn, smite, or blast it; and especially to the corn in Egypt, whither it blew from the desert of Arabia: these

sprung up after them; after the seven full ears, in the same place the other did, or near unto them.

Ver. 7. *And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears*, etc.] So it appeared to Pharaoh in his dream, which must be very amazing to behold, and unaccountable how it should be:

and Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, [it was] a dream; not a real fact, but a dream; yet not a common dream, but had some important signification in it; it not vanishing from his mind, but abode upon it, which made him conclude there was something more than common in it, and made him very desirous to have the interpretation of it.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass in the morning, that his spirit was troubled*, etc.] With the thoughts of his dreams; they were uppermost in his mind; he was continually thinking of them; it was as if he had always the same images before him now awake, as well as when asleep, and therefore could not be easy without getting knowledge of the meaning of them:

and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof; who pretended to have great skill in the things of nature, and in astrology and other sciences, by which they pretended to know future events, and to interpret dreams among other things; and show what they portended, and what things would happen for the accomplishment of them:

and Pharaoh told them his dream; both his dreams, which for the similarity of them, and there being so little interruption between them, are represented as one dream; for that both were told them appears by what follows:

but [there was] none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh; they were nonplussed and confounded, and did not know what to say; the things were so strange and surprising that he related, that they could not offer any conjectures about them, or, if they did, they were very unsatisfactory to Pharaoh.

Ver. 9. *Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh*, etc.] When the magicians and wise men could not interpret his dreams, he was in distress of mind on that account:

saying, I do remember my faults this day; which some interpret of his forgetfulness of Joseph and his afflictions, and of his ingratitude to him,

and breach of promise in not making mention of him to Pharaoh before this time; but they seem rather to be faults he had committed against Pharaoh, and were the reason of his being wroth with him, as in (⁴⁴¹⁰Genesis 41:10); and these were either real faults, which the king had pardoned, or however such as he had been charged with, and cleared from; and which he now in a courtly manner takes to himself, and owns them, that the king's goodness and clemency to him might appear, and lest he should seem to charge the king with injustice in casting him into prison; which circumstance he could not avoid relating in the story he was about to tell.

Ver. 10. *Pharaoh was wroth with his servants*, etc.] Not with all of them, but with the butler and the baker. Aben Ezra observes here, that Pharaoh was not the proper name of this king, but a title of office, and signifies the king; for it cannot be thought that the butler would use such freedom in his presence as to call him by his name: the true name of this prince, according to the eastern writers ^{f1706}, was Rian ben Walid; others take him to be Aphophis, the third of the Hycsi, or pastor kings: but, according to Bishop Usher ^{f1707}, his name was Mephramuthosis:

and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house: in consequence of his wrath and displeasure, for crimes really or supposed to be committed by him; and the captain of the guard's house was a prison, or at least there was a prison in it for such sort of offenders; and this was Potiphar's, Joseph's master's, house:

[both] me and the chief baker; which explains who the officers were Pharaoh was wroth with, and who were for their offences committed to prison.

Ver. 11. *And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he*, etc.] In one and the same night:

we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream; they both dreamed exactly what should befall them, as it was interpreted to them; the dreams, the interpretation of them, and the events, answered to each other.

Ver. 12. *And [there was] there with us a young man*, etc.] Who was in the prison with them, had the care of them, and waited upon them; he was then about twenty eight years of age; for it was two years ago he speaks of, and Joseph was thirty when he stood before Pharaoh, (⁴⁴⁴⁶Genesis 41:46):

an Hebrew servant to the captain of the guard; he first describes him by his age, a young man, then by his descent, an Hebrew, and by his state and condition, a servant; neither of them tended much to recommend him to the king:

and we told him; that is, their dreams:

and he interpreted to us our dream, to each man according to his dream did he interpret; told them what their dreams presignified, what the events would be they portended; the interpretation was different according to their dreams.

Ver. 13. *And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was*, etc.] The event answered to the interpretation, and showed it to be right; this is frequently hinted and repeated, to show the exactness and certainty of the interpretation given, in order to recommend Joseph to Pharaoh the more:

me he restored unto my office, and him he hanged: that is, Joseph interpreted the butler's dream to such a sense, that he should be restored to his butlership, and accordingly he was; and the baker's dream, that he should be hanged, and so he was. Aben Ezra and Jarchi interpret this of Pharaoh, that he restored the one, and hanged the other, or ordered these things to be done, which answered to Joseph's interpretation of the dreams; but the former sense seems best, for Joseph is the person immediately spoken of in the preceding clause; nor would it have been so decent for the butler, in the presence of Pharaoh, to have spoken of him without naming him, and which would have been contrary to his usage before.

Ver. 14. *Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph*, etc.] Sent messengers to him to come to him directly, ordered the captain of the guard, or keeper of prison, to loose him, and let him free, (see ¹⁷⁰⁸Psalm 105:20);

and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon; that is, out of the prison house; which, as Jarchi says, was made like a ditch or dungeon, or in which the dungeon was where Joseph was first put when he was brought to prison; though it cannot be thought that he continued there when he had so much respect shown him by the keeper, and had other prisoners committed to his care: however, he was fetched in great haste from his place of confinement, by the messengers that were sent for him; or "they made him to run"^{f1708}, from the prison to the palace, the king being so eager to have his dream interpreted to him:

and he shaved [himself]; or the barber shaved him, as Aben Ezra; his beard had not been shaved, nor the hair of his head cut very probably for a considerable time; it being usual for persons in such circumstances to neglect such things:

and changed his raiment; his prison garments being such as were not fit to appear in before a king, and put on others, which either the king sent him, or the captain of the guard his master furnished him with:

and came in unto Pharaoh: into his palace, and his presence; what city it was in which this Pharaoh kept his palace, is no where said; very probably it was which the Scriptures call Zoan, that being the ancient city of Egypt, (⁴¹³²Numbers 13:22).

Ver. 15. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph*, etc.], Immediately, upon his being introduced to him:

I have dreamed a dream, and [there] is none that can interpret it; that he could yet meet with; none of his magicians or wise men, who made great pretensions to skill in such matters:

and I have heard say of thee, [that] thou canst understand a dream to interpret it; it had been reported to him, particularly by the chief butler, that when he heard a dream told him, he had such knowledge and understanding, that he could interpret it, tell the meaning of it, what it portended, and what would be the events signified by it.

Ver. 16. *And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, [it is] not in me*, etc.]. Which expresses his great modesty, that he did not arrogate such skill and wisdom to himself; declaring that he had no such power and abilities in and of himself, to interpret dreams; what he had was a gift of God, and wholly depended upon his influence, and the revelation he was pleased to make to him of such things:

God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace; such an answer to his request in the interpretation of his dream, as shall give him full content, and make his mind quiet and easy, and which shall tend to the welfare of him and his kingdom. Some render the words as a prayer or wish, “may God give Pharaoh”, etc. ^{f1709}; so as it were addressing his God, that he would be pleased to make known to him his interpretation of the dream to the satisfaction of Pharaoh: but the other sense seems best, which expresses his

faith in God, that he would do it, and to whom it should be ascribed, and not unto himself.

Ver. 17. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph*, etc.] Relating both his dreams in a more ample manner, though to the same purpose, than before related:

in my dream, behold, I stood upon the bank of the river; the river Nile, where he could have a full sight of what were after presented to his view.

Ver. 18. *And, behold, there came up out of the river seven kine*, etc.] Cows or heifers, (see Gill on “^{Q410B}Genesis 41:2”); the account of them is the same here as there, and of the place where they fed, only the words are transposed.

Ver. 19. *And, behold, seven other kine*, etc.] Here some addition is made: these are said not only to be

very ill favoured, and leanfleshed, (see Gill on “^{Q410B}Genesis 41:3”), but *poor*, thin, meagre, exhausted of their flesh and strength through some disease upon them, or want of food: and it follows, what was not before expressed,

such as I never saw in all the land of Egypt, for badness; so poor, so lean, and so ill favoured; for whatever might be seen in other countries, never were such seen in Egypt, which was famous for good cattle.

Ver. 20. *And the lean and the ill favoured kine*, etc.] The same as previously described; (see Gill on “^{Q410B}Genesis 41:4”).

Ver. 21. *And when they had eaten them up*, etc.] Or “were come into their bowels”^{f1710}, into their inward parts, their bellies, being swallowed and devoured by them:

it could not be known that they had eaten them: or were in their bellies, they seemed never the fuller nor the fatter for them:

but they [were] still ill favoured as at the beginning; looked as thin and as meagre as they did when they first came out of the river, or were first seen by Pharaoh:

so I awoke; surprised at what he had seen; this was his first dream.

Ver. 22. *And I saw in my dream*, etc.] Falling asleep again quickly, he dreamed a second time; and this dream being of a like kind with the former,

and so small a space between them, they are represented as one, and this is the continuation of it:

and, behold, seven ears, etc. (see Gill on “^{CH41:5}Genesis 41:5”).

Ver. 23. *And, behold, seven ears withered*, etc.] Here a new epithet of the bad ears is given, and expressed by a word nowhere else used, which Ben Melech interprets, small, little, according to the use of the word in the Misnah; Aben Ezra, void, empty, such as had no grains of corn in them, nothing but husk or chaff, and observes that some render it images; for the word is so used in the Arabic language, and may signify that these ears were only mere shadows or images of ears, which had no substance in them: Jarchi says, the word, in the Syriac language signifies a rock, and so it denotes that these ears were dry as a rock, and had no moisture in them, laid dried, burnt up, and blasted with the east wind.

Ver. 24. *And the thin ears devoured the seven good ears*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{CH41:7}Genesis 41:7”);

and I told [this] unto the magicians; just in the same manner as he had to Joseph:

but [there was] none that could declare [it] unto me; the meaning of it; what all this should signify or portend.

Ver. 25. *And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, the dream of Pharaoh [is] one*, etc.] Though there were two distinct dreams expressed under different images and representations, yet the meaning, sense, and signification of them were the same; one interpretation would do for both:

God hath showed Pharaoh what he [is] about to do; that is, by the above dreams, when they should be interpreted to him; for as yet he understood them not, and therefore there could be nothing showed him, but when interpreted it would be clear and plain to him what events were quickly to be accomplished: God only knows things future, and those to whom he is pleased to reveal them, and which he did in different ways, by dreams, visions, articulate voices, etc.

Ver. 26. *The seven good kine [are] seven years*, etc.] Signify seven years, and these years of plenty, as appears from the antithesis in (^{CH41:26}Genesis 41:26):

and the seven good ears [are] seven years; signify the same:

the dream [is] one; for though the seven good kine were seen in one dream, the seven good ears in another, yet both dreams were one as to signification.

Ver. 27. *And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them [are] seven years*, etc.] Signify other seven years, and these different from the former, as follows:

and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine: or there will be seven years of famine that will answer to them, and are signified by them: Grotius, from the Oneirocritics or interpreters of dreams, observes, that years are signified by kine, and particularly he relates from Achmes, that according to the doctrine of the Egyptians, female oxen (and such these were) signified times and seasons, and if fat (as the good ones here also were) signified fruitful times, but if poor and thin (as the bad ones here were) barren times: it seems as if all this skill of theirs was borrowed from Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams here given. Josephus^{f1711} relates a dream of Archelaus the son of Herod, who dreamed that he saw ten ears of corn, full and large, devoured by oxen; he sent for the Chaldeans and others to tell him what they signified; one said one thing and another another; at length one Simon, an Essene, said that the ears signified years, and the oxen changes of affairs, because, when they plough up the earth, they turn it up and change it; so that he should reign as many years as were ears of corn seen, and after many changes should die, as he accordingly did.

Ver. 28. *This [is] the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh*, etc.] As an interpretation of his dreams:

what God [is] about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh: the events of fourteen years with respect to plenty and sterility.

Ver. 29. *Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt*.] Not only a sufficiency but an abundance, even to luxury, as when the Nile rose to sixteen cubits, as Pliny observes^{f1712}; which, though a natural cause, was owing to God, and that it should thus overflow for seven years successively, and cause such a continued plenty, can be ascribed to no other.

Ver. 30. *And there shall arise after them seven years of famine*, etc.]. Which might be occasioned by the river Nile not rising so high as to overflow its banks, as, when it did not rise to more than twelve cubits, a

famine ensued, as the above writer says ^{f1713}; and it must be owing to the overruling providence of God that this should be the case for seven years running:

and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; the seven years of plenty being all spent, it should be as if it never was; the minds of men would be so intent upon their present distressed case and circumstances, that they should wholly forget how it had been with them in time past; or it would be as if they had never enjoyed it, or were never the better for it: this answers to and explains how it was with the ill favoured kine, when they had eaten up the fat kine; they seemed never the better, nor could it be known by their appearance that they had so done:

and the famine shall consume the land: the inhabitants of it, and all the fruits and increase of it the former years produced.

Ver. 31. *And the plenty shall not be known in the land, by reason of that famine following*, etc.] That is, before it would be over; otherwise the former plenty was in some measure known by the stores of provisions laid up in the seven years of it, and which were brought forth when the famine became very pressing; but by that time, and before the seven years of it were ended, there were no traces of the foregoing plenty to be observed:

for it [shall be] very grievous; as it was both in Egypt and in all the countries round about.

Ver. 32. *And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice*, etc.] Or was repeated to him under different figures and images:

[it is] because the thing [is] established by God; by a firm decree of his, and is sure, and will most certainly be accomplished; of which Pharaoh might be assured, and to assure him of it was the repetition of the dream made:

and God will shortly bring it to pass: or “make haste to do it” ^{f1714}, that is, would soon begin to accomplish these events; for, as Bishop Usher ^{f1715} observes, from the harvest of this (the then present) year, the seven years of plenty are reckoned.

Ver. 33. *Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise*, etc.] Of good judgment and conduct, of abilities equal to the execution of a scheme hereafter proposed: it can scarcely be thought consistent with the

great modesty of Joseph that he meant himself, or that indeed, he ventured to give any advice at all, until it was first asked of him by the king; who being so well satisfied with the interpretation of his dreams, thought him a proper person to consult with what to be done in this case; who, as a true father of his country, as every king should be, was concerned for the good of it, and to provide against the worst for them:

and set him over the land of Egypt; not to be governor of it in general, but with a particular respect to the present case, to take care of provision for it.

Ver. 34. *Let Pharaoh do [this]*, etc.] Appoint such a person; who as a sovereign prince could do it of himself:

and let him appoint officers over the land; not Pharaoh, but the wise and discreet governor he should set over the land, who should have a power of appointing officers or overseers under him to manage things according to his direction:

and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years; not the officers appointed, but the appointer of them, the chief governor under Pharaoh, for the word is singular; it is proposed that he should, in Pharaoh's name, and by his order, take a fifth part of all the corn in the land of Egypt during seven years of plenty; not by force, which so good a man as Joseph would never advise to, whatever power Pharaoh might have, and could exercise if he pleased; but by making a purchase of it, which in such time of plenty would be bought cheap, and which so great a prince as Pharaoh was capable of. It is commonly asked, why an half part was not ordered to be took up, since there were to be as many years of famine as of plenty? and to this it is usually replied, that besides this fifth part taken up, as there might be an old stock of former years, so there would be something considerable remain of these seven years of plenty, which men of substance would lay up, as Pharaoh did; and besides, a fifth part might be equal to the crop of an ordinary year, or near it: to which may be added, that in times of famine men live more sparingly, as they are obliged, and therefore such a quantity would go the further; as well as it may be considered, that notwithstanding the barrenness of the land in general, yet in some places, especially on the banks of the Nile, some corn might be produced; so that upon the whole a fifth part might be judged sufficient to answer the extremity of the seven years of famine, and even to allow a distribution to other countries.

Ver. 35. *And let them, gather all the food of those good years that come,* etc.] That is, let the under officers collect together the fifth part of all fruits of the land during the seven years of plenty:

and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh; as his property, and only to be disposed of by his orders; for as it was to be purchased with his money, it was right that it should be in his hands, or in the hands of his officers appointed by him, as the Targum of Jonathan:

and let them keep food in the cities; reserve it in the several cities throughout the land, against the years of famine.

Ver. 36. *And that food shall be for store to the land,* etc.] A deposit in the said cities, to be brought forth and used in a time of public distress; the Targum of Jonathan is, it

“shall be hidden in a cave in the earth:”

against the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt: and so be a supply to the inhabitants of the land, when they should be sore pressed with a famine, and know not what to do, nor where to go for food:

that the land perish not through the famine; that is, that the people of the land perish not, as the above Targum, which, without such a provision, they would have been in great danger of perishing. Justin, an Heathen writer^{f1716}, confirms this account of the advice of Joseph, of whom he says, that

“he was exceeding sagacious of things wonderful, and first found out the meaning of dreams; and nothing of right, divine or human, seemed unknown to him, so that he could foresee the barrenness of land many years beforehand; and all Egypt would have perished with the famine, if the king, by his advice, had not commanded an edict, that the fruits of the earth, for many years, should be preserved.”

Ver. 37. *And the thing was good in the eyes of Pharaoh,* etc.] He approved of the advice Joseph gave, and of the scheme and plan which he proposed:

and in the eyes of all his servants; his nobles, ministers of state and courtiers, all highly commended and applauded it; and it was with the general and unanimous consent of all agreed that it should be put into

execution: but then the next question, and the thing to be considered, was, who was a person fit to be engaged in such an affair?

Ver. 38. *And Pharaoh said unto his servants*, etc.] That were about him, and with whom he was consulting about a proper person to be over this affair of gathering in the fruits of the earth in the time of plenty, and laying them up against a time of famine:

can we find [such an one] as this [is], in whom the Spirit of God [is]? if we search among all the ranks and degrees of men throughout the kingdom, let them be of what character they will, we shall never find a man like this, who appears to have the Spirit of God, or “of the gods”, as he in his Heathenish way spoke, and which he concluded from his vast knowledge of things; and especially of things future: hence the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret it, the spirit of prophecy from the Lord.

Ver. 39. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph*, etc.] After his servants had agreed to his being the man: at least Pharaoh had declared his mind that he should be the person; which if any of them disliked, as probably might be the case of some through envy, and as desirous of the post themselves, yet durst not make any opposition to it:

forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this; the interpretation of his dreams, what would be hereafter for fourteen years to come, what was advisable to be done for the good of the nation, and had proposed a plan so well contrived and formed:

[there is] none so discreet and wise as thou [art]; and consequently none so fit for this business, since he was so divinely qualified; and Justin, the Heathen writer^{f1717}, observes that he had such knowledge and experience of things, that his answers seemed to be given not from men, but from God.

Ver. 40. *Thou shall be over my house*, etc.], Have the care of his domestic affairs, and be the principal man in his palace and court:

and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; not only in his family, but in his whole kingdom; whatever he ordered and commanded them to do, they should it, or “all my people shall kiss”^{f1718}, that is, either their hand at the sight of him, or meeting him, in token of respect and veneration shall yield a ready and cheerful obedience to him, of which the kiss was a sign, (see ^{<4912>}Psalm 2:12). The Targum of Onkelos renders it,

“shall be fed”^{f1719}, supplied with corn, and with all necessary provisions, and so Jarchi interprets it; which is restraining it to that part of his office which concerned the gathering and laying up their stores for time to come; but the Targum of Jonathan is, “shall be armed”^{f1720}; and so Aben Ezra makes him the prince or general of the army, or who had the militia at his command, and could arm them when he pleased; but it seems to denote a more large and unlimited power than either of these, even the government of the whole land under the king, who only excepts himself:

only in the throne will I be greater than thou; that is, he alone would be king, wear the crown sit upon the throne, and have all the ensigns of royal majesty, in which Joseph was to have no share; otherwise he was to have an executive power and authority over all his subjects in the land, even to bind his princes at pleasure, and to teach, instruct, and direct his senators, (~~19571~~ Psalm 105:21,22).

Ver. 41. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph*, etc.] He continued speaking to him for the greater confirmation of what he had said, and for further explanation of it:

see, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt; not merely as the corn master general, to take care of a provision of corn in time of plenty, against a time of scarcity, but as a viceroy or deputy governor over the whole land, as appears by the ensigns of honour and dignity bestowed on him; of which in the following verses.

Ver. 42. *And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand*, etc.] Which, as it was expressive of the interest he had in his royal favour, so was a token of that high office and great dignity to which he was promoted: thus among the Romans, in later times, when anyone was put into the equestrian order, a ring was given to him^{f1721}; for originally none but knights were allowed to wear rings; and it was sometimes used to design a successor in the kingdom, as, when Alexander was dying, he took his ring from off his finger, and gave it to Perdicca^{f1722}, which was understood, though he did not express it, that he should be his successor, in the Apocrypha:

“14 Then called he for Philip, one of his friends, who he made ruler over all his realm, 15 And gave him the crown, and his robe, and his signet, to the end he should bring up his son Antiochus, and nourish him up for the kingdom.” (1 Maccabees 6)

Now, though Pharaoh did not by this intend to point out Joseph for his successor in the kingdom, yet he gave him his ring as a mark of honour, and as being in place next unto his viceroy or deputy: and besides, as it is observed by many, this might be his signet, or the ring which had his seal upon it, by which he sealed patents and public deeds, and which he gave to Joseph to make use of in his name; though Schmidt doubts whether this was such a ring, since kings and princes have been used to have larger for such purposes, than what are wore on the finger: by this it appears, that Pliny^{f1723} was mistaken that there were no rings in and before the time of Troy:

and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen; of which there was the best sort in Egypt, and which great personages used to wear:

and put a gold chain about his neck; another badge of honour and dignity, (see ²¹⁵⁶Daniel 5:16).

Ver. 43. *And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had*, etc.] By which it appeared that he was next to Pharaoh, but not above him; as kings were wont to have more chariots than one, those were distinguished by first, second, etc. being of greater state the one than the other, (see ⁴⁸²⁴2 Chronicles 35:24):

and they cried before him, bow the knee; that is, his guard that attended him, when he rode out in his chariot, called to the people, as they passed along, to bow the knee to Joseph, as a token of veneration and respect; or they proclaimed him “Abrech”, which Onkelos paraphrases, this is the father of the king; and so Jarchi, who observes, that “Rech” signifies a king in the Syriac language; and this agrees with what Joseph himself says, that God had made him a father to Pharaoh, (⁰⁴⁸⁸Genesis 45:8). Others render it a tender father; and the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem take in both senses,

“this is the father of the king, (or let the father of the king live, so the Jerusalem,) who is great in wisdom, and tender in years:”

though rather he may be so called, because he acted the part of a tender father to the country, in providing corn for them against a time of scarcity:

and he made him [ruler] over all the land of Egypt; appointed him to be governor of the whole land, and invested him with that office, and made him appear to be so, by the grandeur he raised him to.

Ver. 44. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I [am] Pharaoh,* etc.] Or I am king, which the word Pharaoh signifies, as Josephus^{f1724} says; and that this is not a proper name, but a title of office, seems plain from these words; and the sense either is, that though Pharaoh had raised Joseph to such high honour and dignity, yet he alone was king: or this he said to show his power and authority to do what he had done, and would stand by him, and support him in his office and grandeur:

and without thee shall not a man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt; which is to be taken not in a strict literal sense, but proverbially, signifying, that nothing should be done in the nation of any moment or importance, relating to political affairs, but what was by his order and authority; the hands and feet being the principal instruments of action. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“without thy word (or order) a man shall not lift up his hand to gird on armour, or his foot to mount a horse;”

signifying thereby, that all things relating to war and peace should be altogether under his direction.

Ver. 45. *And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah,* etc.] Which, according to the paraphrase of Onkelos, signifies one to whom hidden things are revealed; or, as Jonathan, a revealer of secrets; and so most of the Jewish writers explain it; and which seems to be given him from his interpreting Pharaoh's dreams, and revealing what was hereafter to come to pass. The word is only used in this place, at least the latter part of it and Aben Ezra confesses his ignorance of it, whether it is an Egyptian word or not; Kircher^{f1725} most asserts it, and says it signifies a prophet (or foreteller) of future things. Though some think the first part of the name has some respect to the Egyptian idol Baal Zephon, (^{<244>}Exodus 14:2), and that, in this new name Pharaoh gave Joseph upon his promotion, he inserted the name of his god, as Nebuchadnezzar, when he gave new names to Daniel and his comparisons, (^{<200>}Daniel 1:7 5:12):

and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Potipherah; not the same with Potiphar, Joseph's master, as Jarchi says, not only their names differ, but also their offices; nor would Joseph, it is imagined, marry the daughter of such a woman, so wicked as his mistress was, and had so much abused him, and been the cause of all his troubles; nor was this Asenath the daughter of Dinah by Shechem, as some Jewish writers^{f1726} assert, whom

Potiphar's wife, having no child, brought up as her own, which is not at all probable; but an Egyptian woman, the daughter of the person before named: who was

priest of On: the same with Aven; (see Gill on “^{f1727} Ezekiel 30:17”); and which in Ptolemy ^{f1727} is called Onii, about twenty two miles from Memphis, and said to be the metropolis of the “Heliopolitan home”; and has been since called “Heliopolis”, as it is here in the Septuagint version, which signifies the city of the sun, and is the same with Bethshemesh, the house of the sun, (^{f1728} Jeremiah 43:13); where, as Herodotus ^{f1728} says, the sun was worshipped, and sacrifice offered to it, and the inhabitants of this place are by him said to be the wisest and most rational of the Egyptians ^{f1729}; here Potipherah, Joseph's father-in-law, was “priest”; and Strabo ^{f1730} says, at Heliopolis we saw large houses, in which the priests dwelt; for here especially of old it was said, that this was the habitation of priests, of philosophers, and such as were given to astronomy: the Septuagint version and Josephus ^{f1731} call this man Petephre; and an Heathen writer ^{f1732}, Pentephre, a priest of Heliopolis; which a very learned man ^{f1733} says, in the Egyptian tongue, signifies a priest of the sun; and so Philo says ^{f1734}, that Joseph married the daughter of a famous man in Egypt, who had the priesthood of the sun. But the word may as well be rendered “prince” ^{f1735}, as it is when there is nothing to determine its sense otherwise, as there is none here; and it is more likely, that Pharaoh should marry his prime minister into the family of one of his princes than of his priests; this seems to be more agreeable to the high rank that Joseph was raised to, as well as more suitable to his character as a worshipper of the true God, who would not choose to marry the daughter of an idolatrous priest: though, according to Diodorus Siculus ^{f1736}, the Egyptian priests were second to the king in honour and authority, and were always about him, and were of his council; and Aelianus, says ^{f1737}, that formerly with the Egyptians the judges were priests, and the eldest of them was a prince, and had the power of judging all; and even Sethon, king of Egypt, was a priest of Vulcan: whether this prince or priest was of the king's family, or whether the kings of Egypt had a power to dispose of the daughters of their subjects, especially of their priests or princes when dead, is not certain: perhaps no more, as Bishop Patrick observes, is meant, than that Pharaoh made this match, and which was a mark of great honour and affection to Joseph; and which, if even disagreeable to him, being an idolater, he could not well refuse:

and Joseph went out over [all] the land of Egypt; either the name and fame of him, as Aben Ezra interprets it, (see ^{<1024>}Matthew 4:24); or rather he himself went forth in all his grandeur before related, and took a tour, throughout the whole land to observe the fruitfulness of it, and make choice of proper places to lay up his intended stores.

Ver. 46. *And Joseph [was] thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt*, etc.] Interpreting his dreams, and had such honour conferred upon him as to be made his prime minister; from whence it appears that Joseph had now been thirteen years in Egypt, partly in Potiphar's house, and partly in prison, since he was seventeen years of age when he was sold thither, (see ^{<0370>}Genesis 37:2):

and Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh; from standing before him, and ministering to him as his counsellor and chief statesman, or he went out from his court and palace for a while:

and went throughout all the land of Egypt: this seems to be a second tour; before he went to survey the land, and pitch upon the most proper places for granaries to lay up store of corn in; and now he went through it, to gather in and give directions about it, and see it performed, for the years of plenty were now begun.

Ver. 47. *And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls*.] Such as the gatherers take up in their hands when reaped, in order to bind up in sheaves: now such was the fruitfulness of the land during the seven years of plenty, that either one stalk produced as many ears as a man could hold in his hand; or one grain produced an handful, as Ben Melech observes; though Onkelos paraphrases the words,

“the inhabitants of the earth in the seven years of plenty gathered even into their treasures:”

and this they did by the order and direction of Joseph as he passed through the land; what he bought of them they brought, and put into the granaries, as he directed them.

Ver. 48. *And he gathered up all the food of the seven years*, etc.] That is, of plenty; not all the fruits of the earth, or all that was eatable, but the corn, as in (^{<0449>}Genesis 41:49); and not all of that the earth produced, but the fifth part of it, as he proposed, which he bought with Pharaoh's money, and therefore: had a right to sell it again as he did:

which were in the land of Egypt; in which only he had a concern, and where only was this plenty:

and laid up the food in the cities; in places built for that purpose, and whither the people round about could easily bring it, and fetch it, when it was wanted:

the food of the field, which [was] round about every city, laid he up in the same; which was very wisely done, for present carriage, and for the convenience of the people in time of famine. At this day, at old Cairo, is an edifice the most considerable in it, called Joseph's granary; it occupies a square, surrounded by a wall, and has divers partitions contrived within it, where is deposited the corn, that is paid as a tax to the Gram Seignior, brought from different parts of Egypt^{f1738}.

Ver. 49. *And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering*, etc.] At first he took an account of the quantities that were bought and laid up, how much there was in each granary, until it amounted to so much, that there was no end of numbering it; it was like the sand of the sea, an hyperbolical expression, denoting the great abundance of it:

for [it was] without number; not only the grains of corn, but even the measures of it, whatever were used; so Artapanus, an Heathen writer, says^{f1739}, Joseph, when governor of Egypt, got together the corn of seven years, an immense quantity.

Ver. 50. *And unto Joseph were born two sons*, etc.] The word for "born" is singular; hence Ben Melech conjectures that they were twins: and this was

before the years of famine came; or "the year of famine"^{f1740}; the first year:

which Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah priest of On, bare unto him; which is observed, to show that he had them by his lawful wife; whom the Targum of Jonathan wrongly again makes the daughter of Dinah, and her father prince of Tanis, the same with Zoan; whereas this was "On" or "Heliopolis", a very different place; so Artapanus says^{f1741}, that Joseph married the daughter of the priest of Heliopolis, by whom he had children; and another Heathen writer^{f1742} mentions their names, Ephraim and Manesseh.

Ver. 51. *And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh*, etc.] Which signifies forgetfulness, as the reason of it shows:

for God, [said he], hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house; all his toil and labour in Potiphar's house, and especially in the prison; and all the injuries his brethren had done him; all this he was made to forget by the grandeur and honour, wealth and riches, power and authority he was possessed of; and indeed he had so much business upon his hands, that he had scarce time to think of his father, and his family.

Ver. 52. *And the name of the second called he Ephraim*, etc.] Which signifies fruits or fruitfulness; and being of the dual number, may intend both his spiritual and temporal fruitfulness God had blessed him with:

for God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction; in the land of Egypt, where he had been long afflicted, even for the space of thirteen years, more or less, in his master's house, and in the prison; but God had made him fruitful in grace and good works, in holiness, humility, etc. and oftentimes afflictive seasons are the most fruitful ones in this sense. God also bestowed great gifts upon him, as skill in the interpretation of dreams, wisdom in political affairs, a large abundance of wealth, and riches, honour and glory; to which may be added, the fruit of his body, his two children.

Ver. 53. *And the seven years of plenteousness that was in the land of Egypt were ended.*] Perhaps quickly after the birth of Ephraim, Joseph's second son; since the account follows upon that, and it is certain that he was born before the years of famine began, (⁽⁴⁴⁵⁾Genesis 41:50); some connect the words, "moreover when" the seven years of plenty were ended, then began, as follows, seven years of famine; these events were fulfilled just as Joseph had predicted.

Ver. 54. *And the seven years of dearth began to come, as Joseph had said*, etc.] In the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams; as soon as the seven years of plenty were over, there were quickly some appearances of the famine coming on; as particularly the river Nile not flowing to its usual height at the season of it; hence there was a drought, the earth was parched, and everything began to wither and decay, and the seed that was sown sprung not up:

and the dearth was in all lands; adjoining to Egypt, as Syria, Arabia, Palestine, Canaan, etc.

but in all the land of Egypt there was bread; which was in the hands of everyone, and remained of their old stores in the years of plenty not yet exhausted, and which continued for some time after the dearth began. It is very probable that to this seven years' drought in Egypt Ovid^{f1743} refers, which he makes to be nine; as does also Apollodorus^{f1744}.

Ver. 55. *And when all the land of Egypt was famished*, etc.] Their old stock and store eaten up, and the inhabitants ready to starve with hunger:

the people cried to Pharaoh for bread; as their common father, and knowing that he had stores of provision laid up in all cities against this time:

and Pharaoh said to the Egyptians, go unto Joseph; whom he had appointed over this business of providing and laying up corn against this time, and of distributing it:

what he saith to you, do; give the price for the corn he fixes or requires; for this was the principal thing they had to do with him, to get corn for their money.

Ver. 56. *And the famine was over all the face of the earth*, etc.] Not over the whole world, but the land of Egypt; all the inhabitants of it were pinched with it, rich and poor; it reached all parts and all sorts of men:

and Joseph opened all the storehouses; in the several cities throughout the land where he had laid up corn:

and sold unto the Egyptians; for, as he had bought it with Pharaoh's money, it was no injustice to sell it; and as it could be sold at a moderate price, and yet Pharaoh get enough by it, being bought cheap in a time of plenty, no doubt but Joseph, who was a kind and benevolent man, sold it at such a price:

and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt; there being no overflow of the Nile year after year, and nothing left of the old stock but what was in the storehouses.

Ver. 57. *And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy [corn]*, etc.] All the neighbouring nations (Syria, Arabia, Palestine, Canaan, etc.), when they heard there was corn there for money, came from all parts for it, and were glad to get it at such expense and trouble:

because that the famine was [so] sore in all lands; that there was no bread to be got for money elsewhere. It is thought by many, that for this care of Joseph in laying up provision against this time of need, and which was the preservation of the Egyptians, he was worshipped by them under various names; as the Apis, which was an ox, a sign of fruitfulness; and Serapis, sometimes figured as a young man carrying a basket of bread on his head; and Osiris, who is sometimes represented with a bushel on his head. However, this is certain, that he was an eminent type of Christ in all this, both in his estate of humiliation and exaltation: as Joseph was wrongly charged by his mistress, so was Christ falsely accused by the Jews; as he was cast into prison and bound there, so Christ was taken and bound as a prisoner; as Joseph was raised to great honour and glory in Pharaoh's court, so Christ was exalted by his Father, and crowned with glory and honour; and if the new name given him, "Zaphnathpaaneah", signifies the Saviour of the world, as some interpret it, it agrees well with Christ, who was sent into the world for that purpose; and indeed, if it means a revealer of secrets, it suits with him, who hath declared his Father's mind and will, and revealed the mysteries of his grace to the sons of men: and as Joseph had all the stores of corn under his care, and the needy were bid to go to him for it, so Christ has all the treasures of grace in his hand, and all that are sensible of their need of it are directed to go to him for it; and it is from him that men of all nations and countries receive grace for grace, and have all their supplies, and spiritual sustenance and nourishment.

CHAPTER 42

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 42

This chapter relates how that Jacob having heard there was corn in Egypt, sent all his sons but Benjamin thither to buy corn, (^{<0401>}Genesis 42:1-5); and coming before Joseph, they bowed to him, and he knowing them, though they knew not him, spoke roughly to them, and charged them with being spies, (^{<0406>}Genesis 42:6-9); they in their defence urged that they were the sons of one man in Canaan, with whom their youngest brother was left, on which Joseph ordered them to send for him, to prove them true men, (^{<0420>}Genesis 42:10-16); and put them all into prison for three days, and then released them, and sent them away to fetch their brother, (^{<0427>}Genesis 42:17-20); this brought to mind their treatment of Joseph, and they confessed their guilt to each other, which Joseph heard, and greatly affected him, they supposing he understood them not, and before he dismissed them bound Simeon before their eyes, whom he retained till they returned, (^{<0422>}Genesis 42:21-24); then he ordered his servants to fill their sacks with corn, and put each man's money in his sack, which one of them on the road found, opening his sack for provender, filled them all with great surprise and fear, (^{<0425>}Genesis 42:25-28); upon their return to Jacob they related all that had befallen them, and particularly that the governor insisted on having Benjamin brought to him, (^{<0429>}Genesis 42:29-34); their sacks being opened, all their money was found in them, which greatly distressed them and Jacob also, who was very unwilling to let Benjamin go, though Reuben offered his two sons as pledges for him, and himself to be a surety, (^{<0435>}Genesis 42:35-38).

Ver. 1. *Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt*, etc.] That is, to be sold there, or otherwise it being there, unless it could be bought, would have been of no avail to foreigners; wherefore the Septuagint version is, that there was a sale ^{f1745} there, a sale of corn; the word has the signification of "breaking" ^{f1746} in it, because that bread corn is broke in the mill, or is broken from the heap when sold or distributed, or because when eaten it breaks the fast. Now Jacob had either seen persons passing by with corn, of whom he inquired from whence they had it, who replied, from

Egypt; or he understood by the report of others that corn was to be bought there; though some of the Jewish writers would have it, as Jarchi observes, that he saw it by the revelation of the Holy Spirit:

Jacob said unto, his sons, why do ye look one upon another? like persons in surprise, distress and despair, at their wits' end, not knowing what to do, what course to take, and which way to turn themselves, and scarce able to speak to one another, and consult with each other what was proper to be done; for it seems not so agreeable that they should be charged as idle persons, careless and unconcerned, indifferent and inactive; but rather, if the other sense is not acceptable, the meaning may be, "why do ye look?"^{f1747} here and there, in the land of Canaan, where it is to no purpose to look for corn; look where it is to be had.

Ver. 2. *And he said, behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt,* etc.] This explains what is meant by the phrase he saw, one sense being put for another:

get ye down thither; as fast as you can without delay; Egypt lay lower than Canaan, and therefore they are bid to go down, as when they went from thence to Canaan they are said to go up, (^{Q4525}Genesis 45:25);

and buy for us from thence, that we may live, and not die; which shows the famine was very pressing, since, unless they could buy corn from Egypt they could not live, but must die.

Ver. 3. *And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt.*] They obeyed their father's orders, and immediately set out for Egypt; "ten" of them went down in a body together, all but Benjamin, so that it is easily reckoned who they were, and they are called not Jacob's sons, as they were; but Joseph's brethren, whom they had sold into Egypt, and to whom now they were going, though they knew it not, to buy corn of him in their necessity, and to whom they would be obliged to yield obeisance, as they did.

Ver. 4. *But Benjamin, Joseph's brother, Jacob sent not with his brethren,* etc.] Benjamin is called Joseph's brother, because he was so both by father and mother's side, as the rest were not; him Jacob kept with him, being the youngest and his darling, the only son he had with him of his beloved wife Rachel; and was very probably the more beloved by him since he had been bereft of Joseph; and it was not only to keep him company that he retained him at home, but for the reason following:

for he said, lest peradventure mischief befall him; as had to Joseph his brother, as he imagined; either that the journey would be too much for him, being young, or lest he should be seized with sickness on the road, or rather with death, as Aben Ezra interprets it according to the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan.

Ver. 5. *And the sons of Israel came to buy [corn] among those that came*, etc.] Either among the Egyptians that came to buy, or among those who came from different countries, or rather particularly among the Canaanites, as the Targum of Jonathan; with these they might join upon the road, and go together in a body where the market for corn was:

for the famine was in the land of Canaan: which obliged the inhabitants of it as well as Jacob's family to seek for corn elsewhere, and confirms the sense of the preceding clause: this, though a very fruitful land, yet when God withheld a blessing from it, it became barren, as it had been before, (^{<0120>}Genesis 12:10 26:1), and was to try the faith of those good men to whom God had given it, and to wean their hearts from being set upon it, and to put them upon seeking a better country, as they did.

Ver. 6. *And Joseph [was] the governor over the land*, etc.] Not the land of Canaan last mentioned, but the land of Egypt; under Pharaoh, he had the chief and sole authority, and especially in the affair of the corn, and the disposal of that;

[and] he [it was] that sold to all the people of the land: of Egypt, and also to all that came out of other lands; not that he in person could do all this, but by those that acted under him:

and Joseph's brethren came; to Joseph to buy corn of him:

and bowed down themselves before him, [with] their faces to the earth; not only bowed the knee as the Egyptians did, but prostrated their whole bodies, stretching out their hands and feet, and touching the ground with their faces, as was the manner of the eastern countries, at least some of them; and so of Canaan; and thus did they submit themselves to him in the most humble manner, and thereby, though without their knowledge, fulfilled his dream of their sheaves making obeisance to his sheaf, (^{<0307>}Genesis 37:7).

Ver. 7. *And Joseph saw his brethren*, etc.] Among those that came to buy corn, and when they prostrated themselves before him:

and he knew them; some of them being at man's estate, and their beards grown when they sold him, and their habits and dress now being much the same it was then, and by them he knew the younger:

but made himself strange unto them; took no notice of them as his relations, but carried himself to them as he did to other foreigners, and yet more strangely:

and spake roughly unto them; or hard ^{f1748} things or words; put on a stern countenance, and spoke with a high tone and in a rough surly manner to them:

and he said unto them, whence come ye? who are ye? of what country are ye? what is your business here?

and they said, from the land of Canaan to buy food; which they could not get in Canaan, the famine being there so great.

Ver. 8. *And Joseph knew his brethren, but they knew not him.*] It being about twenty two years since they saw him, and then he was young, and his beard not grown, as now it was; and besides, he was clothed as a prince, and spoke the Egyptian language; and being in such great grandeur and splendour, and in such power and authority, and having such a retinue attending him, they never once thought of him, whom they supposed might be dead, having never heard of him all this time; or, however, it could not come into their minds, that he whom they sold for a slave could ever be governor of the land of Egypt.

Ver. 9. *And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed of them,* etc.] Their bowing and prostrating themselves before him brought to his remembrance his dreams of their sheaves making obeisance to his, and of the sun, moon, and eleven stars, doing the same to him, (~~4030~~ Genesis 37:7,9);

and said unto them, ye [are] spies; not believing they were, nor absolutely asserting that they were such; but this he said to try them, and what they would say for themselves, and in order to lead on to further discourse with them, and to get knowledge of his father and brother Benjamin, whether living or not: he dealt with them as a judge on the bench, when examining persons, whose charges have the nature of an interrogation, as this has: "ye [are] spies"; are ye not? surely ye must be, and unless you give a better account of yourselves, I must take you up as such:

to see the nakedness of the land ye are come: what parts of it are weakest, most defenceless, and less fortified, and most easy to break in at, and invade the land; and it was not without reason that the Egyptians might suspect the neighbouring nations round about them, being in distress, and hearing of corn in Egypt, of forming a design of coming upon them and taking away their corn by force, and might be the reason why foreigners that came to buy corn were brought before Joseph and examined by him.

Ver. 10. *And they said unto him, nay, my lord*, etc.] One in the name of the rest, or each in his turn, denying that they were spies, and addressing him with the greatest reverence and submission, calling him their lord, and thus further accomplishing his dreams:

but to buy food are thy servants come; that and no other was the errand they came upon.

Ver. 11. *We [are] all one man's sons*, etc.] Therefore not likely to be spies; it could hardly be thought that a single family should engage in such an affair; or that one man would, send his sons as spies, and especially all of them, it being a dangerous affair, and they being liable to be taken up and put to death; and as more families than one must be concerned in such an enterprise, it is reasonable to suppose, that if they had been spies they would have been of different families, and also not together, but in different parts of the kingdom, to observe the fittest place to enter in at and execute their design:

we [are] true [men]: that spoke truth when they said they came to buy corn; were honest, upright, and sincere in what they said, nor would they, nor durst they, tell a lie:

thy servants are no spies; this they expressed in the strongest terms, and with the fullest assurance they could, detesting the charge and character of being spies.

Ver. 12. *And he said unto them, nay*, etc.] This argument will not do, I am not to be put off with such words as these; if you can produce no better proof of your being honest men than this, or give no better account of yourselves, I must abide by it, that,

to see the nakedness of the land ye are come; this he urged in order to get a further account from them of their family and the state of it, which he was anxious to know.

Ver. 13. *And they said, thy servants [are] twelve brethren*, etc.] Or rather, “were twelve”, since one afterwards is said not to be:

the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; of Jacob, who dwelt there; this is said with the same view as before, to show the improbability of their being spies;

and, behold, the youngest [is] this day with our father: meaning Benjamin, whom Joseph was eager to hear of, and no doubt was glad to hear he was alive, and his father also, and that they were both together in the land of Canaan:

and one [is] not; is not in the land of the living, is dead; for so they thought Joseph was, who is the person intended, as appears from what both Reuben and Judah afterwards say, (^{f1749}Genesis 42:22 44:20); and yet he was before them, and was the person they were speaking to: this must be very striking and affecting to Joseph, who knew full well they meant himself.

Ver. 14. *And Joseph said unto them, that [is it] that I spake unto you, saying, ye [are] spies.*] This proves it, at least gives strong suspicion of it; since at first they seemed to speak of themselves, as if they were the only sons of one man and there were no more, now they speak of twelve, and make mention of one being at home with his father; but seeing he sent so many of them, why not all? why should one only be left at home?

Ver. 15. *Hereby ye shall be proved*, etc.] Whether spies, or not, namely, by producing their youngest brother, said to be at home with his father:

by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither: the phrase, “by the life of Pharaoh”, seems to be the form of an oath, as it was common with many nations, especially with the Scythians, who used to swear by the royal throne ^{f1749}, and the Romans, in later times, by the life, health, and genius of their emperor; and this custom of swearing by the life of their king, or by his head, continued with the Egyptians, as Aben Ezra says, unto his times; though some take this to be a wish or prayer for the life of Pharaoh, and render it, “may Pharaoh live” ^{f1750}, or, at most, but a strong asseveration, that as dear as the life of Pharaoh was to him, so surely they should not stir from the place where they were, unless their youngest brother Benjamin was brought thither.

Ver. 16. *Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother*, etc.] He proposes that one of them might be sent by them to their father's house, and bring, Benjamin down to Egypt:

and ye shall be kept in prison; the rest of them till he came:

that your words may be proved, whether [there be any] truth in you; by this it would be seen whether they were men of truth and honesty or not; and should their brother be brought they would appear to be good men and true:

or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely ye [are] spies; should not their brother they spoke of be produced, it would be a plain case that they were not the honest men they pretended to be, nor did they come merely to buy corn, but had an ill intention.

Ver. 17. *And he put them all together into ward three days.*] In order to consult together, and agree who should be sent to fetch their brother; and which it seems probable in this length of time they could not agree upon, no one caring to be the bringer of such evil tidings to their father.

Ver. 18. *And Joseph said unto them the third day*, etc.] His heart yearning towards them, though he put on such an appearance; finding they could not come to an agreement among themselves who should go on the errand, he thought fit to recede from his former order, and to give them another:

this do, and live: meaning what he was about to say to them, which if they punctually observed and performed, it would be the means of saving their lives:

[for] I fear God; and therefore would not do either an unjust or cruel thing. This might have given them an him who he was: but there being among the Gentiles, in all nations, some few that feared God, they took no further notice of it than this, that they might expect just and equitable dealings by him; since, though he was in such an high place, he knew and owned there was one higher than he, to whom he was accountable.

Ver. 19. *If ye [be] true [men]*, etc.] As you say you are:

let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison; agree among yourselves which of you (for one of you must) remain in prison where you are: and the rest being set at liberty,

go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses; Joseph, though he dealt with them after this manner to get what knowledge he could of his family, and to get sight of his brother, yet was concerned for the good of them and theirs, lest they should be in extreme want through the famine, and that they might have a speedy supply of corn, was not willing to detain them any longer.

Ver. 20. *But bring your youngest brother unto me*, etc.] Upon their return for more corn:

so shall your words be verified; that they were true men, and had no ill design upon the land, but were come only to buy corn:

and ye shall not die; as spies, which they were otherwise threatened with; and as it is customary in all nations to put such to death when found out:

and they did so; they left one of their brethren behind; they carried corn to their houses or families in Canaan, and brought their brother Benjamin with them when they returned to Egypt.

Ver. 21. *And they said one to another*, etc.] Before they went out of the prison, at least while in the presence of Joseph:

we [are] verily guilty concerning our brother; meaning Joseph, whom they had sold for a slave, and who they supposed was dead through grief and hard servitude; and now being in trouble themselves, it brings to mind the sin they had been guilty of, which, though committed twenty two years ago, was still fresh in their memories, and lay heavy on their consciences; for length of time neither makes sin less, nor the conscience lighter, when it is revived and charged home upon it, and which was aggravated particularly by the following circumstance:

in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; when in the utmost agony, with trembling limbs, and quivering lips, and floods of tears, as they stripped him of his coat, he most earnestly and importunately requested of them they would not put him into the pit, and leave him there; and in the same manner entreated them they would not put him into the hands of strangers, but restore him alive to his father; but they turned a deaf ear to all his cries and entreaties, and hardened themselves against him:

therefore is this distress come upon us; the same measure that was measured by them to him, was now measured to them again, and they were dealt with according to “lex talionis”: they cast Joseph into a pit, and now they were committed to a prison; they would not attend to his cries and tears, and the anguish of his soul did not move their pity, and now he is inexorable to them, and will not at least appear to have any compassion on them, or show pity to them; and perhaps their being dealt with in this similar way brought to their remembrance what they had done.

Ver. 22. *And Reuben answered them*, etc.] Being the eldest, and who had been most concerned for the life of Joseph, and most tender and careful of him:

saying, spake I not unto you, saying, do not sin against the child, and ye would not hear? it seems by this that Reuben endeavoured to dissuade his brethren from selling Joseph, when they first proposed it, to which they would not attend; since it is certain they did hearken to him as not to kill him directly, as they first consulted, and they hearkened to him to cast him into a pit, where he did not intend he should continue, but till he had an opportunity of taking him out, and returning him to his father: but it seems probable that Reuben was with them when they first spied the Ishmaelites, and proposed to sell Joseph to them, which he objected to, and entreated they would not do it; and perhaps he went out from them, and took a circuit, with a view to get to the pit and take Joseph out, but before he got thither his brethren had taken him out, and sold him: or this may refer to the general advice he always gave them, to do nothing that might endanger the life of Joseph, or be the means of his death, which selling him for a slave he supposed had been:

therefore, behold, also, his blood is required; the Targum of Jonathan adds, “of us”; they were accessory to his death, and guilty of it; for Reuben supposed he was dead, and now they must suffer for it, as a just retaliation, being threatened with death unless they could clear themselves.

Ver. 23. *And they knew not that Joseph understood [them]*, etc.] For what is above related they spoke in his presence and hearing; but speaking to one another in the Hebrew language, and he being an Egyptian, as they took him to be, they did not imagine that he could understand them, and therefore were not at all upon their guard in what they said: and what confirmed them in this was,

for he spake unto them by an interpreter; which he the rather chose to do, that they might have no suspicion of him; and which shows, that though there was a likeness between the Hebrew language and the Egyptian in many things, yet in some they differed, and the difference was such that there was need of an interpreter, where the parties did not understand both languages: this interpreter between Joseph and his brethren, according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, was Manasseh, the eldest son of Joseph, and so Jarchi; which is very improbable, he being but a child at this time, if not an infant; (see ^{<0450>}Genesis 41:50,51).

Ver. 24. *And he turned himself about from them, and wept*, etc.] Hearing his brethren confess their sin and guilt to one another in selling him, and Reuben's affectionate concern for him, it wrought so much upon his affections, being naturally of a tender spirit, that he could no longer act the part he had, and keep up the sternness and severity of his countenance; wherefore he turned his face from them, that they might not discern it, and his back upon them, and went into another room: and after he had given vent to his passion, and composed himself,

and returned to them again, and communed with them; upon the same subject, of going with their corn to Canaan, and bringing their youngest brother with them upon their return, and promising moreover, for their encouragement, a free traffic in the land of Egypt, (^{<0423>}Genesis 42:34):

and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes; who perhaps was the most cruel and hardhearted among them; and it appears from the affair of Shechem, that he was a man of a fierce and bloody disposition. According to Jarchi, it was he that said to Levi, on sight of Joseph, behold this dreamer cometh; and that it was he that cast him into the pit; and, as the Targum says, advised to kill him: and perhaps Joseph might pitch upon him as the hostage, not only because he had used him more evilly than the rest, but because he might observe he was less concerned, and not so much humbled now for the evil he had done as the rest were; as also he might choose to detain him, as being not so much in his father's affection, because of the affair of Shechem, and so be a less affliction to him than if it was another; and besides, he might fear that being of a perverse and boisterous disposition, he would vehemently oppose the sending of Benjamin into Egypt, which Joseph was so very desirous of: and he bound him in their presence to terrify them, and let them know what they must expect if they did not obey his orders, and the more to humble

them for the sin they had been guilty of, and was now upon their minds; though perhaps, as Jarchi observes, when they were gone he let him out, and gave him food and drink; or however might give him some liberty, and use him with mildness and gentleness.

Ver. 25. *Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn*, etc.] Which was as much as they came for:

and to restore every man's money into his sack; the money paid by each for his quantity of corn delivered to him, not into the person's hands, but to be put into his sack privately, and unknown to him;

and to give them provision for the way; sufficient both for themselves and for their cattle, that they might carry the whole of what corn they bought to their families:

and thus did he unto them; that is, not Joseph, but his steward or deputy, or however the servant that he gave the above order to.

Ver. 26. *And they laded their asses with the corn*, etc.] Cattle very fit to carry burdens, and no doubt they had each of them one at least:

and departed thence; from the place where Joseph was, and from the land of Egypt.

Ver. 27. *And as one of them opened his sack*, etc.] According to the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi, this was Levi; but Aben Ezra thinks it is more likely to be Reuben the firstborn, who was one, that is, the first of them:

to give his ass provender in the inn; at which they lay very probably the first night of their journey; a good man regards the life of his beast, and takes care of that as well as of himself, and generally in the first place:

he espied his money; the money which he paid for his corn:

for, behold, it [was] in his sack's mouth; just as he opened it.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto his brethren, my money is restored*, etc.] The money paid for the corn is returned:

and, lo, [it is] even in my sack; this put them all upon opening their sacks, where every man found his money, though not expressed, (see ~~Gen~~ Genesis 43:21):

and their heart failed [them]; through surprise and fear; or “went out”^{f1751} front them, as it were, they were ready to faint and swoon away:

and they were afraid; their consciences being awakened, and loaded with the guilt of their former sins, they were afraid that more evil was coming upon them for them; and that this was a scheme laid to entrap them, and that they should be pursued and seized, and fetched back, and charged with a fraud and trick, as going off with their corn without paying for it:

saying one to another, what [is] this [that] God hath done unto us? for whoever was the instrument, they concluded the overruling hand of divine Providence was in it, for the further chastisement and correction of them for their iniquity: instead of being thus frightened and distressed, it is very much it did not give them suspicion of Joseph, that he was the person they had been conversing with, and that he had done this in kindness to them; but their minds were so pressed with the guilt of their sin, that they were possessed of nothing but fears and dreadful apprehensions of things, and put the worst construction upon them they could, as men in such circumstances usually do, even fear where no fear is, or no occasion for it.

Ver. 29. *And they came unto Jacob their father, unto the land of Canaan,* etc.] Without being pursued and fetched back, or retarded in their journey as they might fear:

and told him all that befell unto them; chiefly what befell them while in Egypt:

saying, as follows.

Ver. 30. *The man, [who is] the lord of the land,* etc.] Of Egypt; not the king, but the deputy governor of it, whose authority under Pharaoh was very great, and reached to the whole land, and all political affairs, and especially what related to the corn, and the sale of it; he, say they,

spake roughly to us; gave them hard words, and stern looks, and used them in a very rough manner, (see ~~OLD~~ Genesis 42:7);

and took us for spies of the country; laid such a charge against them, and treated them as such; or “gave” them^{f1752}, committed them to prison as such.

Ver. 31. *And we said unto him, we [are] true [men]*, etc.] Honest, upright men, not given to treacherous and treasonable practices, either in the

country where they lived, or any other; they came to Egypt with no ill design upon the country, only to buy corn for the relief of their families in necessity:

we are no spies; or never were ^{f1753}: they had never been guilty of such practices, and never charged with anything of that kind; they denied the charge, and detested the character.

Ver. 32. *We [be] twelve brethren, sons of our father*, etc.] All brethren by the father's side, though not by the mother's, and by one father; they had been twelve, and were so now, though they knew it not, supposing that one was dead, as is next observed:

one [is] not; is not alive, but dead; the Targum of Jonathan is,

“what is become of one we know not”

and the youngest [is] this day with our father in the land of Canaan; (see ^{<04213>}Genesis 42:13).

Ver. 33. *And the man, the lord of the country, said unto us, hereby shall I know that you [are] true [men]*, etc.] This will be a proof and demonstration of it:

leave one of your brethren [here] with me; as an hostage; they do not say “bound in the prison”, (^{<04219>}Genesis 42:19), as Joseph did, because they would not grieve their father, at least would not tell him of it at once, lest it should too much affect him:

and take [food for] the famine of your household, and be gone; that is, corn for the relief of their families, being distressed with a famine.

Ver. 34. *And, bring your youngest brother unto me*, etc.] Their brother Benjamin:

then shall I know that you [are] no spies, but [that] you [are] true [men]; he knew they were no spies now, but true, honest, upright men, with respect to any designs upon the country; but then he should own and acknowledge them to be such, having such plain proof that what they said was true:

[so] will I deliver your brother; their brother Simeon, who was left bound; though this circumstance they also here studiously conceal from their father:

and ye shall traffic in the land; not only for corn, but for any other commodity Egypt furnished its neighbours with.

Ver. 35. *And it came to pass, as they emptied their sacks*, etc.] Both those in which were the corn they had bought, and those in which were their provender for their cattle, and provision for themselves:

that, behold, every man's bundle of money [was] in his sack; the same purse, and the same pieces of money, gold or silver, they had paid to the steward:

and when [both] they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid; the Targum of Jonathan adds,

“because of Simeon, whom they had left there;”

fearing that they should be charged with theft or fraud, and that Simeon would be put to death; they had opened their sacks before, and found their money in them, but put it up again as it was, in order to open them in their father's presence, from whom they thought proper to conceal this circumstance, lest he should blame them for not returning to the governor with their money upon the first notice of it, when they had travelled but one day's journey; wherefore they make no mention of it in the account of things that befell them, and express their surprise and fear upon finding it when they opened their sacks, as if they had known, nothing of it before; though it may be their fears were renewed and increased by what Jacob might observe to them, as the consequence of it, which they had not so thoroughly considered before.

Ver. 36. *And Jacob their father said unto them, me have ye bereaved [of my children]*, etc.] Which looks as if Jacob suspected that they had either sold or slain Joseph, and had done one or the other by Simeon:

Joseph [is] not, and Simeon [is] not: neither of them were with him, and both were given up by him as dead, or, as the Targum of Jonathan paraphrases it,

“of Joseph ye have said an evil beast hath devoured him; and Simeon, ye say, the king of the country hath bound him;”

as for Joseph he knew not but he was dead, he feared he was; and as for Simeon, he being in the hands of so rough a man as they had represented the lord of the land to be, and especially as his release depended upon

sending Benjamin, which he was determined at present not to do; he was reckoned by him as a lost or dead man:

and ye will take Benjamin [away]; they were desirous of it, and what their design was he could not tell; he seems to have a strong suspicion that it was not good:

all these things are against me; against his will, his peace, and comfort, and happiness, though they were all working and would work as they did for his good, and for the good of his family, for the preservation of it during the seven years of famine; or are “upon me”^{f1754}, as heavy burdens, too heavy for him to bear, ready to sink him down to the earth.

Ver. 37. *And Reuben spoke unto his father*, etc.] Being the eldest son, it most properly lay upon him to make answer to his father in the name of his brethren, and to offer a word of comfort to him:

saying, slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee; meaning not Simeon, who was in Egypt, but Benjamin, whom it was proposed to take thither, and whom Jacob was very loath to part with; and to persuade him to it Reuben offers to him, and gives him leave to slay his two sons, or rather two of his sons^{f1755}, since he had four, (~~old~~ Genesis 46:9); if he did not bring Benjamin again to him: this was a strange proposal, for what were two sons of his to his own son, so exceedingly beloved by him? besides, to lose his own son, and to have two of his grandchildren slain, would have been an increase of his sorrow and grief, instead of being an alleviation of it; but Reuben’s meaning was, not that his children should be slain, but this he says, to show that he would be as careful and solicitous for the return of Benjamin as if the life of two sons of his lay at stake, and was so confident of it that he could risk the life of them upon it, who were as dear to him as one Benjamin was to his father:

deliver him into my hand, and I will bring him to thee again; he undertook to be responsible for him.

Ver. 38. *And he said, my son shall not go down with you*, etc.] He gives a peremptory denial; this was his then present resolution and determination:

for his brother is dead; meaning Joseph, Benjamin’s own brother by father and mother’s side; him he supposed to be dead, such circumstances being related and produced, which made it highly probable, and he had not heard anything of him for twenty two years:

and he is left alone; Benjamin being the only surviving child of his dearly beloved Rachel, as he thought:

if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go; that is, to Egypt, whether by thieves and robbers, or by the fatigue of the journey, or by any means whatever, so that he loses his life. All the Targums interpret this mischief of death:

then shall ye bring down my gray heirs with sorrow to the grave; the sense is, should this be the case he should never lift up his head, or have any more comfort in this world, but should pass his time with continual sorrow until his gray head was laid in the grave, or till he came to the state of the dead.

CHAPTER 43

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 43

This chapter informs us how that the famine continued in the land of Canaan, and the corn that Jacob's family had from Egypt being consumed, Jacob pressed his sons to go down for more, which they refused to do, unless Benjamin was sent with them, for whose safety Judah offered to become a surety, (^{<0431>}Genesis 43:1-10); Jacob with reluctance was prevailed upon to let him go, and dismissed them with a present to the governor of Egypt, and with double money to buy corn with, and with his blessing upon them, (^{<0431>}Genesis 43:11-14); upon which they set out for Egypt; and when they came into the presence of Joseph, he seeing Benjamin with them, ordered his steward to have them to his house, and get dinner ready, it being his pleasure that they should dine with him that day, (^{<0431>}Genesis 43:15-17); this threw them into a fright, supposing they were going to be called to an account for the money they found in their sacks; wherefore they related to the steward very particularly the whole of that affair, who bid them not be uneasy, for he had had their money; and as a proof that things would go well with them, brought Simeon out to them, and treated them very kindly and gently, (^{<0431>}Genesis 43:18-24); and having got their present ready against Joseph came home, they delivered it to him with great veneration and submission; who asked of the welfare of their father, and whether that was not their younger brother they spoke of, the sight of whom so affected him, that he was obliged in haste to retire to his chamber, and weep, (^{<0432>}Genesis 43:25-30); and having washed his face, and composed himself, he returned and ordered dinner to be brought, which was set on different tables, one for himself and the Egyptians, and the other for his brethren, whom he placed according to their age, to their great surprise; and sent them messes from his table to each, and to Benjamin five times more than the rest, and they were so liberally entertained, that they became cheerful and merry, (^{<0433>}Genesis 43:31-34).

Ver. 1. *And the famine [was] sore in the land.*] In the land of Canaan; it increased yet more and more: this is observed for the sake of what follows,

showing the reason and necessity of Jacob's sons taking a second journey into Egypt.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass, when they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt*, etc.] Which, in so numerous a family as Jacob's was, having so many children, grandchildren, and servants, what nine men on so many asses could bring with them must be consumed in a short time, how long cannot be said; no doubt they lived sparingly on it in such a time of scarcity, to make it last as long as they could, and perhaps only he, his children and grandchildren, might eat of it; the servants, as Calvin observes, might live on meaner food, as acorns, herbs, and roots; and it must not be thought that all this corn was eaten up entirely, and none left, but the far greater part of it, and but very little remaining; or otherwise, how should Jacob, and his sons' wives and children be supported until the return of his sons from Egypt with fresh provisions? indeed it may be supposed, that the land of Canaan produced some corn, though but little; and it is certain there were other fruits which were serviceable for food, as appears from (^{<0431>}Genesis 43:11):

their father said, go again, buy us a little food; just enough for him, and them, and theirs, for the present; hoping that the famine would be over quickly, and therefore orders them to go once more to Egypt, and buy some provisions: they made no motion themselves to go, as it is highly probable they determined they would not, since Jacob had resolved Benjamin should not go, but waited for their father's motion, and which he did not make until necessity obliged him.

Ver. 3. *And Judah spake unto him*, etc.] Reuben the eldest son had met with a repulse already, (^{<0426>}Genesis 42:36); Simeon the next was now in Egypt, (^{<0424>}Genesis 42:24), and Levi, perhaps on account of the affair of Shechem, (^{<0325>}Genesis 34:25-31), did not yet stand well in his father's favour and affection; wherefore Judah being next, with the consent of his brethren, undertakes to manage the affair with him, who had doubtless an interest in him, as well as authority among his brethren, and was a prudent man, and could speak well:

saying, the man did solemnly protest unto us; meaning Joseph, though he then knew not that it was he; whom he calls "the man", not by way of contempt, or as thinking and speaking meanly of him, but the reverse, the great man, the honourable man, the governor of Egypt; and so the

Septuagint version adds, “the man, the lord of the land”; he in the strongest terms, and in the most solemn manner, protested by the life of Pharaoh:

saying, ye shall not see my face; with acceptance, should not be admitted to come near him, or treat with him, and purchase any corn of him:

except your brother [be] with you; their youngest brother Benjamin.

Ver. 4. *If thou wilt send our brother with us*, etc.] Give orders for his going with us, and put him under our care:

we will go down and buy thee food; signifying, on the above condition, that they were ready and willing to take a journey into Egypt, and buy provisions for him and his family, otherwise not.

Ver. 5. *But if thou wilt not send [him], we will not go down*, etc.] This they said not as undutiful, and from a spirit of rebellion and disobedience to their father, or of stubbornness and obstinacy, but because they durst not go down, nor could they with any safety; they might expect to be taken up as spies, and put to death as they were threatened; and besides, it would be in vain, and to no purpose, since there was no likelihood of succeeding, or of getting any provision:

for the man said unto us, ye shall not see my face, except your brother [be] with you; which they repeat both for the confirmation of it, and as an apology for themselves, to clear them from any charge of unfaithfulness.

Ver. 6. *And Israel said*, etc.] In answer to the speech of Judah:

wherefore dealt ye [so] ill with me; had done that which brought so much evil upon him, gave him so much grief and trouble, and threw him into such perplexity and distress, that he knew not what to do, or course to take:

[as] to tell the man whether ye had yet a brother? which he thought was done imprudently and unadvisedly, and that there was no need of it; which, had it not been done, would have prevented this anxiety of mind he was now in, and the mischief he feared would follow.

Ver. 7. *And they said*, etc.] Not Judah only, in the name of the rest, but each of them in turn, being all charged with doing an ill thing:

the man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred; or “in asking asked”^{f1756}; very particularly and closely, putting many questions to us,

who we were? to whom we belonged? of what family we were? and inquired into the particulars and circumstances of our relations:

saying, [is] your father yet alive? have ye [another] brother? they told him they were all one man's sons, as they were obliged, when they were charged with being spies, in order to clear themselves, (⁽⁴²⁰⁾Genesis 42:10,11); upon which he inquired whether their father was living, and whether they were all the sons their father had:

and we told him according to the tenor of these words; they answered to these questions put to them, and which were so closely put, that they could do no other than say what they did:

could we certainly know that he would say, bring your brother down? could they have foreseen this, they would have been more upon their guard; though in all probability had they been ever so cautious this would have been the case; it would have been required of them to bring their brother with them, so desirous was Joseph of seeing him.

Ver. 8. *And Judah said unto Israel his father, send the lad with me, and we will arise and go,* etc.] Directly to Egypt for corn; Judah calls Benjamin a lad, because the youngest brother, and tenderly brought up by his father, who had an affectionate fondness for him as if he had been a child; otherwise he must be thirty two years of age, for he was seven years younger than Joseph, who was now thirty nine years of age; yea, Benjamin must have children of his own, who went with him and his father into Egypt, (⁽⁴⁴²⁾Genesis 46:21); for the computation of Benjamin's age, (see ⁽⁴³²⁾Genesis 30:22 31:41 35:18 37:2 41:40,53,54 45:6);

that we may live, and not die, both we, and thou, [and] also our little ones; he argues, that if they with Benjamin went down to Egypt for corn, there was a possibility, yea, a probability that they would all live, even Benjamin also; but if not, they must all in course die, and Benjamin likewise; and therefore it was most prudent and advisable, for the sake of all their lives, of them and theirs, and for the sake of Benjamin among the rest, for whom Jacob was so particularly concerned, to let him go with them to Egypt for corn, since he must die if they did not go, and he could but die if he did go; and there was great likelihood, if not a certainty, he would not; at least Judah was confident he would not, as appears by what follows.

Ver. 9. *I will be surety for him,* etc.] Engage for his safe return:

of my hand shall thou require him; I will be answerable for him:

if I bring him not to thee, and set him before thee: do not return him from Egypt, and bring him to Canaan, into his father's house and presence safe, and sound:

then let me bear the blame for ever; of persuading his father to let him go with him; all this he said, to show what care he would take of him, and what confidence he had that no evil would befall him, that he would be returned with them in safety; which he might ground upon the assurance that Joseph had given, that they should not die if they brought their brother with them, (^(42:20)Genesis 42:20); and perhaps Judah, as Schmidt thinks, might be under a special instinct of divine Providence, which directed him to say these things: and it may be added, that Jacob also might be under a divine impulse, which influenced him to regard what Judah said, or otherwise his suretyship was but a poor security, and of little avail.

Ver. 10. *For except we had lingered*, etc.] Delayed going down to Egypt, through the demur Jacob made of tending Benjamin with them:

surely now we had returned this second time; they would have made their journey to Egypt, and returned again with their corn, and their brother Benjamin too, as Judah supposed, before this time; so that by these delays they were losing time, and involving themselves and families in distress for want of corn.

Ver. 11. *And their father said unto them*, etc.] Being in some measure convinced by their reasonings, and in part at least reconciled to let Benjamin go with them, there being nothing to be done, he perceived, unless he consented to it:

if [it must be] so now, do this; if nothing else will do but Benjamin must go, which after all he was reluctant to, then he advises them to do as follows:

take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels; such as were the peculiar produce of the land of Canaan, and the best of it; for which it was most famous, and praised, as the word used signifies; these Jacob advises to take and put into their sacks they carried to bring back their corn in:

and carry down the man a present; the great man and governor of Egypt, whose name was not known, little thinking it was his son Joseph; this he

proposed to be done, in order to procure his friendship, that he might carry it kindly and respectfully to them, release Simeon, and send back Benjamin with them. The present consisted of the following things,

a little balm: or rosin, of which there was great quantity in and about Gilead; (see Gill on “^{f1756}Jeremiah 8:22”):

and a little honey; the land of Canaan in general is called a land flowing with milk and honey; and some parts of it were famous for it, as the, parts about Ziph, called from thence the honey of Ziphim ^{f1757}: this is the first time mention is made of “honey” in Scripture. Some say ^{f1758} Bacchus was the inventor of it. Justin ^{f1759} makes a very ancient king of a people in the country, now called Spain, to whom he gives the name of Gorgoris, to be the first that found out the way of gathering honey; but by this it appears to be of a more early date. Dr. Shaw ^{f1760} thinks, that not honey, properly so called, is meant, but a kind of “rob” made of the juice of grapes, called by the Arabs “dibsa”, a word near in sound with, and from the same root as this. And who further observes, that Hebron alone (the place were Jacob now was) sends every year to Egypt three hundred camel loads, i.e. near two thousand quintals of this rob: and Leo Africanus says ^{f1761}, there is but little honey to be found in Egypt, wherefore it made this part of the present the more acceptable:

spices; of various sorts, a collection of them; though it is thought, by Bochart and others, that the “storax” is particularly meant; the best of that sort being, as Pliny ^{f1762} says in Judea. The Targum and Jarchi take it to be “wax”, as do also other Jewish writers:

and myrrh; the liquor called “stacte”, that drops from the myrrh tree. Some will have this “lot”, as the word is, the same with “ladanum”; one should rather think that it should be the lotus or lote tree, the fruit of which, Pliny ^{f1763} says, is the size of a bean, and of a saffron colour, and Herodotus ^{f1764} says, it is sweet like a date; but that it was frequent in Egypt, and needed not be carried there. The Targum renders it “chestnuts”, and so Ben Melech, as it does what follows,

nuts, and almonds, the oil of nuts, and the oil of almonds: the former design not common, but the pistachio nuts, as Jarchi observes from R. Machir; and these, as Pliny ^{f1765} says, were well known in Syria, and were good for food and drink, and against the bites of serpents; and, as Bochart

^{f1766} observes, are frequently mentioned by naturalists along with almonds, and as like unto them.

Ver. 12. *And take double money in your hand*, etc.] Than what they carried before, either to buy as much more as they then did; or rather because of the greater scarcity of corn, as Jarchi observes, which made it doubly dearer; for this seems to be different from the money they are also bid to take in return for that found in their sacks, which was a third parcel, as follows:

and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry [it] again in your hand; that it might be ready to pay upon demand, should they be charged with nonpayment for the corn they had before:

peradventure it [was] an oversight; a mistake of the governors, or of those that were under him, concerned in the sale of the corn, and receiving money for it, or of Jacob's sons; he could not tell how it was, but some way or other he supposed a mistake was made.

Ver. 13. *Take also your brother*, etc.] Their brother Benjamin, committing him into their hands and to their care, hereby declaring his consent and willingness that he should go with them:

and arise, go again to the man; the governor of Egypt, to buy corn of him.

Ver. 14. *And God Almighty give you mercy before the man*, etc.] Who has the hearts of all men in his hands, kings, princes, governors, even those who are the most cruel and hardhearted, rough and severe in their tempers and dispositions, and such an one they had represented this man to be; one that had spoke roughly to them, and used them roughly: Jacob therefore sent him a present to soften his mind, and now he puts up a prayer to God, and dismisses his sons with his good wishes for them, that God would incline the heart of the governor to show kindness to them, and let them have corn, nor use any of them ill: particularly,

that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin; release Simeon, and send him and Benjamin aiming with them when they returned:

if I be bereaved [of my children], I am bereaved; this he said, not as utterly despairing of their return, but as expressive of his patient submission to the divine will, be it as it may be.

Ver. 15. *And the men took the present*, etc.] Their father directed them to:

and they took double money in their hand; besides what they found in their sacks mouths, which they also carried with them:

and Benjamin; they took him likewise with their father's leave:

and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph; presented themselves to him, and their petitions for more corn, as well as to answer to any questions that should be asked them.

Ver. 16. *And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them*, etc.] Whom he knew, though he had not seen him twenty two years, and though he must be very much altered, being but about ten years of age when Joseph was said into Egypt, yet being with the rest of his brethren, whom he knew very well, concluded it must be him:

he said to the ruler of his house; his steward, as he is after called, not his son Manasseh, as the Targum of Jonathan:

bring [these] men home; to his own house, for Joseph was now at or near the place where were the granaries of corn, and where that was said and distributed:

and slay, and make ready; or "slay a slaughter"^{f1767}, that is, of beasts for food; a sheep, or a lamb, or a calf, very probably, and order it to be dressed, boiled or roasted, or both, that it might be fit for food: wherefore Aben Ezra must be mistaken when (^{<0463>}Genesis 46:34); he says, that the Egyptians in those times did not eat flesh, nor might any kill a sheep; for it cannot be thought that Joseph could order a dinner for his brethren, to whom as yet he did not choose to make himself known, in direct violation of the customs and laws of Egypt, and who, it is plain by what follows, dined as an Egyptian, and with the Egyptians, and not as an Hebrew, and with his brethren as Hebrews; besides, for what purpose did Pharaoh get and possess such herds and flocks of cattle, if not for food as well as other uses? (see ^{<0476>}Genesis 47:6,16,17); though in later times they abstained from eating various animals, as Porphyry^{f1768} from Chaeremon relates, and particularly from sheep and goats, according to Juvenal^{f1769}:

for [these] men shall dine with me at noon; which was the usual time of dining with the eastern people, as it is now with us, though with the Romans at evening.

Ver. 17. *And the man did as Joseph bade: and the man brought the men into Joseph's house.*] Showed them the way to it, and introduced them into it, and led them into some apartment in it, and ordered every thing to be got ready for dinner as his master had bid him, being a diligent and faithful servant: at old Cair is shown to travellers^{f1770} the house of Joseph in the tower, and a very surprising well, said to be made by him, and here, they say; the granaries were, in which the corn was laid up.

Ver. 18. *And the men were afraid, because they were brought into Joseph's house,* etc.] It not being usual, as Jarchi observes, for those that came to buy corn to lodge there, but at an inn in the city:

and they said, because of the money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in; to examine and inquire of them how they came to go away without paying for their corn, take up their money again after they had laid it down, and take it away with them, and so were guilty of tricking and defrauding, if not of theft:

that he may seek occasion against us: or “roll on us”^{f1771}; cast all the shame on them, and leave the reproach and scandal of it on them:

and fall upon us; with hard words, and severe menaces, if not with blows:

and take us for bondmen, and our asses; imprison them, which was the punishment for fraud and theft, and take their asses as a forfeiture.

Ver. 19. *And they came near to the steward of Joseph's house,* etc.] The same person before called the ruler of his house, under whose direction they were; just before they came to the house, as it seems by what follows, they made up to him as having something to say to him:

and they communed with him at the door of the house; before they went into it, being uneasy and eager to know what should be the meaning of their being brought thither, which was unusual.

Ver. 20. *And said, O sir,* etc.] Or, “on me, my lord”^{f1772}, one said in the name of the rest, perhaps Judah, on me let the blame lie, if guilty of rudeness in making our address to thee; or as the Vulgate Latin version, “we pray, sir, that thou wouldest hear us”; and so Jarchi and Aben Ezra say the phrase is expressive of beseeching, entreating, and supplicating:

we came indeed down at the first time to buy food; not to spy the land but to buy corn, and not to get it by fraud or tricking but by paying for it the price that was required.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass when we came to the inn*, etc.] Upon the road, on the first day's journey, to refresh themselves and their cattle:

that we opened our sacks; to give provender to our cattle; by which it appears that they all did this, though it is only said of one of them at the inn, and of all of them when they came home, (⁽¹⁴²⁷⁾Genesis 42:27,35);

and, behold, [every] man's money [was] in the mouth of his sack, our money in full weight; nothing wanting of it; it being usual in those times to pay money by weight, and not by the tale of pieces:

and we have brought it again in our hand; in order to pay it for the corn we have had, having no design to defraud.

Ver. 22. *And other money have we brought down in our hands to buy food*, etc.] Double money for a double quantity, or because the price of corn was now doubled; and their bringing this besides the other showed their honest and upright intentions:

we cannot tell who put our money in our sacks; we are quite ignorant of it, and can by no means account for it, and therefore hope no blame will be laid on us.

Ver. 23. *And he said, peace [be] unto you, fear not*, etc.] Do not be uneasy and disturbed, you have nothing to fear, you are in no danger:

your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks; the hidden treasure, as the word signifies, found in their sacks; was there by the providence of God, so disposing the heart of Joseph to order it to be put there, as the steward interpreted it; who by being Joseph's family had got some knowledge of the true God, and of his all wise and disposing Providence:

I had your money; he received it of them, which he acknowledges, and that was sufficient to acquit them from guile and theft, though he does not say that he put the money into their sacks, or by whose order it was done:

and he brought Simeon out unto them; either out of prison, or out of some other room to them, which was, no doubt, done by the direction of Joseph.

Ver. 24. *And the man brought the men into Joseph's house*, etc.] After the above discourse had passed between them, and he had made their minds easy, both with respect to the money, and by bringing Simeon unbound to them:

and gave [them] water, and they washed their feet; which was usually done in the eastern countries after travelling, and when about to take a meal, and was both for refreshment and cleanliness:

and he gave their asses provender; thus were they hospitably entertained, they and all that belonged to them.

Ver. 25. *And they made ready the present against Joseph came at noon*, etc.] They took it out of their vessels or bags in which they brought it, having unladen their asses, and disposed of it in a proper manner to present it to him when he came home at noon to dine:

for they heard that they should eat bread there; dine there, bread being put for all provision: this was told them, very probably, by the steward, or by some of the servants in the house, or they overheard what Joseph said to the steward, (^{<0496>}Genesis 43:16).

Ver. 26. *And when Joseph came home*, etc.] In order to dine, it being noontime:

they brought him the present which [was] in their hand into the house; everyone took a part of it in his hand, and brought it to Joseph in the parlour where he was, and delivered it to him as a present from their father, or from themselves, or it may be as from both:

and bowed themselves to him to the earth; in the most prostrate and humble manner, now again fulfilling his dream, and more completely than before, for now all his eleven brethren were together, signified by the eleven stars in the dream, that made obeisance to him, (see ^{<0509>}Genesis 37:9 42:6).

Ver. 27. *And he asked them of [their] welfare*, etc.] Or “peace”^{f1773}, their prosperity, especially of the health of their bodies, whether they were well and in good health after so long a journey:

and said, [is] your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? when they were with him before, and told him they were all the sons of one man, who dwelt in Canaan:

[is] he yet alive? which he was very desirous of knowing; for, being advanced in years, he might fear he was removed by death in the time between their going and returning.

Ver. 28. *And they answered, thy servant our father [is] in good health, he [is] yet alive,* etc.] Which is an answer to both his questions; and by calling their father Joseph's servant, he did obeisance to him in them, as well as by sending a present to him, which they delivered as coming from him his servant; and it is not improbable that Jacob sent his salutation to him as his servant, and so that part of the dream of Joseph's was also fulfilled, which represented the sun doing obeisance to him, (⁴⁰⁵⁰Genesis 37:9,10):

and they bowed their heads, and made obeisance; a second time, as they did, no doubt, at every time they gave answer to Joseph's questions; and this is again observed, to show the full completion of the above dream.

Ver. 29. *And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin,* etc.] He had seen him before when his brethren first presented themselves to him, but then took no particular and special notice of him, only gave him a side look as it were, but now he looked wistly at him:

his mother's son; the son of Rachel his mother, and who was his only brother by his mother's side, the rest, though his brethren, yet only by his father's side, not his mother's sons:

and said, [is] this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? he knew he was the same, but was willing to have it from their mouths, to lead on to what he had further to say:

and he said; after they had answered his question, and told him it was he:

God be gracious unto thee, my son; speaking as a superior, a governor, in which capacity he was a father to his inferiors; and as a man, a relation, a brother, though not as yet discovered; he spoke in the most tender and affectionate manner, and, as a religious good man, he wishes the best thing he could for his brother, the grace and goodness of God; and which may be understood in the largest and most expressive sense, as including all good things, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

Ver. 30. *And Joseph made haste,* etc.] To get out of the room where he was with his brethren as fast as he could:

for his bowels did yearn upon his brother; his passions grew strong, his affections were raised, his heart was full of tenderness, and there was such a flow of love and joy at the sight of his brother, and the little conversation he had with him, that he was ready to burst out, and must have discovered himself if he had not immediately turned and got out of the room:

and he sought [where] to weep; a proper place to vent his passion in tears of joy, and relieve himself

and he entered into [his] chamber, and wept there; where he could be the most retired, and not likely to be overheard.

Ver. 31. *And he washed his face*, etc.] From the tears on it, that it might not be discerned that he had been weeping:

and went out; of his chamber into the room again, where his brethren were:

and refrained himself; from weeping, or showing any excess of passion, love, joy, etc.

and said, set on bread; gave orders to his servants to bring in dinner, and set it upon the table; bread, as before, being put for all kind of food.

Ver. 32. *And they set on for him by himself*, etc.] A table was placed and provisions set upon it in one part of the room for Joseph by himself; which was done either because he was an Hebrew, and the Egyptians might not eat with him, nor he with them; or rather for the sake of grandeur, he being the next man in the kingdom to Pharaoh:

and for them by themselves; another table was placed and spread for Joseph's brethren by themselves, the reason of which is after given:

and for the Egyptians, which did eat with him, by themselves; a third table was laid for such Egyptian noblemen and others, who were at this time Joseph's guests, or used to dine with him:

because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews, for that [is] an abomination unto the Egyptians; the reason of which, as given by the Targums of Onkelos and, Jonathan, is, because the creatures the Egyptians worshipped the Hebrews eat; but it is a question whether such creatures as oxen, sheep, goats, etc. which were eaten by the Hebrews, were so early worshipped by the Egyptians; though they were in later times, and particularly the Apis or ox, which is supposed by many to be worshipped

on the account of Joseph, and so after his time; rather the abhorrence the Egyptians had the Hebrews in was on account of their being shepherds, on a political account, they having before this time suffered much by the insurrections and rebellions of such sort of persons among themselves, who set up a kingdom and kings of their own, called the “Hyysi”, or pastor kings: or else this difference made between the Egyptians and Hebrews at eating, was not on account of what they did eat, as of the certain rites and customs the Egyptians had peculiar to themselves in dressing their food, and eating it; and therefore would not eat with any of another nation; so that this was not any particular distaste they had to the Hebrews, but was their usage towards men of all nations; for so Herodotus says ^{f1774}, that

“no Egyptian, man or woman, might kiss the month of a Greek, or use a knife, or spit, or pot;”

that is, a knife a Greek had cut anything with, or a spit he had roasted meat on, or a pot he had boiled it in; and adds,

“nor might taste of the flesh of an ox, cut with the knife of a Greek.”

And indeed they would not eat nor converse with any of another religion ^{f1775}, be they who they would.

Ver. 33. *And they sat before him*, etc.] At a table, so placed that they were in his sight, and he had a full view of them:

the firstborn according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; everyone according to his age, Reuben, the firstborn, first, and so on to Benjamin the youngest: thus they placed themselves as they used to be in their father’s family, or they were so placed by Joseph; and if this was the case, it may be a reason, and a principal one, of what follows:

and the men marvelled one at another; not the Egyptians, the guests of Joseph, seeing eleven brethren placed in this manner, and these being Hebrews, taken so much notice of; but Joseph’s brethren, who either wondered at the manner of their being seated so regular, according to their age; or at the honour done them to dine with the governor, and at the grandeur of the entertainment, and at the separate manner in which the governor, and the nobles of Egypt, sat at meals; or at what follows.

Ver. 34. *And he took [and sent] messes unto there from before him,* etc.]

The several dishes were brought before him, who cut them up, and sent to everyone their part and portion, as was usual in those times and countries, and afterwards elsewhere ^{f1776}, for the master of the family or feast to divide the food into parts, and to give to every guest his part; and these were called, from their being sent, “missus”, and from whence seems to be our English word “messes”, here used:

but Benjamin’s mess was five times so much as any of theirs; which was done out of his great affection to him, being his own brother both by father and mother’s side; and, as some think, to try his brethren, how they stood affected to Benjamin, and observe if this did not raise their envy to him, as his father’s particular respect to him had raised it in them against himself; and that, if it should, he might provide for his safety, lest they should use him in like manner as they had used him. This undoubtedly was designed as a peculiar favour, and a mark of special honour and respect, it being usual for princes to send messes from their tables to such as they favoured; and particularly it was usual with the Egyptians for their kings to have double messes more than the rest, in honour of them, as Herodotus ^{f1777} relates: Benjamin’s mess consisted either of five parts, or it was five times bigger than what was sent to the rest; not but that they had all what was sufficient; there was no want to any, but great plenty of everything for them all; nor was this designed Benjamin, that he should eat the larger quantity, only to show him distinguishing respect:

and they drank, and were merry with him; after dinner they drank wine liberally and plentifully, but not to excess and intemperance, yet so as to be cheerful and in good spirits; their fears being all dissipated by this generous entertainment they met with.

CHAPTER 44

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 44

This chapter relates the policy of Joseph in making an experiment of his brethren's regard and affection for Benjamin; he ordered his steward to put every man's money into his sack, and his silver cup in Benjamin's, and when they were got out of the city, to follow after them, and charge them with the theft, as he did; and having searched their sacks, as they desired he would, found the cup with Benjamin, which threw them into the utmost distress, and obliged them to return to Joseph, (^{<0441>}Genesis 44:1-14); who charged them with their ill behaviour towards him; they acknowledge it, and propose to be his servants; but he orders them to depart to their father, retaining Benjamin in servitude, (^{<0445>}Genesis 44:15-17); upon which Judah addressed him in a very polite and affectionate manner, and relates the whole story, both of what passed between Joseph and them, concerning Benjamin, the first time they were in Egypt, and between their father and them upon the same subject, when he directed them to go a second time thither to buy corn, and how he became a surety to his father for him, and therefore proposed to be his bondman now, not being able to see his father's face without Benjamin, (^{<0448>}Genesis 44:18-34).

Ver. 1. *And he commanded the steward of his house*, etc.] Whom the Targum of Jonathan again calls Manasseh, the eldest son of Joseph:

saying, fill the men's sacks [with] food, as much as they can carry; this he ordered out of his great affection for them, and that his father and his family might have sufficient supply in this time of famine:

and put every man's money in his sack's mouth; not that which had been put into their sacks the first time, for the steward acknowledged his receipt of it, but what they had paid for their present corn, they were about to carry away.

Ver. 2. *And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest*, etc.] Benjamin; this he ordered to be done, partly to put him in apparent danger, and try how his brethren would behave towards him in such circumstances, and thereby know how they stood affected to him; and

partly that he might have an excuse for retaining him with him. This cup was valuable both for the matter of it, being of silver, and for the use of it, being what Joseph himself drank out of: and by the word used to express it, it seems to have been a large embossed cup, a kind of goblet, for it has the signification of a little hill. Jarchi says it was a long cup, which they called “mederno”. The Septuagint render it by “condy”, which is said to be a Persian word, and a kind of an Attalic cup, that held ten cotylae^{f1778}, or four or five quarts, and weighed ninety ounces; but a cup so large seems to be too large to drink out of:

and his corn money; what he had paid for his corn:

and he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken; put every man’s money in the mouth of his sack, and his silver cup with the corn money into Benjamin’s sack.

Ver. 3. *As soon as the morning was light*, etc.] When it was break of day, before the sun rose:

the men were sent away, they and their asses; the men being refreshed with food, and their asses having provender given them, and saddled and loaded, they were handsomely and honourably dismissed.

Ver. 4. *[And] when they were gone out of the city, [and] not [yet] far off*, etc.] Which perhaps was Tanis, the Zoan of the Scriptures; (see ²⁰¹⁴Ezekiel 30:14), margin;

Joseph said unto his steward, up, follow after the men; who no doubt was ready provided with men and horses, to go out and pursue when Joseph should give the orders, he being privy to Joseph’s intentions, and with whom the scheme was concerted, and the secret was. Joseph appears to have been up very early this morning, and had observed the exact time of his brethren’s departure, and guessed whereabouts they might be when he sent his steward, and others after them; for it can hardly be thought he was sent alone after eleven men, and to charge them with a theft, and bring them back again:

and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good? in taking away the silver cup, when they had been so kindly and bountifully entertained. This he was to represent as base ingratitude, as it would have appeared, had it been fact. In much such manner was Esop used by the inhabitants of Delphos; they, being

displeased with him, put a sacred cup or vial into his bags, which he, being ignorant of, went on his way towards Phocis; and they ran after him, and seized him, and charged him with sacrilege ^{f1779}.

Ver. 5. [*Is not this [it], in which my lord drinketh*, etc.] Which was for his own particular use, and so the more ungrateful in them to take it,

and whereby indeed he divineth? according to our version and others, Joseph is here represented by his steward as a diviner or soothsayer, and so he might be thought to be by the Egyptians, from being such an exact interpreter of dreams, foretelling things to come, and that he made his divinations by the silver cup; and we are told that the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and Egyptians, used to fill basins with water, in which they put plates of silver and precious stones, marked with certain characters, and pronouncing certain words, called to the devil, who uttered a voice in the water like an hissing, and returned answers to the things inquired about ^{f1780}: a like practice is used by the Africans now ^{f1781}; which method Andronicus took to know who would be his successor, but was reckoned among the most infamous and scandalous parts of the magic art ^{f1782} wherefore, as Joseph never practised any thing of this kind, so neither would he dissemble, or make as if he did; though it must be owned that the Arabs ^{f1783} in Egypt at this day pretend to consult with the cup and divine by it: but the words will bear another version and sense, for it may signify to tempt, to try, to make an experiment, and by experience to know a thing, as in (^{<1127>}Genesis 30:27); and so the Arabic version, “and indeed he hath tried you by it”: so Aben Ezra interprets it of his trying of them by it, whether they were thieves or not, whether they were a parcel of light fingered filching fellows: the cup, he pretends, was set before them, and he turned himself another way, either Joseph or the steward, and they took the opportunity of carrying it off; or else, as others think, he tried them by drinking in it very freely and liberally, what sort of men they were, how they would behave themselves in their cups, when truth is commonly spoke, the wit being out when the wine is in: but of these two senses the former is to be preferred; though it seems best of all to understand this not of the cup as the instrument by which he tried, searched, and inquired into things, but as the object searched after and inquired of; for the word signifies to inquire, and make a strict observation of things, and thereby make shrewd guesses and conjectures, as in (^{<1128>}1 Kings 20:33); and so the sense is, either according to R. Jonah ^{f1784}, that his master would diligently inquire of the soothsayers concerning it, in order to find out who took it

away, and so Ben Melech; for the words may be rendered, “for which he certainly makes”, or has made, or will make “divination”, which agrees with (^{<0445}Genesis 44:15); for if the cup was gone, how could he make divination with it? it must be for it; or indeed they might well conclude themselves, that as such a thing would soon be missed, diligent inquiry would be made after it, and it would be at once conjectured that it was taken away, not by any of the household, but by those strangers that had dined with Joseph; and a man of his sagacity and penetration would soon find it out, and therefore it was madness and folly to do such an action, and think to get off clear:

ye have done evil in so doing: both a mad and foolish action, and a base, wicked, and ungrateful one, as well as what was infamous and scandalous; for nothing was reckoned more so than for a guest at a prince’s table to carry away a cup, or anything of that kind, with him: so Claudius the Roman emperor, a guest of his, the day before, having taken away a golden cup, as was supposed, ordered an earthen one to be put in its place ^{f1785}, which was a putting him to public shame and reproach: Dioxippus the Athenian, being at table with Alexander the great, a golden cup was taken away privately, by some that envied him; and the hint being given as if he had done it, all eyes were turned on him as the thief, which he could not bear, but went out, and wrote a letter to the king, and then killed himself ^{f1786}.

Ver. 6. *And he overtook them*, etc.] Their asses being laden with corn could not travel very fast, and he and his attendants being mounted on swift horses:

and he spake unto them these same words; that Joseph had ordered him to say, and so what follows particularly, (^{<0440}Genesis 44:10).

Ver. 7. *And they said unto him, wherefore saith my lord these words?* etc.] One of them, in the name of the rest, perhaps Judah, made answer, as astonished at the charge laid against them, suggesting that there was not the least foundation for it, and were quite surprised to hear anything of this kind alleged against them:

God forbid that thy servants should do according to this thing; expressing the utmost detestation of such a fact, as being what they could never be guilty of.

Ver. 8. *Behold, the money which we found in our sacks mouths;* etc.] Upon their return from Egypt, the first time they went thither for corn:

we brought again unto thee out of the land of Canaan; which was a full proof of their honesty: they might have kept it until it was called for and demanded of them, but of themselves they brought it with them, as being money not their own; and they did not wait to be examined about it when they came to Egypt again, but of their own accord related the story of it, and offered the money to this same man the steward they were now speaking to, which he could not deny: yea, they brought it to him out of the land of Canaan, a foreign country at a considerable distance, and out of the jurisdiction of Egypt, and where they were not liable to be called to an account for it:

how then should we steal out of thy lord's house silver or gold? that is, vessels of silver or vessels of gold, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan; it could not be reasonably thought they would, for if they would not retain the governor's money when in their own land and out of his reach, much less would they steal anything out his house, which they might conclude would soon be missed, and they easily apprehended and committed to prison, and suffer for it.

Ver. 9. *With whomsoever of thy servants it be found,* etc.] The silver cup:

both let him die; which was rashly said, since they might have thought the cup might be put in one of their sacks unknown to them, as their money had been before; and besides, death was a punishment too severe for such a crime, and therefore is by the steward himself moderated; but this they said the more strongly to express their innocence:

and we also will be my lord's bondmen; his servants, as long as they lived: this was likewise carrying the matter too far, and exceeding all bounds of justice, which could only require satisfaction of the offender.

Ver. 10. *And he said, now also [let] it [be] according unto your words,* etc.] Not according to the full extent of their words, but according to a part of them; that he only should be a servant that was found guilty; so moderating the punishment which they had fixed, and were willing to submit to, and therefore could not object to what he next proposes:

he with whom it is found shall be my servant; speaking in the name of Joseph, whom he represented, and who had directed him what to say:

and ye shall be blameless; acquitted of the charge, and pronounced innocent, and let go free.

Ver. 11. *Then they speedily took down every man his sack to the ground*, etc.] To be opened and examined, and this they did in all haste, as having a clear conscience, and being confident that nothing could be found upon them, and desirous of having the affair issued as soon as possible, that the steward might have full satisfaction, and they proceed on in their journey:

and opened every man his sack; showing neither reluctance nor fear, being conscious of their innocence.

Ver. 12. *And he searched*, etc.] To the bottom of them, not content to look into the mouth of them being opened, but rummaged them, and searched deeply into them to find the cup, which was the thing charged upon them he was solicitous to find; as for the money in the sack's mouth he took no notice of that, nor is there any mention of it:

[and] began at the oldest; at Reuben, as the Targum of Jonathan expresses it: the steward might know their different ages in course, by the order in which they were placed at Joseph's table when they dined with him:

and left off at the youngest; at Benjamin, he ended his scrutiny with him; this method he took partly to hold them in fear as long as he could, and partly to prevent any suspicion of design, which might have been entertained had he went directly to Benjamin's sack:

and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack; where the steward himself had put it, and as it is usually said, they that hide can find.

Ver. 13. *Then they rent their clothes*, etc.] In token of sorrow and distress, being at their wits' end, like distracted persons, not knowing what to do: this was usually done in the eastern countries when any evil befell, as did Jacob, (^{<0534>}Genesis 37:34); and as the Egyptians themselves did when mourning for their dead, as Diodorus Siculus^{f1787} relates:

and laded every man his ass; put their sacks of corn on their asses again, having tied them up:

and returned to the city; to the metropolis, as Jarchi, which was either Tanis, that is, Zoan, or, as others think, Memphis: hither they returned to see how it would go with Benjamin, to plead his cause and get him released, that he might go with them, they being afraid to see their father's

face without him; otherwise, could they have been content to have gone without him, they might have proceeded on in their journey, (see ^{<0447>}Genesis 44:17).

Ver. 14. *And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house*, etc.] Judah is particularly mentioned because he was the principal spokesman, and was chiefly concerned for the safety of Benjamin, being his surety:

for he [was] yet there; Joseph was yet at his own house, was not as yet gone to the granaries, to look after the affairs of the corn, and the sale and distribution of it, but was waiting for the return of his brethren, which he expected quickly:

and they fell before him on the ground; not only in a way of reverence, again fulfilling his dream, but as persons in the utmost distress and affliction, throwing themselves at his feet for mercy.

Ver. 15. *And Joseph said unto them, what deed is this ye have done?* etc.] An action so wicked, base, and ungrateful, attended with such aggravated circumstances, that it can scarcely be said how bad a one it is, and may be well wondered at, that men who had received such favours could ever be guilty of; this he said, putting on a stern countenance, and seemingly in great anger and wrath:

wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? either that he could divine himself, though not by the cup, of which here no mention is made, but in some other way used by the Egyptians; or that he had diviners with him, as Aben Ezra, with whom he could consult, to find out the person that took the cup; or surely they must needs think that such a man as he, who had such great knowledge of things, natural and political, and whose name was Zaphnathpaaneah, a revealer of secrets, would be able to search into and find out an affair of this kind; (see Gill on ^{<0445>}Genesis 41:45"); and they might well conclude, that a man so sagacious and penetrating would easily conjecture who were the persons that took away his cup, even the strangers that had dined with him so lately, and therefore could never expect to go off with it.

Ver. 16. *And Judah said, what shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak?* etc.] Signifying that they were nonplussed, confounded, knew not what to say; they could not acknowledge guilt, for they were not conscious of any, and yet could not deny the fact, the cup being found on one of them; and though they might have a suspicion of fraud, yet were afraid to

speak out what they suspected, and therefore were at the utmost loss to express themselves:

or how shall we clear ourselves? to assert their innocence signified nothing, here was full proof against them, at least against their brother Benjamin:

God hath found the iniquity of thy servants; brought it to their remembrance, fastened the guilt of it on their consciences, and in his providence was bringing them to just punishment for it; meaning not the iniquity of taking away the cup, which they were not conscious of, but some other iniquity of theirs they had heretofore been guilty of, and now God was contending with them for it; particularly the iniquity of selling Joseph; this was brought to their minds before, when in distress, and now again, (see ~~Gen 42:21~~ Genesis 42:21):

behold, we [are] my lord's servants, both we, and [he] also with whom the cup is found; hereby fulfilling his dream more manifestly than ever; for, by bowing down to the earth to him, they might be thought to do no other than what all did, that came to buy corn of him; but here they own themselves to be his servants, and him to be lord over them, and to have dominion over them all, and them to be his slaves and bondmen.

Ver. 17. *And he said, God forbid that I should do so,* etc.] This would be doing an unjust thing, Joseph suggests, should he take them all for bondmen, for the offence of one:

[but] the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; not die, as they had supposed, but become his servant:

and as for you, get ye up in peace unto your father; they had leave, yea, an order to return to their father in the land of Canaan, with their corn and cattle, in peace and plenty; there being no charge against them, nor would any hurt or damage come to them: this Joseph said to try their affection to their brother Benjamin, and see whether they would leave him to distress, and then he should know better how to conduct both towards him and them.

Ver. 18. *Then Judah came near unto him,* etc.] Being the spokesman of his brethren, and the surety of Benjamin: he plucked up a spirit, put on courage, and drew nearer to the governor, and with much freedom and boldness, and in a very polite manner, addressed him:

and said, O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears; not admit him to private audience, or suffer him to whisper something to him, but give him the hearing of a few words he had to say to him:

and let not thine anger burn against thy servant; do not be displeased with his boldness, and the freedom he takes, but hear him patiently:

for thou [art] even as Pharaoh; next, if not equal in power and authority with him; could exercise justice or show mercy, punish or release from punishment, at his pleasure; and having leave granted him, he began his speech, and made the following narrative.

Ver. 19. *My lord asked his servants*, etc.] The first time they came down to Egypt to buy corn; he puts him in mind of what passed between them at that time:

saying, have ye a father or a brother? which question followed upon their saying that they were the sons of one man, (^{<0421>}Genesis 42:11 43:7).

Ver. 20. *And we said unto my lord, we have a father*, etc.] Yet living in the land of Canaan:

an old man; being one hundred and thirty years of age, (^{<0479>}Genesis 47:9);

and a child of his old age; who was born when he was near an hundred years of age: and

a little one; not in stature, but in age, being the youngest son, and much younger than they: so they represented him, on that account, and because he was tenderly brought up with his father, and not inured to business and hardship, and so unfit to travel:

and his brother is dead; meaning Joseph: so they thought him to be, having not heard of him for twenty two years or more, and they had so often said he was dead, or suggested as much, that they at length believed he was:

and he alone is left of his mother; the only child left of his mother Rachel:

and his father loveth him; being his youngest son, and the only child of his beloved Rachel, and therefore most dear unto him.

Ver. 21. *And thou saidst unto thy servants, bring him down unto me*, etc.] Judah does not relate the reason of his order, which was to give proof that

they were no spies, but as if Joseph designed to show favour to Benjamin, as undoubtedly he did:

that I may set mine eyes upon him; not barely see him, as Aben Ezra interprets it, though that would be, and was, very desirable by him, and agreeable to him; but he desired to set his eyes upon him, not only for his own pleasure, but for the good of Benjamin, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; he intimated that he should receive him kindly, show favour unto him, and use him well: the Septuagint version is, “and I will take care of him”: Joseph’s brethren had told him, that Benjamin was at home with their father, who they suggested was afraid to let him go with them, lest evil should befall him; wherefore to encourage him to let him go with them, Joseph promised to take care of him, that no hurt should be done to him, but he should be provided with everything that was proper and necessary; and this Judah improves into an argument with the governor in favour of Benjamin, that since he desired his coming, in order to show him a kindness, he hoped he would not detain him, and make a slave of him.

Ver. 22. *And we said unto my lord, the lad cannot leave his father*, etc.] That is, his father will not be willing to part with him:

for [if] he should leave his father, [his father] would die; with grief and trouble, fearing some evil was befallen him, and he should see him no more.

Ver. 23. *And thou saidst unto thy servants*, etc.] In answer to the representation of things made by them, and notwithstanding that:

except your youngest brother come down with you, you shall see my face no more; which though not before related in the discourse, which passed between Joseph and his brethren, in express terms, yet might be justly inferred from what he said; nay, might be expressed in so many words, though not recorded, and as it seems plainly it was, as appears from (^{ORIG}Genesis 43:3).

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when we came unto thy servant my father*, etc.] In the land of Canaan:

we told him the words of my lord; what he had said to them, particularly respecting Benjamin.

Ver. 25. *And our father said*, etc.] After some time, when the corn was almost consumed they had bought in Egypt:

go again, [and] buy us a little food; that may suffice till the famine is over; (see ^{<040>}Genesis 43:1).

Ver. 26. *And we said, we cannot go down*, etc.] With any safety to their persons, which would be in danger, or with any profit to their families, since their end in going down to buy corn would not be answered:

if our youngest brother be with us, then will we go down; let it be agreed to, that Benjamin go along with us, to Egypt, and then no difficulty will be made of it:

for we may not see the man's face, except our youngest brother [be] with us; the face of the great man, the governor of Egypt; for that this phrase, "the man", is not used diminutively, but as expressive of grandeur, is clear, or otherwise it would never have been made use of in his presence, and in such a submissive and polite speech as this of Judah's.

Ver. 27. *And thy servant my father said unto us*, etc.] When thus pressed to let Benjamin go with them:

ye know that my wife bare me two [sons]; Rachel, by whom he had Joseph and Benjamin, and whom he calls his wife, she being his only lawful wife; Leah was imposed upon him, (^{<020>}Genesis 29:20-30); and the other two were concubines, (^{<030>}Genesis 30:4,9).

Ver. 28. *And the one went out from, me*, etc.] Being sent by him to see how his brethren did, who were feeding his flocks at Shechem, and he had never returned to him to that day:

and I said, surely he is torn in pieces; by some wild beast; this he said on sight of his coat, being shown him all bloody:

and I saw him not since; now twenty two years ago; for though Joseph was not such a great way off his father, especially if he was at Memphis, as some think; yet what through his confinement as a servant in Potiphar's house, and then for some years in prison, and through the multiplicity of business when advanced in Pharaoh's court, he had no leisure and opportunity of visiting his father; and especially so it was ordered by the providence of God that he should not, that he might be made known at the most proper time for the glory of God, and the good of his family.

Ver. 29. *And if ye take this also from me*, etc.] His son Benjamin, as he perhaps suspected they had taken Joseph, and made away with him:

and mischief befall him; either in Egypt, or on the road, going or returning, any ill accident, especially death, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, or what may issue in it:

ye shall bring my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave; it would be the means of his death, and while he lived he should be full of sorrow and grief; (see ^{<0428>}Genesis 42:38).

Ver. 30. *Now therefore, when I come to thy servant my father*, etc.] That is, should he return to him in the land of Canaan with the rest of his brethren:

and the lad [be] not with us; his brother Benjamin, so called here, and in the following verses, though thirty years of age and upwards, (see ^{<0438>}Genesis 43:8);

seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life; he is as closely united to him in affection, and is as dear to him as his own soul; quite wrapped up in him, and cannot live without him; should he die, he must die too; (see ^{<0981>}1 Samuel 18:1); so it follows:

Ver. 31. *It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad [is] not [with us], that he will die*, etc.] As soon as ever he sees us, without asking any question and observes that Benjamin is missing he will conclude at once that he is dead, which will so seize his spirits, that he will expire immediately:

and thy servants shall bring down the gray hairs of thy servant, our father, with sorrow to the grave; as he said would be the case, (^{<0429>}Genesis 44:29); and which would be very afflicting to his sons to be the cause of it, and could not be thought of without the utmost uneasiness and distress.

Ver. 32. *For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father*, etc.] Which is another argument used for the release of Benjamin, though he should be detained for him, which he offers to be:

saying, if I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame unto my father for ever; (see Gill on "^{<0439>}Genesis 43:9").

Ver. 33. *Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord*, etc.] Being, as Jarchi observes preferable to Benjamin for strength, for war, and for service: in this Judah was a type of Christ, from whose tribe he sprung, who became the surety of God's Benjamins, his children who are beloved by him, and as dear to him as his right hand, and put himself in their legal place and stead, and became sin and a curse for them, that they might go free, as Judah desired his brother Benjamin might, as follows:

and let the lad go up with his brethren; from Egypt to Canaan's land, to their father there.

Ver. 34. *For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad [be] not with me?* etc.] Signifying that he must abide in Egypt, and chose to do it, and could not go up to the land of Canaan any more or see his father's face without Benjamin along with him, to whom he was a surety for him:

lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father; see him die, or live a life of sorrow worse than death: this he could not bear, and chose rather to be a slave in Egypt, than to be the spectator of such an affecting scene. By this speech of Judah, Joseph plainly saw the great affection which his brethren, especially Judah, had for his father and his brother Benjamin, as well as the sense they had of their evil in selling him, which lay uppermost on their minds, and for which they thought themselves brought into all this trouble; wherefore he could no longer conceal himself from them, but makes himself known unto them, which is the principal subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 45

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 45

This chapter contains an account of Joseph's making himself known to his brethren, which was done when they were alone, (^{<0451>}Genesis 45:1-4); when he encouraged them not to distress themselves on account of their selling him into Egypt, for God in his providence had sent him there for their good, (^{<0455>}Genesis 45:5-8); and he ordered them to go forthwith to Canaan, and acquaint his father with all the honour and glory they saw him in, and to desire him to come thither to him, where he should be provided for during the five years of famine yet to come, in the best part of the land of Egypt, (^{<0459>}Genesis 45:9-13); upon which he expressed the strongest affection to Benjamin, and to all his brethren, (^{<0454>}Genesis 45:14,15); the fame of this was soon spread in the house of Pharaoh, which gave the king great pleasure, who immediately expressed his earnest desire that his father might come and settle in Egypt, and ordered provisions to be sent him, and carriages to bring him down, and all that belonged to him, (^{<0456>}Genesis 45:16-20); and Joseph accordingly delivered to his brethren wagons and provisions for the way, and gave gifts to them, and sent a present to his father, and dismissed his brethren with an exhortation not to fall out by the way, (^{<0452>}Genesis 45:21-24); and when they came to Canaan, they acquainted their father with all these things, who at first could not believe them; but when he saw the wagons, his spirit revived, and determined to go and see his son, (^{<0453>}Genesis 45:25-28).

Ver. 1. *Then Joseph could not refrain himself*, etc.] That he should not weep, as the Targum of Jonathan adds; at least he could not much longer refrain from tears, such an effect Judah's speech had on his passions:

before all them that stood before him; his servants that attended him and waited upon him, the steward of his house, and others, upon whose account he put such a force upon himself, to keep in his passions from giving vent, that they might not discover the inward motions of his mind; but not being able to conceal them any longer,

and he cried; or called out with a loud voice, and an air of authority:

cause every man to go out from me; out of the room in which he and his brethren were; perhaps this order was given to the steward of the house to depart himself, and to remove every inferior officer and servant upon the spot; or other people that might be come in to hear the trial of those men, and to see how they would be dealt with:

and there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren; not that Joseph was ashamed of them, and of owning before them the relation he stood in to them; but that they might not see the confusion his brethren would be thrown into, and have knowledge of the sin they had been guilty of in selling him which could not fail of being mentioned by him, and confessed by them; and besides, it was not suitable to his grandeur and dignity to be seen in such an extreme passion he was now going into.

Ver. 2. *And he wept aloud*, etc.]; Or “gave forth his voice in weeping”^{f1788}; as he wept he cried aloud; for having put such a violent restraint on himself, as the flood of tears was the greater, so his voice was the stronger and louder for it:

and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard; the Egyptians, that were in the room or rooms adjoining to that where Joseph was, heard his cry, and perhaps a great deal of what was said; which they soon reported to others, and it quickly reached Pharaoh’s court, which might not be at any great distance.

Ver. 3. *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I [am] Joseph*, etc.] As soon as he could compose himself a little, and utter his words, the first thing he said was, that he was Joseph; that was his right name, his Hebrew name; though he was called by the Egyptians Zaphnathpaaneah, and by which name Joseph’s brethren only knew him, if they knew his name at all; and it must be very startling to them to bear this sound, and to be told by himself that that was his name; and which was not all he meant and they understood, but that he was Joseph their brother as afterwards expressed:

doth my father yet live? this he knew before, for they had told him he was alive; wherefore he puts this question not through ignorance, or as doubting but to express his affliction for his father, and his joy that he was alive:

and his brethren could not answer him; they were so surprised and astonished; they were like men thunderstruck, they were not able to utter a word for awhile:

for they were troubled at his presence; the sin of selling him came fresh into their minds, the guilt of it pressed their consciences, and the circumstances that Joseph was in filled them with fear that he would avenge himself on them.

Ver. 4. *And Joseph said unto his brethren, come near to me, I pray you,* etc.] Very probably Joseph sat in a chair of state while they were under examination, and through reverence of him they kept at a proper distance; or being frightened at what he had said, he might observe them drawing back, as Jarchi remarks, and so encourages them in a kind and tender manner to return and come nearer to him, and the rather, that they might more privately converse together without being overheard; as also that they might, by approaching him discern and call to mind some of his features still remaining, by which they might be assured he was Joseph indeed:

and they came near, and he said, I [am] Joseph your brother; not only his name was Joseph, but he was that Joseph that was their brother; he claims and owns the relation between them, which must be very affecting to them, who had used him so unkindly:

whom ye sold into Egypt: which is added, not so much to put them in mind of and upbraid them with their sin, but to assure them that he was really their brother Joseph; which he could not have related had he not been he, as well as to lead on to what he had further to say to them for their comfort.

Ver. 5. *Now therefore be not grieved,* etc.] To an excess, so as to be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; otherwise it became them to be grieved for their sin, and to show a godly sorrow and true repentance for it:

nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; reflect upon themselves, and afflict themselves in an immoderate way; or break forth into anger and wrath with one another, upbraiding and blaming each other for their conduct in that affair, and so foment contentions and quarrels among themselves:

for God did send me before you to preserve life; the life of thousands of persons in Egypt, Canaan, and other countries; and particularly to preserve their lives was he sent before them into Egypt; where, by interpretation Pharaoh's dreams, by which he understood and did foretell the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine, he was to great honour and trust, and laid up a sufficiency of corn in the time of plenty to answer the exigencies of various countries in the time of famine, and, among the rest, of his own family; and therefore would have this attributed by them to the wise disposing providence of God.

Ver. 6. *For these two years [hath] the famine [been], in the land*, etc.] In the land of Egypt and in the countries round about:

and yet [there are] five years; still remaining, which he knew by the above dreams and the interpretation of them:

in the which [there shall] neither [be] earing nor harvest; that is, no tillage of land, neither ploughing nor sowing, and so no reaping, or gathering in of the fruits of the earth, as used to be in harvest; at least, there would be very little ground tilled, only it may be on the banks of the Nile, since they had no corn to spare for seed; and besides, as the Egyptians knew by Joseph's prediction that the Nile would not overflow, it was to no purpose to attempt to plough their land, which through seven years of drought was become very difficult, or to sow, could they get the seed into the ground, since there was no likelihood of its springing up again.

Ver. 7. *And God sent me before you*, etc.] This he repeats to impress the minds of his brethren with a sense of the good providence of God in bringing him to Egypt before them, to make provision for their future welfare, and to alleviate their grief, and prevent an excessive sorrow for their selling him into Egypt, when by the overruling hand of God it proved so salutary to them:

to preserve you a posterity in the earth; that they and theirs might not perish, which otherwise, in all human probability, must have been the case; and that the promise of the multiplication of Abraham's seed might not be made of none effect, but continue to take place, from whence the Messiah was to spring:

and to save your lives by a great deliverance; from the extreme danger they were exposed unto, through the terrible famine, and in which

deliverance were to be observed the great wisdom, goodness, power, and providence of God.

Ver. 8. *So now [it was] not you [that] sent me hither, but God,* etc.]

Which is to be understood not absolutely, as if they had no concern at all in sending him thither; they sold him to the Ishmaelites, who brought him down to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, and so were instrumental in his coming to Egypt; but comparatively, it was not they so much as God that sent him; whose providence directed, disposed, and overruled all those events, to bring Joseph to this place, and to such an high station, to answer the purposes and designs of God in providing for and preserving Jacob's family in a time of distress:

and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh: to be a teacher to him, as Aben Ezra, that is, to be his counsellor, to advise him well in all things, as a father his children; or to be his partner and patron, as Jarchi, to have a share with him in power and authority, and to be reckoned as a father to him, (see ^{<044>}Genesis 41:43); and to provide for him and the welfare of his kingdom, as parents do for their children: the following phrases explain it of rule and government; and the meaning is, that he was a great man, and a prince ^{f1789} in Pharaoh's court:

and lord of all his house; his prime minister, chief counsellor and courtier:

and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt; to whom all the deputies of the several provinces were subject under Pharaoh, and especially in the affair of the corn.

Ver. 9. *Haste you, and go up to my father,* etc.] In Canaan, which lay higher than Egypt; being desirous he should know as soon as possible that he was alive, and in what circumstances he was:

and say unto him, thus saith thy son Joseph; without any title, such as the father and counsellor of Pharaoh and governor of Egypt, only Joseph his son, which would be enough to revive the heart of Jacob:

God hath made me lord over all Egypt: his exaltation to this dignity he ascribes, not to Pharaoh, but to God; civil honour and promotion to worldly grandeur and dignity are from God, and not from man:

come down unto me, tarry not; the great business on his hands not permitting him to go to his father and fetch him to Egypt, he desires that he

would come to him without delay, which would be greatly to the advantage of him and his family, and to their mutual comfort.

Ver. 10. *And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen*, etc.] Called by Artapanus^{f1790} Kaisan or Kessan; the Septuagint version Gesan of Arabia, as it was that part of Egypt which bordered on Arabia: it seems to be the same with the land of Rameses, (see ^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11); and the Heliopolitan home, which, Strabo^{f1791} says, was reckoned to be in Arabia, and in which were both the city of Heliopolis and the city Heroopolis, according to Ptolemy^{f1792}; for in the Septuagint version of (^{<0458>}Genesis 46:28), instead of Goshen is Heroopolis, or the city of the Heroes in the land of Rameses, with which agrees Josephus^{f1793}: wherefore Dr. Shaw^{f1794} observes, the land of Rameses or Goshen could be no other than the Heliopolitan home, taking in that part of Arabia which lay bounded near Heliopolis by the Nile, and near Heroopolis by the correspondent part of the Red Sea. Now either before this time Joseph had got a grant of this country, of Pharaoh, to dispose of at pleasure, or he had so much power and authority of himself as to put his father into it: or it may be, it was the domains of his father in law the priest of On, since On or Onii, according to Ptolemy^{f1795}, was the metropolis of the Heliopolitan home, and by some thought to be Heliopolis itself, and perhaps might be Joseph's own country, which he had with the daughter of the priest of On: indeed if what the Jewish writers say^{f1796}, that Pharaoh, king of Egypt in Abraham's time, gave to Sarah the land of Goshen for an inheritance, and therefore the Israelites dwelt in it, because it was Sarah their "mother's"; it would account for Joseph's proposing to put them into the possession of it without the leave of Pharaoh; but Goshen seems to have been in the grant of Pharaoh, who agreed and confirmed what Joseph proposed, (^{<0456>}Genesis 47:6);

and thou shalt be near unto me; as he would be in Goshen, if Memphis was the royal seat at this time, as some think^{f1797}, and not Tanis or Zoan; or Heliopolis, or both, in their turn; and Artapanus^{f1798} is express for it, that Memphis was the seat of that king of Egypt, in whose court Moses was brought up; and especially Heliopolis, may be thought to be so, if Joseph dwelt at On or Heliopolis, where his father in law was priest or prince, which was near if not in Goshen itself: and according to Bunting^{f1799}, On or Oni was the metropolis of Goshen; and Leo Africanus says^{f1800}, that the sahidic province, in which was Fium, where the Israelites dwelt,

(see ^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11), was the seat of the nobility of the ancient Egyptians:

thou and thy children, and thy children's children: for Jacob's sons had all of them children, even Benjamin the youngest, as appears from the following chapter:

and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast; and Goshen, being a place of pasturage, was fit and suitable for them; and so Josephus says ^{f1801}, of Heliopolis, which he takes to be the place where Jacob was placed, that there the king's shepherds had their pastures.

Ver. 11. *And there will I nourish thee*, etc.] Provide for him and his family: *for yet [there are] five years of famine*; still to come, two of the seven only being past:

lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty; his whole posterity be consumed, as it would be in all probability, if he did not procure food for his family during the famine.

Ver. 12. *And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin*, etc.] They were eyewitnesses of his being alive, having themselves seen him, and even Benjamin, who could not be suspected by his father of a fraud in imposing on him; and some of them could doubtless remember his features, and had an ocular proof of his being the very person, which they could with great evidence relate unto Jacob; as also his voice in speaking:

that [it is] my mouth that speaketh unto you; without an interpreter, as Aben Ezra, and in the Hebrew language, as the Targum and Jarchi; which might confirm them, and likewise their father upon their report, that the governor was not an Egyptian, but an Hebrew; and by that and other concurrent testimonies that he must be Joseph.

Ver. 13. *And you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt*, etc.] His wealth and riches, his grandeur and dignity, his power and authority:

and of all that you have seen; what a magnificent house he dwelt in; what a numerous train of servants he had; in what majesty he rode in the second chariot to the king; and what authority he exercised over the people, and what reverence they gave him, and what power he had, particularly in the distribution of corn:

and ye shall haste, and bring down my father hither; for Joseph had an eager desire to see him, wherefore this is repeated.

Ver. 14. *And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck and wept*, etc.] On his neck first, because he was his own brother by father and mother's side; and he wept over him for joy that he had a sight of him once more: the word for "neck" is in the plural number, and being used, may signify that he fell first on one side of his neck, and then on the other, to show his great affection for him:

and Benjamin wept upon his neck; their love and the tokens of it were reciprocal.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, he kissed all his brethren*, etc.] In their turns, to testify his real affection for them, and hearty reconciliation to them:

and wept upon them; that is, upon their necks, as he had on Benjamin's:

and after that his brethren talked with him: being emboldened by this carriage of his to them, and encouraged to believe that he really forgave them their sin against him, and was truly reconciled unto them, and had a real affection for them, and had no reason to fear he would avenge himself on them: they entered into a free conversation, and talked of their father and their family, and the concerns of it, and of what passed since the time he was separated from them.

Ver. 16. *And the fame thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house*, etc.] The report was carried to court, and there it was told by some from Joseph's house, who had overheard what had passed, at least somewhat of it:

saying, Joseph's brethren are come; perhaps they might call him by his Egyptian name, though the historian gives him his Hebrew name, and which was his right name, and by which he was best known to the Hebrews, for whose sake chiefly he wrote:

and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants; for Joseph being greatly beloved both by the king and his courtiers, who are meant by his servants, they were glad of an opportunity of showing their further regard to him, by their respect and civilities to his relations and friends, who had been the means of providing for the welfare of the whole kingdom, and of saving all their lives; Pharaoh's expressions of pleasure on this occasion were, no doubt sincere, whatever were those of his courtiers; who might not so well

affect a stranger, and one that had been in a very low estate of life, to be raised above them, and have so much trust reposed in him, and honour conferred upon him, and might dissemble in their respect to Joseph before their sovereign; though such might be the prudence and affability of Joseph, and such the sense they had of their obligations to him in point of gratitude, that they might be really pleased to hear that his brethren were come; and the rather Pharaoh and his court might be the more delighted, because that it appeared that he came of a good family in Canaan; whereas they knew no more of him than of his having been a slave in Potiphar's house, and then cast into a prison for a crime charged upon him, out of which he was taken, and made the great man he was.

Ver. 17. *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph*, etc.] Who, it is highly probable, waited upon Pharaoh to acquaint him with the coming of his brethren; for it cannot be imagined that Pharaoh should say what follows upon a bare report, without having a further account of things from Joseph, or that he would neglect giving it, but take the first opportunity to inform him, whereupon he gave him the following order:

say unto thy brethren, this do ye; give them directions and instructions to do as follows:

lade your asses: with provisions for the present necessity of their father's household in Canaan, and for their journey back to Egypt:

and go, get you into the land of Canaan; with all the haste they could make.

Ver. 18. *And take your father, and your households*, etc.] Or families, for they were all married persons, and had children, and no doubt servants also: all were to be brought with them,

and come unto me; into his kingdom, to his metropolis, and to his palace, and into his presence:

and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt; the best things which it affords, and the best and most fruitful part of it, as he afterwards did, which was the land of Goshen:

and ye shall eat the fat of the land; the choicest fruits of the earth, such as were produced in fields and gardens; meaning that they should have the finest of the wheat for themselves, and the fattest pastures for their flocks.

Ver. 19. *Now thou art commanded, this do ye*, etc.] Had his orders from Pharaoh; had full power and authority to do the above things, and what follows: the sense Joseph Kimchi gives of this clause is, that Joseph was ordered by Pharaoh not to let any wagons go out of Egypt with corn, lest the Egyptians should want; but now Pharaoh said to him, though thou wert thus ordered, yet bid thy brethren do as follows:

take you wagons out of the land of Egypt: and lade them with corn, as the same writer observes; the Targum of Jonathan adds, which were drawn by oxen:

for your little ones, and for your wives: the wagons were to carry the women and children in when they returned:

and bring your father, and come; in one of the carriages, or in what way was most agreeable to him in his old age.

Ver. 20. *Also regard not your stuff*, etc.] Or “your vessels”^{f1802}, utensils, household goods; he would not have them to be concerned if they could not bring all their goods with them, but were obliged to leave some behind, and which, because of the distance of the way and difficulty of the road, lying through sandy deserts, could not well be brought, since there was enough to be had in the land of Egypt; therefore, as it may be rendered, “let not your eye spare”^{f1803}, or “pity”: do not be grieved at it, or say it is a pity to leave these good things behind. Some render and explain the words just the reverse, “leave nothing of your household goods”^{f1804}; bring all away with you, as if he would not have them think of returning again, but of settling and continuing in Egypt; but this does not so well agree with what follows as the former sense does:

for the good of all the land of Egypt [is] yours: whatever good things were in it, whether for food or use for themselves, their houses, or their flocks, all were at their service, and they were welcome to them; or the best or most fruitful part of the country was designed for them, and would be given to them, or was at their option.

Ver. 21. *And the children of Israel did so*, etc.] As Pharaoh commanded, and Joseph from him directed them to do:

and Joseph gave them wagons, according to the commandment of Pharaoh: and beasts, either horses or oxen to draw them, and these not

empty, though the principal use of them was to fetch his father and his family, and their goods:

and gave them provision for the way: both going and returning, as much as would suffice for both.

Ver. 22. *To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment*, etc.] Rich apparel, two suits of clothes, to shift and change upon occasion, such as Homer^{f1805} calls *ὑμᾶτια ἐξαμειβα*, “changeable garments”; those he gave to everyone of his brethren, partly that they might have something to show to their father and to their wives, which would cause them to give credit to the report they should give of Joseph, and his great prosperity; and partly that they might, upon their return, be provided with suitable apparel to appear before Pharaoh, and chiefly this was intended to show his great respect and affection for them, and reconciliation to them:

but to Benjamin he gave three hundred [pieces] of silver; or shekels, as the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan, which amounted to between thirty and forty pounds of our money; the Septuagint very wrongly renders it three hundred “pieces of gold”; and besides these he gave him also

five changes of raiment; because of his greater love and affection for him.

Ver. 23. *And to his father he sent after this [manner]*, etc.] Or “according to” this^{f1806}; either in like manner, as he gave his brethren change of raiment, etc. so he sent the like to him, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech interpret it, referring it to what goes before; or rather as Jarchi, according to this account or number, even which follows: namely,

ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt: the best things the land afforded; the Targum of Jonathan says with wine, but that Egypt did not abound with; and so Jarchi, out of the Talmud, observes, that it was old wine that was sent, such as is agreeable to ancient men:

and ten she asses laden with corn; not made up into bread, next mentioned, and so distinguished from it:

and bread: ready made and baked:

and meat for his father by the way; food and fruit of various sorts; Aben Ezra reckons many, peas, beans, lentils, millet, fetches, figs, currants, and dates.

Ver. 24. *So he sent his brethren away, and they departed*, etc.] From Egypt to Canaan with the wagons, asses, and rich presents:

and he said unto them, see that ye fall not out by the way; the Targum of Jonathan adds, about the affair of selling me; which he had reason to fear they would, from what they, and particularly Reuben, had said in his presence, (~~(1027)~~ Genesis 42:21,22); he was jealous this would be the subject of their discourse by the way, and that they would be blaming one another about it, and so fall into contentions and quarrels; that one would say it was owing to the reports of such an one concerning him, that they entertained hatred against him; that it was such an one that advised to kill him, and such an one that stripped him of his clothes, and such an one that put him into the pit, and such an one that was the cause of his being sold; and thus shifting of things from one to another, and aggravating each other's concern in this matter, they might stir up and provoke one another to wrath and anger, as the word used signifies, which might have a bad issue; to prevent which Joseph gives them this kind and good advice; and especially there was the more reason to attend to it, since he was reconciled unto them, and was desirous the whole should be buried in oblivion.

Ver. 25. *And they went up out of Egypt*, etc.] That lying lower than the land of Canaan:

and came into the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father; they found him alive and well.

Ver. 26. *And told him*, etc.] What had happened to them in Egypt:

saying, Joseph [is] yet alive; who was thought by him and them to have been dead long ago:

and he [is] governor over all the land of Egypt; deputy governor, and had such power and authority that nothing was done without his order; the executive power or administration of government was put into his hands, and all the officers of the kingdom were under him, he was next to Pharaoh:

and Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not; it was too great and too good news to be true; though it was desirable, it was unexpected; it amazed him, he knew not what to think, or say or believe about it; there was such a conflict of the passions in him, that he could not compose

himself, or reason with himself about it; and what might serve the more to hinder his belief of it was, that this report of theirs was contrary to what they themselves had before related of his death; and very likely upon the mention of the thing he fell into a swoon, and was not himself for a while; and when he came a little to himself, they went on with their account, as follows.

Ver. 27. *And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them,* etc.] Not concerning their selling of him, and his forgiveness of them, and reconciliation to them, which perhaps Jacob never heard of to his dying day, since he makes no mention of it, nor hints at it in his dying words to them; but of his great advancement in the court of Pharaoh, and how desirous he was to have his father and family with him, and provide for them, since there were five years of famine yet to come:

and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, and his sons wives and children, down to Egypt in; and which were so grand and magnificent, that he was easily persuaded could never have been provided by his sons, if what they had said concerning Joseph was not true: and then

the spirit of Jacob their father revived: not the Holy Spirit, or spirit of prophecy, as the Targums, which the Jews say departed from him, and had not been with him since the loss of Joseph, but now returned; but his own natural spirit, he became lively and cheerful, giving credit to the report of his sons.

Ver. 28. *And Israel said, [it is] enough, Joseph my son [is] yet alive,* etc.]. Or it is “much” or “great”^{f1807}; he had much joy, as the Targums; this was the greatest blessing of all, and more to him than all the glory and splendour that Joseph was in; that he was alive, that was enough for Jacob, which gave him content and pleasure; not so much the news of his grandeur in Egypt, as of his being in the land of the living:

I will go and see him before I die; though his age was great, the journey long and difficult, so great was his desire of seeing Joseph, that he determines at once upon going, expecting death shortly: no doubt but this was said in submission to the will of God, and in seeking him by prayer and supplication, and in the exercise of faith, believing that God would grant him his desire, than which nothing in life could be more desirable to him, and he only wished to live to enjoy this favour. In Joseph’s making himself known unto his brethren, he was a type of Christ, who manifests himself to

his people alone, and as he does not unto the world, saying unto them, that he is Jesus the Saviour, their friend and brother, and whom they crucified, whose sins were the cause of his sufferings; and yet encourages them to draw nigh unto him with an humble and holy boldness, giving them abundant reason to believe that he will receive them kindly, seeing that all that were done to him were by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God, and for their good, even for their eternal salvation; and that they might not perish, but have everlasting life; and to whom he now gives change of raiment, riches and honour, yea, durable riches and righteousness; and declares it to be his will, that where he is, they may be also, and behold his glory: and this is sufficient to engage them to reckon all their worldly enjoyments as mere stuff, contemptible things in comparison of the good and glories of another world they are hastening to, where there will be fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; and therefore should not fall out by the way, as they too often do.

CHAPTER 46

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 46

In this chapter we are told, that Jacob with all his family and substance took a journey to Egypt to see his son Joseph, as he determined, in which he was encouraged to proceed by a vision from God, (~~Q46B~~Genesis 46:1-7); and an account is given of all his sons, his sons' sons and daughters that went thither with him, (~~Q46B~~Genesis 46:8-27); when he came near to Egypt he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to acquaint him of his coming, who met him at Goshen, where there was a most affectionate interview between them, (~~Q46B~~Genesis 46:28-30); and when he gave directions and instructions what answers to give to Pharaoh's questions, when they should appear before him, to whom he proposed to go and inform him of their being come into Egypt, (~~Q46B~~Genesis 46:31-34).

Ver. 1. *And Israel took his journey with all that he had*, etc.] Set forward in it immediately, as soon as possible after he had resolved to take it, and with him he took all his children and grandchildren, and all his cattle and goods; which shows that he took his journey not only to see his son Joseph, but to continue in Egypt, at least during the years of famine, as his son desired he would, otherwise there would have been no occasion of taking all along with him:

and came to Beersheba: where he and his ancestors Abraham and Isaac had formerly lived; a place where sacrifices had often been offered up, and the worship of God performed, and much communion enjoyed with him. This is said to be sixteen miles from Hebron^{f1808}, where Jacob dwelt, and according to Musculus was six German miles from it:

and offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac; which were attended with prayer and praise; with praise for hearing that his son Joseph was alive, and with prayer that he might have a good, safe, and prosperous journey.

Ver. 2. *And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night*, etc.] He appeared to Jacob as he lay upon his bed in the night season, and with an articulate voice spoke to him as follows:

and said, Jacob, Jacob: not “Israel”, the more honourable name he had given him, but Jacob, putting him in mind of his former low estate; and doubling this name, either out of love and affection to him, as Jarchi intimates; or rather in order to awake him, at least to stir up his attention to what he was about to say to him:

and he said, here [am] I; signifying his readiness to hearken to him in what he should say to him, and to obey him in whatsoever he should command him.

Ver. 3. *And he said, I [am] God, the God of thy father,* etc.] His father Isaac, who was now dead, and who is the rather mentioned, because in him Abraham’s seed was to be called, and in his line the promise both of the land of Canaan, and of the Messiah, ran, and from him Jacob received the blessing; and this might be a confirmation of it to him, in that Jehovah calls himself his God; he first declares himself to be his God, and so able to perform whatever he should promise him, and his father’s God, who would show him favour, as he had to him:

fear not to go down into Egypt; Jacob might have many fears arise in his mind about this journey, as interpreters generally observe; as lest it should not be agreeable to the will of God, since his father Isaac was forbidden to go into Egypt, when in like circumstances with him, (^{<120>}Genesis 26:1,2); as well as he, might fear it would be too great a journey for him in his old age, some evil would befall him, or he die by the way and not see his son; or lest going with his family thither, and there continuing for some time, they might be tempted with the pleasantness and fruitfulness of the land, and settle there, and forget and neglect the promised land of Canaan; and especially lest they should be drawn into the idolatry of the Egyptians, and forsake the worship of the true God; and very probably he might call to mind the prophecy delivered to Abraham, of his seed being strangers and servants, and afflicted in a land not theirs for the space of four hundred years, (^{<153>}Genesis 15:13); and Jacob might fear this step he was now taking would bring on, as indeed it did, the completion of this prediction, by which his offspring would be oppressed and diminished. The Targum of Jonathan makes this to be Jacob’s principal fear;

“fear not to go down into Egypt, because of the business of the servitude decreed with Abraham;”

as also he might fear his going thither might seem to be a giving up his title to, and expectation of the promised land: to remove which fears the following is said,

for I will there make of thee a great nation: as he did; for though in process of time his seed were greatly afflicted here, yet the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied; and their increase in Egypt was vastly greater than it had been in a like space of time before; for in the space of two hundred fifteen years before their descent into Egypt, they were become no more than seventy persons, whereas in the like number of years in Egypt, they became 600,000, besides children; (see ^{f1807}Genesis 46:27) (^{f1808}Exodus 12:37).

Ver. 4. *I will go down with thee into Egypt*, etc.] Which was enough to silence all his fears; for if the presence of God went with him to protect and defend him, to bless and prosper him, and to direct, support, and comfort, he had nothing to fear from any quarter:

and I will also surely bring thee up [again]: Jarchi takes this to be a promise that he should be buried in the land of Canaan, which had its fulfilment, when his corpse was carried out of Egypt to Machpelah, and there interred; but rather this refers to the bringing up of his posterity from thence in due time, for which Jacob might be most solicitous, and so the Targum of Jonathan,

“and I will bring up thy children from thence:”

and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes: and so close them when he was dead; this, as Aben Ezra says, was a custom of the living to the dead, and it used to be done by the nearest relations and friends, though now with us commonly by strangers, or those that are not akin: this was a custom among the Greeks and Romans, as appears from Homer^{f1809}, Virgil^{f1810}, Ovid^{f1811}, and other writers^{f1812}; and so, among the Jews, Tobias is said to shut the eyes of his wife’s father and mother, and to bury them honourably,

“Where he became old with honour, and he buried his father and mother in law honourably, and he inherited their substance, and his father Tobit’s.” (Tobit 14:13)

Of the Vulgate Latin version: Maimonides^{f1813} reckons this of closing the eyes of the dead, among the rites used towards them, and so in the Talmud

^{f1814}: now by this expression Jacob was assured that Joseph was alive, and that he should live to see him, and that Joseph would outlive him, and do this last office for him; and, as Ben Melech observes, by this he had the good news told him that Joseph should remain behind him, to sustain and support his sons, and his sons' sons, all the years that he should live after him.

Ver. 5. *And Jacob rose up from Beersheba*, etc.] In high spirits, and proceeded on in his journey, being encouraged and animated by the promises of God now made unto him:

and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him; it may be wondered at that Joseph did not send his chariot to fetch his father; it could not be for want of due respect and honour to him, but it may be such a carriage was not fit for so long a journey, and especially to travel in, in some parts of the road through which they went: no mention being made of Jacob's wives, it may be presumed they were all now dead; it is certain Rachel was, (see ^{<0359>}Genesis 35:19); and it is more than probable at Leah died before this time, since Jacob says he buried her himself in Machpelah in Canaan, (^{<0481>}Genesis 49:31); and it is very likely also that his two concubine wives Bilhah and Zilpah were also dead, since no notice is taken of them.

Ver. 6. *And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan*, etc.] Some interpreters add, by way of explanation, and in Mesopotamia; much of Jacob's substance being yet there, though the greatest part was got in Canaan, and so that is put for the whole; and Jarchi supposes that Jacob gave all that he got in Padanaram to Esau for his part in the cave of Machpelah, and therefore mention is only made of his substance in Canaan; but there is no need of any such additions or suppositions, since the text only speaks of the substance of Jacob's sons, and what they had was only gotten in Canaan, into which they came very young; all which they brought with them as being their property, and not obliged to leave it behind to strangers; though they were bid not to regard their stuff, yet they were not willing to live upon others, but upon their own, and as much as they could independent of others; and that they might not be upbraided hereafter that they came into Egypt poor and destitute of everything:

and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him; safe and well.

Ver. 7. *His sons, and his sons' sons with him*, etc.] His eleven sons, and their sons, his grandchildren:

and his daughters; his own daughter Dinah, and his daughters in law, the wives of his sons; for these came with him into Egypt, as appears from (^{<0415>}Genesis 46:5); though the plural may be put for the singular, as in (^{<0423>}Genesis 46:23):

and his sons' daughters; and mention is made of Sarah the daughter of Asher, (^{<0417>}Genesis 46:17); Jarchi adds, Jochebed, the daughter of Levi, but it is certain she was born in Egypt, (^{<0459>}Numbers 26:59):

and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt; left none behind him in Canaan, son or daughter; no mention is made of servants, though no doubt many came along with him: the design of the historian is to give an account of Jacob's children, who they were, and their number, when they came into Egypt, that the increase of them might be observed.

Ver. 8. *And these [are] the names of the children of Israel which came into Egypt*, etc.] Not meaning precisely Jacob's seed and offspring, but the body of the people of Israel, as they were when they went into Egypt, including Jacob himself:

Jacob and his sons; for he went with them to Egypt, and was the head and principal of them:

Reuben, Jacob's firstborn; (see ^{<0122>}Genesis 29:32).

Ver. 9. *And the sons of Reuben, Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi*.] From whom came the families named after them, of which they were the heads, (^{<0415>}Numbers 26:5,6).

Ver. 10. *And the sons of Simeon*, etc.] Who was the second son of Jacob:

Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar; the first of these is called Nemuel, (^{<0432>}Numbers 26:12 ^{<1304>}1 Chronicles 4:24); the third, Ohad, is omitted in the places referred to, he dying without children, as may be supposed, and so was not the head of any family; and the fourth, Jachin, is called Jarib, (^{<1304>}1 Chronicles 4:24); and the fifth is called Zerah, in the above place, by a transposition of letters:

and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman; whom Simeon married, very probably after the death of his first wife, by whom he had the above five

sons, or she was his concubine: many Jewish writers ^{f1815} say, this was Dinah, married to a Canaanite, but this is impossible: according to the Targum of Jonathan, this Shaul was Zimri, who did the work of the Canaanites at Shittim, (^{<0254>}Numbers 25:14), which is not at all likely, the distance of time will not admit of it.

Ver. 11. *And the sons of Levi, Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.*] From these sprung the priests and Levites, (see ^{<0400>}Numbers 3:1-4).

Ver. 12. *And the sons of Judah, Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez, and Zarah,* etc.] Five of them:

but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan; and so did not go with Jacob into Egypt; and which is observed that they might not be reckoned among them, though it was proper to take notice of them in the genealogy:

and the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul; some think that these could not be born in Canaan, but in Egypt; and that they are mentioned among those that went down to Egypt, because they went there in the loins of their father, and to supply the places of Er and Onan, who died before, and have the honour to be here named, because they might be the first of Jacob's great grandchildren born there; though others suppose that Pharez was at this time fourteen years of age, and instances are given of some, who before that age have been fathers of children; the difficulty is not easily solved: the Targum of Jonathan expressly says,

“Shelah and Zarah did not beget children in Canaan, but there were two sons of Pharez who went down into Egypt, Hezron and Hamul.”

Ver. 13. *And the sons of Issachar, Tola, and Phuvah; and Job, and Shimron.*] The first of these was the father of a numerous race in the days of David, their number was 22,600; (see Gill on “^{<0300>}1 Chronicles 7:2”); the second is called Puah, and the third Jashub, and the fourth Shimrom, (^{<0300>}1 Chronicles 7:1); and were all the heads of families, as appears from the places referred to.

Ver. 14. *And the sons of Zebulun, Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.*] Whose names are the same in (^{<0400>}Numbers 26:26).

Ver. 15. *These are the sons of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob in Padanaram,* etc.] Which must be restrained to the six sons only, who were

properly Leah's, and not to their sons' sons, for they were not born in Padanaram, but in Canaan:

with his daughter Dinah; who also was by Leah:

all the souls of his sons and daughters [were] thirty and three; that is, together with himself, or otherwise it will be difficult to give the exact number; if all before mentioned are to be reckoned there will be thirty four, wherefore some are for excluding Dinah; but she is not only expressly mentioned, but is the only one intended by his daughters here, the plural being put for the singular; and there is as much reason for retaining her here, as Sarah the daughter of Asher hereafter: some think Er and Onan are to be excluded, as indeed they are, because they died in the land of Canaan, and then there will be but thirty two; wherefore some are for adding Jochebed the daughter of Levi, but she is neither mentioned in the genealogy, nor did she go with Jacob into Egypt, but was born in Egypt long after: it seems best therefore to take Jacob himself into the account, as several Jewish writers do ^{f1816}, and who is expressly named and set at the head of this account, (^{<0448}Genesis 46:8), which will make thirty three.

Ver. 16. *And the sons of Gad*, etc.] A son of Jacob by Zilpah, Leah's maid; for the historian, before he proceeds to give an account of his sons by Rachel, finishes the account of all his sons by Leah and her maid;

Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, and Eri, and Arodi, and Areli; in all seven; the same number is given, and in the same order, (^{<0435}Numbers 26:15-17).

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Asher*, etc.] Another son of Jacob by Leah's maid Zilpah, whose sons were,

Jimnah, and Ishuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister; who is called Sarah, (^{<0436}Numbers 26:46), and by the Septuagint here. She seems to have been a person of some note, being so particularly remarked in both places:

and the sons of Beriah, Heber and Malchiel; this Beriah seems to be the youngest son of Asher, and yet had two sons; who, as the Targum of Jonathan adds, went down into Egypt; he must marry, and have sons when very young; the thing is not impossible: (see Gill on "^{<0442}Genesis 46:12");

Ver. 18. *These [are] the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter*, etc.] To be her maid, when she was married to Jacob, by whom he had Gad and Asher:

and these she bare unto Jacob, [even] sixteen souls; not that Zilpah bare sixteen children to Jacob, for she bore but two; but the children and grandchildren of these two with them made sixteen.

Ver. 19. *The sons Rachel, Jacob's wife*, etc.] The wife of his affection and choice, his principal wife, yea, his only lawful wife; Zilpah and Bilhah were his concubines, and as for Leah, she was imposed and forced upon him:

Joseph and Benjamin; the first was in Egypt already, the other now went down with Jacob.

Ver. 20. *And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim*, etc.] And therefore not to be reckoned with those that went down with Jacob thither; for which reason the clause, “in the land of Egypt”, is inserted, (see ^{<0415>}Genesis 41:50);

which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On, bare unto him; here again the Targum of Jonathan makes Asenath to be the daughter of Dinah, who it says was educated in the house of Potipherah prince of Tanis; (see Gill on “^{<0415>}Genesis 41:50”).

Ver. 21. *And the sons of Benjamin*, etc.] The second son of Jacob by his wife Rachel; whose sons

[were] Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muphim, and Huphim, and Ard; in all one hundred and ten. It is a difficulty to account for it, that Benjamin, Jacob's youngest son, often called a lad at this time, and generally supposed to be about twenty three or four years of age, should have so many sons: some think he had more wives than one, which is not likely, since we never read of any of Jacob's sons that had more than one at a time; and others, that his sons were born twins, and so had them in a little time, which is a much better solution of the difficulty: but others are of opinion, that though the greater part of them might be born in Canaan, yet others might be born in Egypt; and being denominated from the greater part, and that being put for the whole, may be reckoned among the descendants into Egypt; and even those that were in Egypt, being born while Jacob was alive, might be said to descend there in his loins; which may be the best of the ways proposed for

removing this difficulty: though I should rather think they were all born before the descent into Egypt, the whole narrative seems to require this of them all; for otherwise many more might be, said to descend in the loins of Jacob, or in the loins of his sons, which would greatly increase the number of those said to go down with him, after mentioned: to which it may be added, that Benjamin was at least thirty two years of age, and so may very well be thought to have had these children before he went to Egypt.

Ver. 22. *These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob,* etc.] That is, sons and grandsons:

all the souls [were] fourteen; two sons, Joseph and Benjamin; twelve grandsons, two of Joseph's, and ten of Benjamin's.

Ver. 23. *And the sons of Dan, Hushim.*] He had but one son, wherefore the plural is put for the singular, (see ^{<1407>}Genesis 46:7,15); Aben Ezra thinks he had two sons, and that one of them was dead, and therefore not mentioned; but the other way best accounts for the expression; though, as Schmidt observes, the plural may be indefinitely put, and the sense be this, as for the sons of Dan, there was only one, whose name was Hushim. Dan was a son of Jacob by Bilhah, Rachel's maid, as the following was another.

Ver. 24. *And the sons of Naphtali, Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.*] The last is called Shallum in (^{<1373>}1 Chronicles 7:13).

Ver. 25. *These [are] the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter,* etc.] To be her maid, when she was married to Jacob:

and she bare these unto Jacob, all the souls [were] seven; not that she bare seven sons to Jacob, she bore but two, Dan and Naphtali; but the children of these with them made seven, one of Dan's, and four of Naphtali's, who went down with Jacob into Egypt.

Ver. 26. *All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt,* etc.] These are in parcels before mentioned, but here they are brought to a sum total; and by this phrase are excluded those that died before, as Er and Onan, and those that were in Egypt before, as Joseph and his two sons; and I should think also all that were born in Egypt afterwards, even while Jacob was living: those reckoned are only such,

which came out of his loins: such as were his seed and offspring. This is observed for the sake of what follows, and to exclude them:

besides Jacob's sons' wives; these do not come into the account, because they did not spring from him:

all the souls [were] threescore and six; thirty two of Leah's, leaving out Er and Onan, sixteen of Zilpah's, fourteen of Rachel's, and seven of Bilhah's, make sixty nine; take out of them Joseph and his two sons, who were in Egypt before, and you have the exact number of sixty six.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Joseph, which were born in Egypt, [were] two souls*, etc.] Ephraim and Manasseh; which is observed to show that they do not come into the above reckoning, but are to be taken into another that follows:

all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, [were] threescore and ten; here it may be observed, the phrase is varied; it is not said, "all the souls which came out of the loins of Jacob", but "all the souls of the house" or family of Jacob; all that that consisted of, and takes in Jacob himself, the head of his house or family; nor is it said, "which came with Jacob into Egypt", as before, but "which came into Egypt"; not which came with him thither, but yet were there by some means or another, as Joseph and his two sons; Joseph by being brought down, and sold there, and his two sons by being born there; if therefore Jacob, Joseph, and his two sons, are added to the above number of sixty six, it will make seventy; as for the account of Stephen, making the number seventy five, (see Gill on "~~4074~~ Acts 7:14").

Ver. 28. *And he sent Judah before him unto Joseph*, etc.] Who was the more honourable of his sons, and in greater esteem with Jacob than his elder brethren were, Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, who by their conduct had greatly displeased him: moreover, he was a man of a polite address, and had endeared himself to Joseph by his speech to him, in which he discovered so much affection both to his father, and his brother Benjamin, and was upon all accounts the fittest person to be sent to Joseph:

to direct his face unto Goshen; to inform Joseph of his father's coming, that a place might be prepared for him to dwell in, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem paraphrase it; and particularly to direct what place in Goshen he would have him come to, and meet him at:

and they came into the land of Goshen; which was the first part of the land of Egypt that lay nearest to Canaan: the Greek version of the whole verse is,

“he sent Judah before him to Joseph, to meet him at Heroopolis, or the city of the heroes, in the land of Rameses,”

which is confirmed by Josephus^{f1817}; (see Gill on “~~<0450>~~Genesis 45:10”).

Ver. 29. *And Joseph made ready his chariot*, etc.] Or “bound”^{f1818} it, fastened the horses to it, harnessed them, and put them to; this he did not himself, as Jarchi thinks, for the honour of his father; but rather, as Aben Ezra, by ordering his servants to do it:

and went up to meet Israel his father in Goshen; that being higher than the other part of Egypt, as it must be, if it was in Thebes, or upper Egypt, as some Jewish writers say^{f1819}; and Fium, supposed to be the place the Israelites dwelt in, (see ~~<0471>~~Genesis 47:11), stood very high^{f1820}:

and presented himself unto him; alighted from his chariot, and came up to his father, and stood before him, and showed himself to him, declaring who he was:

and he fell on his neck, and wept on his neck a good while: either Jacob fell on the neck of Joseph, and wept over him a good while before he could speak to him, as the father of the prodigal son fell on his neck and kissed him, (~~<0150>~~Luke 15:20); or, as Jarchi, Joseph fell on his father’s neck, as he had done upon his brethren before, but wept over him longer; their embraces were no doubt mutual and extremely affectionate, that for a while they were not able to speak a word to each other.

Ver. 30. *And Israel said unto Joseph*, etc.] He broke silence first:

now let me die, since I have seen thy face; not that he was impatient to die, and not desirous to live any longer; for it could not but yield pleasure to him, and make the remainder of his life more comfortable to live with such a son, his darling, and now in so much honour and grandeur; but this he said to express his great satisfaction at the sight of him, that he could now be content to die, having all his heart could wish for, an interview with his beloved son:

because thou [art] yet alive; whom he had looked upon as dead, and the receiving him now was as life from the dead, and could not but fill him with the greatest joy, (see ~~<0153>~~Luke 15:23,24,32); Jacob lived after this seventeen years, (~~<0478>~~Genesis 47:28).

Ver. 31. *And Joseph said unto his brethren, and to his father's house,* etc.] To them and their families, after he had paid his filial respects to his father, in honour, reverence, and affection:

I will go up and shew Pharaoh; acquaint him that his father and all his family were come to Egypt; he says, "I will go up"; which same phrase is used of him, (⁽¹⁴⁶⁾Genesis 46:29); when he came, and carries some difficulty in it how to account for it, that he should be said to go up when he came, and to go up when he returned. Some have thought of upper Egypt, others of the upper part of the Nile, and others, that Pharaoh's palace was situated on an eminence; but then, as it is to be supposed he went the same road he came, it would have been said, that when he came, he came down; what Ben Melech suggests seems most agreeable, I will go up to my chariot, mount that, and return to Pharaoh, and give him an account of his father's arrival, which it was very proper, prudent, and politic to do:

and say unto him, my brethren, and my father's house, which [were] in the land of Canaan, are come unto me; not merely to pay him a visit, but to continue there.

Ver. 32. *And the men [are] shepherds,* etc.] That was their occupation and employment, by which they got their livelihood. Joseph was not ashamed of the business his father and brethren followed, even though mean; and besides, such men were an abomination to the Egyptians: this he thought proper to tell Pharaoh, lest he should think of putting them into some offices of the court or army, which would expose them to the envy of the Egyptians, and might endanger the corruption of their religion and manners, as well as be the means of separating them one from another, which he was careful to guard against, as Josephus ^{f1821} the historian suggests:

for their trade hath been to feed cattle; this was what they were brought up to from their youth, and were always employed in, and for which only they were fit:

and they have brought their flocks and their herds, and all that they have; in order to carry on the same business, and lead the same course of life.

Ver. 33. *And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you,* etc.]. Order them to come before him, to see them, and have some conversation with them:

and shall say, what [is] your occupation? or your works^{f1822}, their business and employment, whether they exercised any manufacture or handicraft, and what it was.

Ver. 34. *That ye shall say, thy servants' trade hath been about cattle,* etc.] Breeding, feeding, and selling them:

from our youth, even until now: this had been their constant employment, they never followed any other:

both we, [and] also our fathers; their father, grandfather, and great grandfather, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were all of the same occupation:

that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; Joseph instructed his brethren to be very particular in the account of their occupation to Pharaoh, that it might be a direction to him how to dispose of them, and where to settle them, namely, in the land of Goshen; which was a country that abounded with good pasture, and so the fittest place for them to be fixed in: and besides this, Joseph had some other reasons for placing them there, as that they might be near to him, who might dwell at On or Heliopolis, to which place, or province, Goshen belonged; and that being also the nearest part of the land to Canaan, they might the more easily and sooner get away when there was an occasion for it; as well as he was desirous they should not be brought into the heart of the land, lest they should be corrupted with the superstition, and idolatry, and vices of the people; and being afar off, both from the court, and the body of the people, might be less subject to their contempt and insults, since it follows:

for every shepherd [is] an abomination unto the Egyptians; not because shepherds ate of the milk and flesh of the creatures they fed, which the Egyptians abstained from; for the Egyptians in those times did eat the flesh of slain beasts, (see ^{<0496>}Genesis 43:16,32); nor because they fed, and slew, and ate those creatures, which the Egyptians worshipped as gods, as Jarchi; for it does not appear that the Egyptians were so early worshippers of such creatures; nor is this phrase, “every shepherd”, to be understood of any other than foreign shepherds; for one of the three sorts of the people of Egypt, as distinct from, and under the king, priests, and soldiers, according to Diodorus Siculus^{f1823}, were shepherds, and were not despised on that account; for, as the same writer says, all the Egyptians were reckoned equally noble and honourable^{f1824}; and such it is plain there were in Egypt, in the times of Joseph, (see ^{<0476>}Genesis 47:6,16,17); and goat herds were

had in esteem and honour by those about Mendes, though swine herds were not ^{f1825}: wherefore this must be understood of foreign shepherds, the Egyptians having been greatly distressed by such, who either came out of Ethiopia, and lived by plunder and robbery ^{f1826}, or out of Phoenicia or Arabia; for, according to Manetho ^{f1827}, it was said that they were Arabians or Phoenicians who entered into Egypt, burnt their cities, etc. and set up kings of their own, called their Hycsi, or pastor kings: and therefore Joseph might the rather fear his brethren and father's family would be the more contemptible in that they came from Canaan, which was near to Arabia and Phoenicia; but Dr. Lightfoot ^{f1828} is of opinion, that the Egyptians, being plagued for Abraham's and Sarah's sake, made a law, that for the future none should converse with Hebrews, nor with foreign shepherds, so familiarly as to eat or drink with them.

CHAPTER 47

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 47

This chapter gives an account of the presentation of five of Joseph's brethren, and then of his father, to Pharaoh, and of what passed between them, (^{<0470>}Genesis 47:1-10); of Joseph's settlement of them, according to the direction of Pharaoh, in the land of Rameses in Goshen, and of his provision for them there, (^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11,12); of his getting into his hands, for Pharaoh, the money, cattle, and lands, of the Egyptians, excepting the lands belonging to the priests, for corn he had supplied them with, (^{<0473>}Genesis 47:13-22); of his giving them seed to sow with, on condition of Pharaoh's having a fifth part of the produce, (^{<0472>}Genesis 47:23-26), of the increase of Jacob's substance in Egypt, and that of his children; of the time of his living there, and his approaching death, when he called Joseph to him, and obliged him by an oath to bury him in the burying place of his fathers, (^{<0477>}Genesis 47:27-31).

Ver. 1. *Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh*, etc.] After he had been with his father, had had an interview with him, and had took his leave of him for a time, he came to Pharaoh's court:

and said, my father, and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; Pharaoh had desired they might come, and Joseph now acquaints him they were come; not being willing it should be said that they were come in a private manner, and without his knowledge; nor to dispose of them himself without the direction and approbation of Pharaoh, who was superior to him; and he makes mention of their flocks and herds, and other substance, partly to show that they were not a mean beggarly family that came to live upon him, and partly that a proper place of pasturage for their cattle might be appointed to them:

and behold, they [are] in the land of Goshen; they are stopped at present, until they should have further directions and orders where to settle; and this is the rather mentioned, because it was the place Joseph proposed with himself to fix them in, if Pharaoh approved of it.

Ver. 2. *And he took some of his brethren*, etc.] Along with him, when he left his father in Goshen; the word for “some” signifies the extremity of a thing: hence some have fancied that he took some of the meanest and most abject, so Jarchi, lest if they had appeared to Pharaoh strong and robust, he should have made soldiers of them; others on the contrary think he took those that excelled most in strength of body, and endowments of mind, to make the better figure; others, that he took of both sorts, or some at both ends, the first and last, elder and younger; but it may be, he made no choice at all, but took some that offered next:

[even] five men: whom the Targum of Jonathan names as follow, Zebulun, Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher; but Jarchi will have them to be Reuben, Simeon and Levi, Issachar and Benjamin; but on these accounts no dependence is to be had:

and presented them, unto Pharaoh; introduced them into his presence, that he might converse with them, and ask them what questions he thought fit.

Ver. 3. *And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, what [is] your occupation?* etc.] Which is the question he had told his brethren beforehand would be asked them, and prepared them to give an answer to it, (^{46:33}Genesis 46:33,34); which was perhaps an usual question Pharaoh asked of persons that came to settle in his dominions, that he might have no idle vagrants there, and that he might know of what advantage they were like to be of in his kingdom, and might dispose of them accordingly:

and they said unto Pharaoh, thy servants [are] shepherds, both we [and] also our fathers; (see ^{46:34}Genesis 46:34).

Ver. 4. *They said moreover unto Pharaoh, for to sojourn in the land are we come*, etc.] Not to obtain possessions and inheritances, as if natives, and to abide there always, but to continue for a little time; for they kept in mind that the land of Canaan was given to them as an inheritance, and would be possessed by then, in due time, and therefore had no thought for the present of continuing here long:

for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks, for the famine [is] sore in the land of Canaan: they say nothing of the want of corn for themselves, because they could have it from Egypt, fetching it, and paying a price for it, but of pasture for their cattle; for the land of Canaan lying higher, was so scorched with the heat of the sun, and parched with drought, that scarce any grass grew upon it; whereas Egypt, and especially the land of Goshen,

lying lower, and being marshy and fenny places, near the Nile, had some grass growing on it, even when the Nile did not overflow to make it so fruitful as it sometimes was:

now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen: which request Joseph, no doubt, directed them to make, it being the spot he had chosen for them in his own mind, and even had promised it to his father; and which his brethren, by their short stay in it as they came along, saw would be very convenient for them, and was the true reason why Joseph instructed them to be particular in the account of their trade and business, that Pharaoh might be inclined of himself to propose it to them or however to grant it when requested.

Ver. 5. *And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph*, etc.] Who was present at the conversation that passed between him and his brethren:

saying, thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee; which is observed, not for Joseph's information, but to lead on to what he had to say further.

Ver. 6. *The land of Egypt [is] before thee*, etc.] To choose what part of it he should judge most suitable and agreeable to his father and brethren:

in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell, in the land of Goshen let them dwell; as is requested; and which was, as Pharaoh here suggests, the best part of the land, the most fertile and fruitful, and the fittest for cattle, being full of pastures through the river Nile and the canals of it, and Goshen being the most fertile portion in the land of Rameses, as in (Gen 47:11); this, Dr. Shaw observes^{f1829}, could be no other than what lay within two or three leagues at the most from the Nile, because the rest of the Egyptian Arabia, which reaches beyond the influence of this river to the eastward, is a barren inhospitable wilderness:

and if thou knowest [any] man of activity among them; strong in body, and of great parts, and endowments of mind, and of great skill, and diligence, and industry in the management of flocks and herds:

then make them rulers over my cattle; or "rulers of cattle over those that are mine"^{f1830}: that is, over his shepherds, to take care that they do their work well and faithfully: from whence it appears that Pharaoh had flocks and herds and shepherds; and therefore it cannot be thought that the Egyptians in those times abstained from eating of animals, or that all shepherds, without exception, were an abomination to them, only foreign

ones that lived on spoil and plunder, and made excursions into their country for such purposes: the office he assigned to men of skill and industry was like that which Doeg the Edomite was in, who was the chief of the herdsmen of Saul, (~~18207~~ 1 Samuel 21:7).

Ver. 7. *And Joseph brought in Jacob his father*, etc.] That is, some time after he had introduced his five brethren, and had gotten the grant of Goshen for them, when he sent, for his father from thence, or he came quickly after to Tanis or Memphis, where Pharaoh's court was:

and set him before Pharaoh; presented Jacob to him, and placed his father right before Pharaoh, perhaps in a chair, or on a seat, by Pharaoh's order, because of his age, and in honour to him:

and Jacob blessed Pharaoh; wished him health and happiness, prayed for his welfare, and gave him thanks for all his kindness to him and his; and he blessed him not only in a way of civility, as was usual when men came into the presence of princes, but in an authoritative way, as a prophet and patriarch, a man divinely inspired of God, and who had great power in prayer with him: the Targum of Jonathan gives us his prayer thus,

“may it be the pleasure (i.e. of God) that the waters of the Nile may be filled, and that the famine may remove from the world in thy days.”

Ver. 8. *And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, how old [art] thou?* Or, “how many are the days of the years of thy life?” which way of speaking Jacob takes up, and very pertinently makes use of in his answer that follows: Dr. Lightfoot ^{f1831} thinks Pharaoh had never seen so old a man before, so grave a head, and so grey a beard, and in admiration asked this question.

Ver. 9. *Jacob said unto Pharaoh, the days of the years of my pilgrimage [are] an hundred and thirty years*, etc.] He calls his life a “pilgrimage”; as every good man's is; they are not at home in their own country, they are seeking a better, even an heavenly one: Jacob's life was very emphatically and literally a pilgrimage; he first dwelt in Canaan, from thence he removed to Padanaram, and sojourned there awhile, and then came to Canaan again; for some time he dwelt at Succoth, and then at Shechem, and after that at Hebron, and now he was come down to Egypt, and he had spent one hundred and thirty years of his life in this way: and with this perfectly agrees the account of Polyhistor from Demetrius ^{f1832}, an Heathen writer, who makes the age of Jacob when he came into Egypt one hundred and

thirty, and that year to be the third year of the famine, agreeably to (^{<01816>}Genesis 45:6);

few and evil have the days of the years of my life been; (see ^{<01840>}Job 14:1); he calls his days but “few”, in comparison of the long lives of the patriarchs in former times, and especially in comparison of the days of eternity: and “evil”, because of the many afflictions he had met with; as from Esau, from whose face he was obliged to flee lest he should kill him, (^{<01274>}Genesis 27:41); and in Laban’s house, where he served for a wife fourteen years, and endured great hardships, (^{<01344>}Genesis 31:41); and at Shechem, where his daughter was ravished, (^{<01342>}Genesis 34:2), and his sons made that slaughter of the Shechemites, (^{<01325>}Genesis 34:25), which he feared would cause his name to stink, (^{<01340>}Genesis 34:30); and at Ephrath, where he buried his beloved Rachel, (^{<01316>}Genesis 35:16); and at Hebron, where his sons brought him such an account as if they believed his beloved son Joseph was destroyed by a wild beast, (^{<01372>}Genesis 37:32);

and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage; his grandfather Abraham lived to be one hundred and seventy five years of age, (^{<01217>}Genesis 25:7), and his father Isaac lived to the age of one hundred and eighty, (^{<01358>}Genesis 35:28).

Ver. 10. *And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.*]

When he took his leave of him, he blessed him, in like manner as when he came into his presence, by wishing all happiness to him, and giving him thanks for the honour he had done him, and the favours he had conferred on him and his.

Ver. 11. *And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt,* etc.] Houses to dwell in, lands to till, and pastures to feed their flocks and herds in:

in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh commanded; according to Jarchi and Aben Ezra, the land of Rameses was a part of the land of Goshen: Jerom^{f1833} says, that Rameses was a city the children of Israel built in Egypt, and that the province was formerly so called in which Jacob and his sons dwelt; but if it is the same with the city which was built by them, it is here called so by anticipation: but Aben Ezra is of opinion that it is not the same, and indeed the names are differently pointed and pronounced; that built by the Israelites is Raamses, and was one of the treasure cities of Pharaoh, and never inhabited by the Israelites; the

Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem call this land the land of Pelusium; but this part of the country lay not in the Pelusiatic, but rather in the Heliopolitan home: Sir John Marsham is of opinion ^{f1834} that Rameses is the name of Pharaoh, the then present king of Egypt, as there were several of the kings of Egypt of that name; and therefore he thinks this land was the king's land, the land of King Rameses, which Joseph placed his father and brethren in by the order of Pharaoh: but it seems rather to be the name of a place, and is thought by Dr. Shaw ^{f1835} to be the same with Cairo: a very learned man ^{f1836} takes this to be the name of the land of Goshen, after the coming of the Israelites into it, and observes, that, in the Egyptian language, "Remsosh" signifies men that live a pastoral life, and so this country was called Ramses or Remsosh, as being the country of the shepherds; and the same learned writer ^{f1837} is of opinion, that the land of Goshen is the same with the Heracleotic nome, or district, which lies in the great island the Nile makes above Memphis, and which is now called by the Arabs Fium, it being the best and most fruitful part of all Egypt; which is confirmed by the testimony of Strabo, who says ^{f1838} it excels all the rest of the nomes, or districts; that it is the only one that produces olives, large and perfect, with fine fruit, which, if well gathered, make good oil, but all the rest of Egypt is without oil; moreover it produces wine not a little (whereas Herodotus says ^{f1839} vines were wanting in Egypt, i.e. in other parts of it), also corn and pulse, and other seeds: and that Fium, as it is now called, is the most fruitful, and is the most pleasant part of all Egypt, having vines, olives, figs, and fruits of all sorts, the most excellent, and some of which are not to be found in other parts of the country, the same, writer proves from various travellers and historians ^{f1840}; particularly Leo Africanus says ^{f1841}, that the Sahidic nome, in which he places Fium, excels all the other parts of Egypt in plenty of pulse, as peas, beans, etc. and of animals and linen, though all Egypt is very fruitful: and Vansleb ^{f1842} says, the province of Fium has been always esteemed one of the most excellent in all Egypt, because of its fruitful fields, its great riches, and pleasant gardens,--all that grows here is of a better taste than in other provinces: here are fields full of rose trees, and woods of fig trees, which are not in other parts of Egypt; the gardens are full of all manner of trees, pears, oranges, lemons, peaches, plums, and apricots:--in Fium only, says he, of all the provinces of Egypt, are vineyards--nor is any province so much cut into channels as this: they all proceed from Joseph's river, and have bridges over them, made with burnt bricks very strong; and tradition says they were built in the days of the Pharaohs; and it is the opinion of the Coptics,

that these kings employed the Israelites in making: bricks for those bridges, which is very probable, from the infinite number of men needful to make such a prodigious quantity: this part of Egypt where Israel dwelt, by all relations, being so excellent, the impudence of Celsus ^{f1843} the Heathen is very surprising, when he affirms that the nation of the Jews, becoming numerous in Egypt, were ordered to dwell apart as sojourners, and to feed their flocks in places vile and despicable.

Ver. 12. *And. Joseph nourished his father, and his brethren, and his father's household, with bread,* etc.] For though there might be in Rameses pasture sufficient for their cattle, yet not corn for their families, the famine still continuing; during which time Joseph, as a dutiful and affectionate son, and as a kind brother, supplied them with all necessary provision, signified by bread:

according to [their] families; according to the number of them, some of his brethren having more and others less in their families; and in proportion to their number he distributed food unto them, so that there was no want: or “according to the mouth of an infant” ^{f1844}; he nourished them like infants, he put as it were the bread into their mouths, and fed them with as much care and tenderness as infants are fed; and they had no more care to provide food for themselves than children have, such a full and constant supply was handed forth to them: in this Joseph was an eminent type of Christ, who supplies the wants of his people.

Ver. 13. *And [there was] no bread in all the land,* etc.] The land of Egypt and the parts adjacent, but in Pharaoh's storehouses, all being consumed that were in private hands the first two years of the famine:

for the famine [was] very sore; severe, pressed very hard:

so that the land of Egypt, and [all] the land of Canaan, fainted by reason of the famine; that is, the inhabitants of both countries, their spirits sunk, as well as their flesh failed for want of food: or “raged” ^{f1845}; became furious, and were like madmen, as the word signifies; according to Kimchi ^{f1846}, they were at their wits' end, knew not what to do, as Aben Ezra interprets it, and became tumultuous; it is much they had not in a violent manner broke open the storehouses of corn, and took it away by force; that they did not must be owing to the providence of God, which restrained them, and to the care and prudence of Joseph as a means, who, doubtless, had well fortified the granaries; and very probably there were a body of soldiers

placed everywhere, who were one of the three parts or states of the kingdom of Egypt, as Diodorus Siculus^{f1847} relates; to which may be added, the mild and gentle address of Joseph to the people, speaking kindly to them, giving them hopes of a supply during the famine, and readily relieving them upon terms they could not object to.

Ver. 14. *And Joseph gathered up all the money*, etc.] Not that he went about to collect it, or employed men to do it, but he gathered it, being brought to him for corn as follows: even all

that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: by which means those countries became as bare of money as of provisions:

and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house: into his repository, as the Targum of Jonathan, into his treasury, not into his own house or coffers, in which he acted the faithful part to Pharaoh; for it was with his money he bought the corn, built storehouses, kept men to look after them to sell the corn; wherefore the money arising from thence belonged to him; nor did he do any injury to the people: they sold their corn in the time of plenty freely; he gave them a price for it, it then bore, and he sold it out again to them, at a price according to the season; nor was it ever complained of, that it was an exorbitant one; it was highly just and necessary it should be at a greater price than when it was bought in, considering the great expense in the collection, preservation, and distribution of it: it must be a vast sum of money he amassed together, and Dr. Hammond^{f1848} thinks it probable that this Pharaoh, who, by Joseph's advice, got all this wealth, is the same with Remphis, of whom Diodorus Siculus^{f1849} says, that he spent his time in minding the taxes and heaping up riches from all quarters, and left more behind him than any of the kings that reigned before, even in silver and gold four million talents, the same that Herodotus^{f1850} calls Rhampsinitus, who, he says, had the greatest quantity of money of any of the kings of Egypt.

Ver. 15. *And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan*, etc.] It had been all spent in the third, fourth, and fifth years of the famine; for it seems to be at the end of the fifth, or beginning of the sixth year of the famine, that this was the case, since we after read of a second or following year, which was very plainly the last, since seed was given them to sow the land with, which shows the time of drought to be near at an end:

all the Egyptians came unto Joseph, and said, give us bread; freely, for nothing, since they had no money to buy any with: no mention is made of the Canaanites, who could not presume to come and ask for corn on such a footing:

for why should we die in thy presence? before his eyes, he not relieving them when it was in his power to do it; they knew such an argument as this would work upon a mind so humane, tender, and generous as was Joseph's:

for the money faileth; all was gone, they had none left to purchase corn with; or they suggest they should not have desired to have had it at free cost.

Ver. 16. *And Joseph said, give your cattle*, etc.] Oxen, sheep, horses, asses, as follows:

and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail; that is, corn for cattle, if they had no money to give.

Ver. 17. *And they brought their cattle unto Joseph*, etc.] Which they might the more readily do, since there was scarce any grass to feed them with; and though some of them were creatures used for food, yet might be so lean and poor for want of grass, as not to be fit to eat; and besides, they could do better without flesh than without bread:

and Joseph gave them bread [in exchange] for horses; with which Egypt abounded, to which many places of Scripture have respect, (^{<6176>}Deuteronomy 17:16) (^{<1108>}1 Kings 10:28 ^{<2109>}Song of Solomon 1:9 ^{<2310>}Isaiah 31:1,3);

and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds; the sheep and the oxen; which shows that these creatures were bred and fed by them, and were, no doubt, slain, and used for food:

and for the asses; which were used for carrying burdens:

and he fed them with bread for all their cattle, for that year; which seems to be the sixth year of the famine: one would wonder what Joseph should do with all their cattle, where put them, and feed them, in such a time of drought; though it is probable the number was not exceeding large, since they only fetched one year's provision of bread.

Ver. 18. *When the year was ended, they came unto him the second year,* etc.] Which seems to be the seventh and last year of the years of famine; not the second year of the famine, as Jarchi, but the second year of their great distress, when having spent all their money they parted with their cattle; for it cannot be thought that they should be drained of their money and cattle too in one year:

and said unto him, we will not hide [it] from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; both these were well known to Joseph, and therefore cannot be the things which they say they would not hide: Musculus thinks it should be rendered in the past tense, “we have not hid”; this they told him the last year, that their money was gone, and he knew he had their cattle for their last year’s provision: the sense seems to be this, that seeing their money was spent, and their cattle were in the hands of Joseph, they would not, and could not conceal from him what follows:

there is not enough left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies and our lands; and the one were starving and the other desolate.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land?* etc.] Beholding their miserable condition, and not helping them; die they must unless they had bread to eat, and their land die also if they had not seed to sow; that is, would become desolate, as the Septuagint version renders it; so Ben Melech observes, that land which is desolate is as if it was dead, because it produces neither grass nor fruit, whereas when it does it looks lively and cheerful:

buy us and our land for bread; they were willing to sell themselves and their land too for bread to support their lives, nothing being dearer to a man than life:

and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh; both should be his; they would hold their land of him, and be tenants to him:

and give [us] seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land may not be desolate; entirely so; some parts of it they could sow a little upon, as on the banks of the Nile, or perhaps that river might begin to overflow, or they had some hopes of it, especially from Joseph’s prediction they knew this was the last year of famine, and therefore it was proper to sow the ground some time in this, that they might have a crop for the provision of the next year; and they had no seed to sow, and if they were not furnished

with it, the famine must unavoidably continue, notwithstanding the flow of the Nile.

Ver. 20. *And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh*, etc.] Not for himself, nor did he entail it on his posterity, but for Pharaoh, who became sole proprietor of it:

for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them; everyone that had a field sold it to buy bread for his family, so great was the famine; no mention is made of their houses, either because these went with their lands, or they were so mean that they were of little account, and would scarce bear any price; for as Diodorus Siculus^{f1851} reports of the Egyptians, they were less careful of the structure of their houses, and exceeded all bounds in the magnificence of their sepulchres:

so the land became Pharaoh's; not only with respect to dominion and government, so it was before, but with respect to property; before, every man's field, and garden, and vineyard were his own, and he was in possession thereof for his own use, but now being sold, were Pharaoh's; and they held them of him, and paid a rent for them in a manner hereafter directed by a law.

Ver. 21. *And as for the people, he removed them*, etc.] From the places where they dwelt, that it might appear they had no more property there, and might forget it, and be more willing to pay rent elsewhere; and their posterity hereafter could have no notion of its being theirs, or plead prescription; and besides, by such a removal and separation of the inhabitants of cities, some to one place, and some to another, sedition and mutiny might be prevented: he had them

to cities, from [one] end of the borders of Egypt, even unto the [other] end thereof; according to the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, those that dwelt in provinces, or in country towns and villages, he removed to cities, and those that dwelt in cities he removed into provinces, and placed them at the utmost distance from their former habitations, for the reasons before given; and the above Targums suggest another reason, to teach the Egyptians not to reproach the Israelites with being exiles and strangers, when they were all of them removed from their native places, and were strangers, where they were.

Ver. 22. *Only the land of the priests bought he not*, etc.] Not from any special affection for them, or any superstitious veneration of them, which

can never be thought of so good a man, but for a reason following, which shows they had no need to sell them:

for the priests had a portion [assigned them], by Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them; they had a certain allowance by the day of provision granted them, on which they lived; so Herodotus says ^{f1852} of the priests of Egypt, that they spend nothing of their own, but sacred food is provided for them, and great plenty of the flesh of geese and oxen is given daily to everyone of them. And this was a delicate affair, which Joseph could not intermeddle with, but in prudence must leave it as he found it, and do as had been used to be done; this depending on the will and pleasure of Pharaoh, if not upon the constitution of the land, as it seems to be from Diodorus Siculus ^{f1853}, who divides Egypt into three parts; and the first part he assigns to the priests, who, according to him, were maintained out of their own revenues. Some understand this of “princes” ^{f1854}, the word sometimes being used of them, and interpret it of the officers and courtiers of Pharaoh, his nobles, that dwelt in his palace, and had their portion of food from him; but the former sense seems best:

wherefore they sold not their lands; they were not obliged to it, having provision from the king’s table, or by his appointment.

Ver. 23. *Then Joseph said unto the people,* etc.] After he had bought their land, and before the removal of them to distant parts:

behold, I have bought you this day, and your land, for Pharaoh: which he observes to them, that they might take notice of it, and confirm it, or object if they had anything to say to the contrary:

lo, [here is] seed for you, and ye shall sow the land: by which it should seem that they were not removed from the spot where they lived, but retained their own land under Pharaoh, and had seed given them to sow it with, which may seem contrary to (⁽⁴⁷²⁾Genesis 47:21); wherefore that must be understood of a purpose and proposal to remove them, and not that it was actually done; or, as Musculus gives the sense, Joseph by a public edict called all the people from the extreme parts of Egypt to the cities nearest to them, and there proclaimed the subjection of them, and their lands to Pharaoh, but continued them to them as tenants of his; unless it should be said, that in those distant parts to which they were sent, land was put into their hands to till and manure for the king, and have seed given

them to sow it with; but this seems to be said to them at the same time the bargain was made.

Ver. 24. *And it shall come to pass, in the increase*, etc.] When the land shall produce an increase, and it shall be gathered in:

that you shall give the fifth [part] unto Pharaoh; a fifth part of the increase:

and four parts shall be your own; for the following uses, one part

for seed of the field: to sow again with for the next year: a second part

for your food; for food for themselves: a third part

for them of your household; their servants and maids: and the fourth part

for food for your little ones; for their children, be they young or old; or however four parts of five he proposed they should have for their own use, and for the maintenance of their families, which was a kind and generous proposal, when all might have been demanded, and they and theirs treated as slaves.

Ver. 25. *And they said, thou hast saved our lives*, etc.] Preserved them from death through famine, by laying up stores of corn, which he had sold out to them for their money, cattle, and land, or otherwise they must have perished, they and theirs, and this favour they thankfully acknowledge:

let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants; signifying, that they esteemed it a great favour to be so on the foot of the bargain made with them, and they desired a continuance in it.

Ver. 26. *And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day*, etc.] With the consent of Pharaoh, his nobles, and all the people of the land, who readily came into it; and so it became, a fundamental law of their constitution, and which continued to the times of Moses, the writer of this history:

[that] Pharaoh should have the fifth [part]; that is, of the increase the whole land of Egypt produced:

except the land of the priests only, [which] became not Pharaoh's; it not being bought by him; so Diodorus Siculus^{†1855}, as he assigns the first part

of the land to the priests, so he says they were free from all taxes and tribute, and next to the king were possessed of honour and authority.

Ver. 27. *And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen,* etc.] The historian returns to the account of the Israelites, having before observed the placing of them in Goshen by Joseph, at the direction of Pharaoh, in compliance with their own request; and here they continued until they were grown more numerous, when they were obliged to spread themselves further in this same country:

and they had possessions therein; fields and vineyards, as the Targum of Jonathan; all the land was Pharaoh's, and they rented of him as his people did, it may be supposed:

and grew, and multiplied exceedingly; even in Jacob's lifetime they grew rich and numerous.

Ver. 28. *And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years,* etc.] He lived just the same term of years with Joseph in Egypt as he had lived with him in Syria and Canaan, (^{<0370>}Genesis 37:2); about two hours' walk from Fium are now to be seen the ruins of an ancient town, which the Coptics say was inhabited by the patriarch Jacob, and for this cause they name it, yet, Modsellet Jacob, or the tabernacle of Jacob ^{f1856}, which place is supposed to be in the land of Goshen, (see ^{<0471>}Genesis 47:11);

so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years; he was one hundred and thirty when he stood before Pharaoh, (^{<0470>}Genesis 47:9); and now had lived in Egypt seventeen years, as in the above clause, which together make up the sum; and this exact time of the years of his life is given by Polyhistor from Demetrius, an Heathen writer ^{f1857}.

Ver. 29. *And the time drew nigh that Israel must die,* etc.] As all men must, by the appointment of God, even good men, the Israel of God; though they shall not die a spiritual death, nor an eternal one, yet a corporeal one, which is for their good, and is a blessing to them; the sting being removed, and so not a penal evil, which is owing to Christ's dying for them, who has abolished death as such; and there is a time fixed for their death, beyond which they must not live, and before which they must not die, but when the time comes there is no avoiding it; the time of Jacob's death was drawing on, as he perceived by the great decline of his natural strength, and perhaps by a divine impulse on his mind:

and he called his son Joseph; sent for him, by a messenger, to come to him:

and said unto him; when he was come:

if now I have found grace in thy sight; which is not spoken in a way of submission, as from an inferior to a superior, as the phrase is sometimes used; or as signifying what would be esteemed as a favour should it be granted, but it is as if he should say, if thou hast any filial affection for me as a parent, and art willing to show love and respect to me, do as follows:

put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: a gesture in swearing, as Jarchi observes, (^{Q124D}Genesis 24:2,3); adding, for explanation's sake,

and deal kindly and truly with me; “kindly”, by promising and swearing to do what he after desires; and “truly”, by observing his oath, and fulfilling his promise:

bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt; not choosing to lie among idolaters at death, with whom he cared not to have any fellowship in life.

Ver. 30. *But I will lie with my fathers*, etc.] Abraham and Isaac, whose bodies lay in the land of Canaan, where Jacob desired to be buried; partly to express his faith in the promised land, that it should be the inheritance of his posterity; and partly to draw off their minds from a continuance in Egypt, and to incline them to think of removing thither at a proper time, and to confirm them in the belief of their enjoyment of it; as well as to intimate his desire after, and faith in the heavenly glory he was going to, of which Canaan was a type:

and thou shalt carry me out of Egypt; into the land of Canaan:

and bury me in their burying place; in the burying place of his fathers, in the cave of Machpelah, near Hebron; (see ^{Q148D}Genesis 49:30,31);

and he said, I will do as thou hast said; Joseph promised his father to fulfil his request, and do as he had desired of him.

Ver. 31. *And he said, swear unto me*, etc.] This he required, not from any distrust of Joseph, but to show his own eagerness, and the intenseness of his mind about this thing, how much he was set upon it, and what an important thing it was with him; as also, that if he should have any objections made to it, or arguments used with him to divert him from it, by

Pharaoh or his court, he would be able to say his father had bound him by an oath to do it, which would at once stop their mouths, and be judged a sufficient reason for what he did, (see ^{<8101>}Genesis 50:5,6):

and he sware unto him; not only gave his promise, but confirmed it with an oath:

and Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head: not in a way of civil respect to Joseph, giving him thanks for the assurance he had given him, that he would bury him, not in Egypt, but in Canaan; but in a religious way to God, giving thanks to him that he had lived to see his son Joseph, who, according to the promise, would close his eyes, and that he had inclined his heart to fulfil his request; though some think that no more is meant, than that after Jacob had spent himself in discoursing with Joseph, he sunk down and reclined on his pillow at his bed's head, to take some rest; for as for what the apostle says in (^{<8112>}Hebrews 11:21); that refers to another thing at another time; (see Gill on "^{<8112>}Hebrews 11:21").

CHAPTER 48

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 48

Joseph, hearing that his father Jacob was sick, paid him a visit, (^{<0401>}Genesis 49:1,2); at which time Jacob gave him an account of the Lord's appearing to him at Luz, and of the promise he made unto him, (^{<0403>}Genesis 49:3,4); then he adopted his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, and blessed them, and Joseph also, (^{<0405>}Genesis 49:5-16); and whereas he crossed his hands when he blessed the sons of Joseph, putting his right hand on the youngest, and his left hand on the eldest, which was displeasing to Joseph, he gave him a reason for so doing, (^{<0407>}Genesis 49:17-20); and then assured him that God would bring him, and the rest of his posterity, into the land of Canaan, where he assigned him a particular portion above his brethren, (^{<0409>}Genesis 49:21,22).

Ver. 1. *And it came to pass after these things*, etc.] Some little time after Jacob had sent for Joseph, and conversed with him about his burial in the land of Canaan, and took an oath to bury him there, for then the time drew nigh that he must die:

that [one] told Joseph, behold, thy father [is] sick; he was very infirm when he was last with him, and his natural strength decaying apace, by which he knew his end was near; but now he was seized with a sickness which threatened him with death speedily, and therefore very probably dispatched a messenger to acquaint Joseph with it. Jarchi fancies that Ephraim, the son of Joseph, lived with Jacob in the land of Goshen, and when he was sick went and told his father of it, but this is not likely from what follows:

and he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim; to see their grandfather before he died, to hear his dying words, and receive his blessing.

Ver. 2. *And [one] told Jacob*, etc.] The same that came from Jacob to Joseph might be sent back by him to, his father, to let him know that he was coming to see him, or some other messenger sent on purpose; for it can hardly be thought that this was an accidental thing on either side:

and said, behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee; to pay him a visit, and which no doubt gave him a pleasure, he being his beloved son, as well as he was great and honourable:

and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon his bed; his spirits revived, his strength renewed, he got fresh vigour on hearing his son Joseph was coming; and he exerted all his strength, and raised himself up by the help of his staff, and sat upon his bed to receive his son's visit; for now it was when he blessed the sons of Joseph, that he leaned upon the top of his staff and worshipped, as the apostle says, (^{<5812>}Hebrews 11:21).

Ver. 3. *And Jacob said unto Joseph*, etc.] Being come into his bedchamber, and sitting by him, or standing before him:

God Almighty appeared unto at Luz in the land of Canaan; the same with Bethel, where God appeared, both at his going to Padanaram, and at his return from thence, (^{<0281>}Genesis 28:11-19 35:6-12); which of those times is here referred to is not certain; very likely he refers to them both, since the same promises were made to him at both times, as after mentioned:

and blessed me; promised he would bless him, both with temporal and spiritual blessings, as he did as follows.

Ver. 4. *And said unto me, behold, I will make thee fruitful*, etc.] In a spiritual sense, in grace and good works; in a literal sense, in an increase of worldly substance, and especially of children:

and multiply thee; make his posterity numerous as the sand of the sea:

and I will make of thee a multitude of people; a large nation, consisting of many tribes, even a company of nations, as the twelve tribes of Israel were;

and I will give this land unto thy seed after thee, [for] an everlasting possession; the land of Canaan, they were to possess as long as they were the people of God, and obedient to his law; by which obedience they held the land, even unto the coming of the Messiah, whom they rejected, and then they were cast out, and a "Loammi" (i.e. not my people, (^{<2009>}Hosea 1:9) written upon them, and their civil polity, as well as church state, at an end: and besides, Canaan was a type of the eternal inheritance of the saints in heaven, the spiritual Israel of God, which will be possessed by them to all eternity.

Ver. 5. *And now thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh*, etc.] Ephraim was the youngest, but is mentioned first, as he afterwards was preferred in the blessing of him:

which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, before I came unto thee into Egypt; and therefore must be twenty years of age, or upwards: for Jacob had been in Egypt seventeen years, and he came there when there had been two years of famine, and Joseph's sons were born to him before the years of famine began, (⁽⁴¹⁵⁾Genesis 41:50); of these Jacob says, they

[are] mine: as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine; that is, by adoption; should be reckoned not as his grandchildren, but as his children, even as his two eldest sons, Reuben and Simeon; and so should be distinct tribes or heads of them, as his sons would be, and have a distinct part and portion in the land of Canaan; and thus the birthright was transferred from Reuben, because of his incest, to Joseph, who in his posterity had a double portion assigned him.

Ver. 6. *And thy issue, which thou begettest after them, shall be thine*, etc.] The children of Joseph, that either were, or would be begotten after Ephraim and Manasseh; though whether ever any were is not certain; and this is only mentioned by way of supposition, as Jarchi interprets it, "if thou shouldest beget", etc. these should be reckoned his own, and not as Jacob's sons, but be considered as other grandchildren of Jacob's were, and not as Ephraim and Manasseh:

[and] shall be called after the name of their brethren in their inheritance; they should not have distinct names, or make distinct tribes, or have a distinct inheritance; but should be called either the children of Ephraim, or the children of Manasseh, and should be reckoned as belonging either to the one tribe, or the other, and have their inheritance in them, and with them, and not separate.

Ver. 7. *And as for me, when I came from Padan*, etc.] From Syria, from Laban's house:

Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan; his beloved wife, the mother of Joseph, on whose account he mentions her, and to show a reason why he took his sons as his own, because his mother dying so soon, he could have no more children by her; and she being his only lawful wife, Joseph was of right to be reckoned as the firstborn; and that as such he might have the double portion, he took his two sons as his own, and put them upon a level

with them, even with Reuben and Simeon. By this it appears, as by the preceding account, that Rachel came with him into the land of Canaan, and there died:

in the way, when yet [there was] but a little way to come unto Ephrath; about a mile, or two thousand cubits, as Jarchi observes:

and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath; where she died, and dying in childbed, could not be kept so long as to carry her to Machpelah, the burying place of his ancestors; and especially as he had his flocks and herds with him, which could move but slowly; and what might make it more difficult to keep her long, and carry her thither, it might be, as Ben Melech conjectures, summertime; and the Vulgate Latin adds to the text, without any warrant from the original, “and it was springtime”; however, she was buried in the land of Canaan, and which is taken notice of, that Joseph might observe it: it follows,

the same [is] Bethlehem; that is, Ephrath; and so Bethlehem is called Bethlehem Ephratah, (^{<38B>}Micah 5:2); whether these are the words of Jacob, or of Moses, is not certain, but said with a view to the Messiah, the famous seed of Jacob that should be born there, and was.

Ver. 8. *And Israel beheld Joseph’s sons,* etc.] Ephraim and Manasseh, of whom he had been speaking as if they were absent, and he might not know until now that they were present, for his eyes were dim that he could not see clearly, (^{<44B>}Genesis 49:10); he saw two young men standing by Joseph, but knew not who they were, and therefore asked the following question:

and said, who [are] these? whose sons are they? the Targum of Jonathan is,

“of whom were these born to thee?”

as if he knew them to be his sons, only inquired who the mother of them was; but the answer shows he knew them not to be his sons, and as for his wife, he could not be ignorant who she was.

Ver. 9. *And Joseph said unto his father, they [are] my sons, whom God hath given me in this [place],* etc.] In the land of Egypt; he accounts his sons as the gifts of God, as children are, (^{<3C7B>}Psalms 127:3); and it was not only a sentiment of the Jews, that children are the gift of God; hence the names of Mattaniah, Nathaniel, etc. but of Heathens, as the Greeks and

Romans, among whom are frequent the names of men which show it, as Theodorus, Deodatus, Apollodorus, Artemidorus, etc.

and he said, bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them; not in a common way, barely wishing them prosperity and happiness, but as a patriarch and prophet, under the influence and inspiration of the Spirit of God, declaring what would befall them, and what blessings they should be partakers of, in time to come.

Ver. 10. *Now the eyes of Israel were dim for age*, etc.] Or “heavy” ^{f1858}, that he could not lift them up easily and see clearly; his eyebrows hung over, his eyes were sunk in his head, and the humours pressed them through old age, that it was with difficulty he could perceive an object, at least not distinctly:

[so that] he could not see; very plainly, otherwise he did see the sons of Joseph, though he could not discern who they were, (⁴⁴⁸Genesis 49:8);

and he brought them near unto him; that he might have a better sight of them and bless them:

and he kissed them, and embraced them: as a token of his affection for them.

Ver. 11. *And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face*, etc.] Some years ago he never expected to have seen him any more; he had given him up for lost, as a dead man, when his sons brought him his coat dipped in blood; and by reason of the long course of years which passed before ever he heard anything of him:

and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed; it was an additional favour to see his offspring; it can hardly be thought, that in a course of seventeen years he had been in Egypt, he had not seen them before, only he takes this opportunity, which was the last he should have of expressing his pleasure on this occasion.

Ver. 12. *And Joseph brought them out from between his knees*, etc.] Either from between his own, where they were kneeling, as he was sitting, in order that they might be nearer his father, to receive his blessing by the putting on of his hands; or rather from between his father’s knees, he, as Aben Ezra observes, sitting on the bed, having kissed and embraced them, they were still between his knees; and that they might not be burdensome

to his aged father, leaning on his breast, and especially, in order to put them in a proper position for his benediction, he took them from thence, and placed them over against him to his right and left hand:

and he bowed himself with his face to the earth; in a civil way to his father, and in reverence of him; in a religious way to God, expressing his thankfulness for all favours to him and his, and as supplicating a blessing for his sons through his father, under a divine influence and direction.

Ver. 13. *And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand*, etc.] He took Ephraim his youngest son in his right hand, and led him up to his father, by which means he would stand in a right position to have his grandfather's left hand put upon him:

and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand; Manasseh his eldest son he took in his left hand, and brought him to his father, and so was in a proper position to have his right hand laid upon him, as seniority of birth required, and as he was desirous should be the case:

and brought [them] near unto him; in the above manner, so near as that he could lay his hands on them.

Ver. 14. *And Israel stretched out his right hand*, etc.] Not directly forward, but across, or otherwise it would have been laid on Manasseh, as Joseph designed it should by the position he placed him in:

and laid [it] upon Ephraim's head, who [was] the younger, the right hand being the strongest and most in use, as it was reckoned most honourable to sit at it, so to have it imposed, as being significative of the greater blessing:

and his left hand upon Manasseh's head; who was the older:

guiding his hands wittingly; this was not done accidentally, but on purpose: or made his "hands to understand"^{f1859}, they acted as if they understood what he would have done, as Aben Ezra; as if they were conscious of what should be, or would be; though he could not see clearly and distinctly, yet he knew, by the position of them before him, which was the elder and which was the younger: he knew that Joseph would set the firstborn in such a position before him as naturally to put his right hand on him, and the younger in such a position as that it would be readiest for him to put his left hand on him; and therefore, being under a divine impulse and spirit of prophecy, by which he discerned that the younger was to have the

greater blessing, he crossed his bands, or changed them, and put his right hand on Ephraim, and his left hand on Manasseh:

for Manasseh [was] the firstborn; or rather, though ^{f1860} he was the firstborn, as Aben Ezra.

Ver. 15. *And he blessed Joseph*, etc.] In his sons who were reckoned for him, and became the heads of tribes in his room:

and said, God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk; in whom they believed, whom they professed, and whom they feared, served, and worshipped, and with whom they had communion:

the God which fed me all my long unto this day; who had upheld him in life, provided for him all the necessities of life, food and raiment, and had followed him with his goodness ever since he had a being, and had fed him as the great shepherd of the flock, both with temporal and spiritual food, being the God of his life, and of his mercies in every sense.

Ver. 16. *The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads*, etc.] Ephraim and Manasseh, now about twenty years old or upwards: this is not to be understood of a created angel he wishes to be their guardian, but of an eternal one, the Son of God, the Angel of God's presence, the Angel of the covenant; the same with the God of his father before mentioned, as appears by the character he gives him, as having "redeemed [him] from all evil"; not only protected and preserved him from temporal evils and imminent dangers from Esau, Laban, and others; but had delivered him from the power, guilt, and punishment of sin, the greatest of evils, and from the dominion and tyranny of Satan the evil one, and from everlasting wrath, ruin, and damnation; all which none but a divine Person could do, as well as he wishes, desires, and prays, that he would "bless" the lads with blessings temporal and spiritual, which a created angel cannot do; and Jacob would never have asked it of him:

and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; having adopted them, he foretells they would be called not only the sons of Joseph, but the children of Israel or Jacob, and would have a name among the tribes of Israel, and be heads of them, as well as would be called the seed of Abraham and of Isaac, and inherit their blessings: and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth; where they increased as fishes, as the word signifies ^{f1861}, and more than any other of the tribes; even in the times of Moses the number of them were 85,200 men fit for

war, (⁰⁰⁵⁴Numbers 26:34,37); and their situation was in the middle of the land of Canaan.

Ver. 17. *And when Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him*, etc.] To see the younger preferred to the elder; parents, generally speaking, having the greatest regard to the firstborn with respect to honour and estate, and to them, in those times, the patriarchal blessing particularly was thought to belong; but it did not always go to them, but to the younger, as in Jacob's own case:

and he held up his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head unto Manasseh's head; he took him by the right hand, and lifted it up from the head of Ephraim, and held it in order that he might put it by his direction on the head of Manasseh.

Ver. 18. *And Joseph said unto his father, not so, my father*, etc.] It is not right, it should not so be, that the right hand should be put on the youngest, and the left hand on the eldest;

for this [is] the firstborn; directing him to Manasseh, and seeking to guide his hand towards him:

put thy right hand upon his head; Joseph was for proceeding according to the order of birthright, but Jacob was directed by a spirit of prophecy, as follows.

Ver. 19. *And his father refused*, etc.] To have any alteration made, and therefore, though Joseph lifted it up from Ephraim's head and held it over it, Jacob put it on again and went on with the blessing:

and said, I know [it], my son, I know [it]; he knew what he did, and he repeats it to confirm it, as well as to show the vehemency of his mind, and his resolution to abide by what he had done; he knew on whom he laid his right hand, and he knew that Manasseh was the firstborn: so the Targum of Jonathan:

and he also shall become a people; a tribe or nation:

and he also shall be great; in number, riches, and honour:

but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he; more numerous, as the tribe of Ephraim was, than that of Manasseh, when they came out of Egypt; for in numbering them there appeared to be 8300 more in the one

tribe than in the other, (^{<0413>}Numbers 1:33,35), as well as more honourable; Ephraim's standard was placed before Manasseh's, (^{<0428>}Numbers 2:18,20); and upon the division of the tribes in Rehoboam's time, as Jeroboam was of the tribe of Ephraim, that tribe was at the head of the ten tribes, and the seat of the kingdom was in it, and the whole kingdom of Israel often goes by the name of Ephraim:

and his seed shall become a multitude of nations; that is, of families, for as nations are called families, (^{<0406>}Amos 3:1,2); so families may be called nations; the Targum of Onkelos is,

“his sons shall be rulers among the people,”

so Joshua, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, conquered and subdued the nations of the Canaanites, and Jeroboam of this tribe ruled over the ten tribes or nations of Israel: it may be rendered, “his seed shall fill the nations” ^{f1862}, or be “the fulness” of them; which Jarchi interprets of the whole world being filled with the fame and renown of Joshua, who was of this tribe, when the sun and moon stood still in his days; but it is best to understand this of the large share he should have of the land of Canaan among the rest of the tribes or nations of Israel.

Ver. 20. *And he blessed them that day*, etc.] That Joseph visited him, and this he did “by faith”; believing that what he had said concerning them would be accomplished, as the apostle observes, (^{<0812>}Hebrews 11:21);

saying, in thee shall Israel bless; in Joseph, as the Targum of Jonathan, that is, in his seed, in his sons Ephraim and Manasseh, when the Israelites blessed any, they should make use of their names:

saying, God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh: as great and honourable, as rich and wealthy, as fruitful and prosperous as they; and the Targum says, this custom continues with the Jews to this day, to put their hands on persons to bless them; if a son, they say,

“God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh;”

if a daughter,

“God make thee as Sarah and Rebekah:”

and he set Ephraim before Manasseh; not only in this form of benediction, but in all that he had said and done before; he preferred him to Manasseh

by putting his right hand upon him, and giving him the superior blessing: and it is no unusual thing for the younger to be set before the elder, both by God and man, but especially by the Lord, who seeth not as man seeth, and proceeds not according to carnal descent, or those rules men go by: there had been many instances before this, as Abel was preferred to Cain, Shem to Japheth, Abraham to Nahor, Isaac to Ishmael, and Jacob to Esau; as there were after it, as Moses to Aaron, and David to his brethren.

Ver. 21. *And Israel said unto Joseph, behold, I die,* etc.] Expected to die very shortly; and he not only speaks of it as a certain thing, and what would quickly be, but with pleasure and comfort, having no fear and dread of it on him, but as what was agreeable to him, and he had made himself familiar with:

but God shall be with you; with Joseph and his posterity, and with all his brethren, and theirs, to comfort and support them, to guide and counsel them, to protect and defend them, to carry them through all they had to endure in Egypt, and at length bring them out of it; he signifies he was departing from them, but God would not depart from them, whose presence would be infinitely more to them than his; and which, as it made him the more easy to leave them, so it might make them more easy to part with him:

and bring you again unto the land of your fathers; the land of Canaan, where their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had dwelt, and which was given to them and theirs for an inheritance, and where Joseph and his brethren had lived, and would be brought thither again, as the bones of Joseph were, and as all of them in their posterity were in Joshua's time.

Ver. 22. *Moreover, I have given to thee one portion above thy brethren,* etc.] The word for "portion" is "Shechem", and which some take to be, not an appellative, as we do, but the name of a city, even Shechem; so the Targum of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret it; and though that is not directly meant, yet there is a reference had to it, and it seems to be enigmatically understood; for this portion or parcel spoken of was near to Shechem, and not only that, but the city itself, and all the adjacent country, came to the lot of Ephraim, and were possessed by that tribe:

which I took out of the hand of the Amorite with my sword and with my bow; not referring, as some think, to the taking and spoiling of the city of Shechem by his sons, and so said to be done by him in them; for Jacob

would never make that his act and deed, which he so much abhorred and detested, and still did, as appears by what he says of it in the following chapter; nor was this taken from the Amorite, but from the Hivite, and not by his sword and bow, whether taken literally or metaphorically, and so interpreted of his prayer and supplication, as by Onkelos; but he was so far from assisting in that affair by supplication, that his imprecations fell on Levi and Simeon, for that fact of theirs: if this is to be understood of the city of Shechem, what Aben Ezra and Ben Gersom propose seems most agreeable, that this is said by way of anticipation, the past tense being put for the future; Jacob, under a spirit of prophecy, foreseeing and declaring that his sons, and he in his sons in future time, would take it out of the hands of the Amorites, the principal of the Canaanitish nations, and then it should be given to Joseph's seed; but the first and special regard is to the part or parcel of ground which lay near Shechem; and this Jacob is said to take by his sword and bow, which some interpret of his money, which were his arms and defence, and which he had got by much labour; and if it could be proved that his money was marked with a sword and bow upon it, as the Persian Darics were with an archer with his bow and arrow, and therefore called sagittaries or archers ^{f1863}, it would countenance this sense; though even then it could not with propriety be said that he by this means obtained it of the Amorite, since he bought it of the children of Hamor the Hivite; but it seems more likely, that after Jacob departed from Shechem to Hebron, the Amorite came and seized on this parcel of ground; which he hearing of, went with his sons and servants, and recovered it out of their hands by his sword and bow; though this warlike action of his is nowhere recorded in Scripture, the Jewish writers ^{f1864} say, that Jacob and his sons had very grievous war with the Amorites on account of the slaughter and captivity of the Shechemites: by giving to Joseph this portion above his brethren, it appears that the birthright was become his, he having the double portion, and indeed all that Jacob had of his own in the land of Canaan; and hence Joseph's bones were buried here, it being his own ground; (see ~~1642~~ Joshua 24:32 ~~1645~~ John 4:5).

CHAPTER 49

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 49

This chapter contains a prophecy of future things, relating to the twelve sons of Jacob, and to the twelve tribes, as descending from them, and which he delivered to his sons on his death bed, having called them together for that purpose, (^{<0401>}Genesis 49:1,2), he begins with Reuben his firstborn, whose incest he takes notice of, on which account he should not excel, (^{<0403>}Genesis 49:3,4), next Simeon and Levi have a curse denounced on them for their cruelty at Shechem, (^{<0405>}Genesis 49:5,6), but Judah is praised, and good things prophesied of him; and particularly that Shiloh, or the Messiah, should spring from him, the time of whose coming is pointed at, (^{<0407>}Genesis 49:7-12), the predictions concerning Zebulun, Issachar, and Dan, follow, at the close of which Jacob expresses his longing expectation of God's salvation, (^{<0409>}Genesis 49:13-18) and after foretelling what should befall Gad, Asher, and Naphtali, (^{<0409>}Genesis 49:19-21), a large account is given of Joseph, his troubles, his trials, and his blessings, (^{<0422>}Genesis 49:22-26), and Benjamin the youngest son is taken notice of last of all, all the tribes being blessed in their order according to the nature of their blessing, (^{<0427>}Genesis 49:27,28), and the chapter is closed with a charge of Jacob's to his sons to bury him in Canaan, which having delivered, he died, (^{<0429>}Genesis 49:29-33).

Ver. 1. *And Jacob called upon his sons*, etc.] Who either were near at hand, and within call at the time Joseph came to visit him, or if at a distance, and at another time, he sent a messenger or messengers to them to come unto him:

and said, gather yourselves together; his will was, that they should attend him all together at the same time, that he might deliver what he had to say to them in the hearing of them all; for what he after declares was not said to them singly and alone, but when they were all before him:

that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days; not their persons merely, but their posterity chiefly, from that time forward to the coming of the Messiah, who is spoken of in this prophecy, and the time of

his coming; some things are said relating to temporals, others to spirituals; some are blessings or prophecies of good things to them, others curses, or foretell evil, but all are predictions delivered out by Jacob under a spirit of prophecy; some things had their accomplishment when the tribes of Israel were placed in the land of Canaan, others in the times of the judges, and in later times; and some in the times of the Messiah, to which this prophecy reaches, whose coming was in the last days, (~~SC00~~ Hebrews 1:1) and Nachmanides says, according to the sense of all their writers, the last days here are the days of the Messiah; and in an ancient writing of the Jews it is said ^{f1865}, that Jacob called his sons, because he had a mind to reveal the end of the Messiah, i.e. the time of his coming; and Abraham Seba ^{f1866} observes, that this section is the seal and key of the whole law, and of all the prophets prophesied of, unto the days of the Messiah.

Ver. 2. *Gather yourselves together*, etc.] This is repeated to hasten them, and to suggest that he had something of importance to make known unto them, which he chose to do, when they were together:

and hear, ye sons of Jacob, and hearken to Israel your father: these words are used and doubled to excite their attention to what he was about to say, and which is urged from the near relation there was between them.

Ver. 3. *Reuben, thou art my firstborn*, etc.] Jacob addressed himself to Reuben first, in the presence of his brethren, owned him as his firstborn, as he was, (~~Q281~~ Genesis 29:31,32) did not cashier him from his family, nor disinherit him, though he had greatly disoblged him, for which the birthright, and the privileges of it, were taken from him, (~~380~~ 1 Chronicles 5:1,2)

my might, and the beginning of my strength; begotten by him when in his full strength ^{f1867}, as well as the first of his family, in which his strength and glory lay; so the Septuagint, “the beginning of my children”; and because he was so, of right the double portion belonged to him, had he not forfeited it, (~~Q217~~ Deuteronomy 21:17 ~~Q456~~ Psalm 105:36). Some versions render the words, “the beginning of my grief”, or “sorrow” ^{f1868}, the word “Oni” sometimes so signifying, as Rachel called her youngest son “Benoni”, the son of my sorrow; but this is not true of Reuben, he was not the beginning of Jacob’s sorrow, for the ravishing of Dinah, and the slaughter and spoil of the Shechemites, by his sons, which gave him great sorrow and grief, were before the affair of Reuben’s lying with Bilhah:

the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power; that is, to him of right belonged excellent dignity, power, and authority in the family, a preeminence over his brethren, a double portion of goods, succession in government, and, as is commonly understood, the exercise of the priesthood; and so the Targums interpret it, that he should, had he not sinned, took three parts or portions above his brethren, the birthright, priesthood, and kingdom. Jacob observes this to him, that he might know what he had lost by sinning, and from what excellency and dignity, grandeur and power, he was fallen.

Ver. 4. *Unstable as water*, etc.] Which is not to be understood of the levity of his mind, and his disposition to hurt, and the impetuous force of that breaking forth like water, and carrying him into the commission of it; but rather of his fall from his excellency and dignity, like the fall of water from an high place; and of his being vile, mean, and contemptible, useless and unprofitable, like water spilled on the ground; and of his weak and strengthless condition and circumstances, being deprived of the prerogatives and privileges of his birthright, and having lost all his honour and grandeur, power and authority. The word in the Arabic language signifies ^{f1869} to be proud and haughty, to lift up one's self, to swell and rise like the turgent and swelling waters: but though he did thus lift himself, yet it follows,

thou shalt not excel; not have the excellency of dignity and power which belonged to him as the firstborn; the birthright and the double portion were given to Joseph, who had two tribes descending from him, when Reuben had but one; the kingdom was given to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi, as both the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem observe: as he did not excel his brethren in honour and dignity, so neither in wealth and riches, nor in numbers; (see ¹⁸³⁶Deuteronomy 33:6) where the word "not" is wrongly supplied; nor in his share in the land of Canaan, his posterity being seated on the other side of Jordan, at their request; nor did any persons of note and eminence spring from his tribe: because thou wentest up to thy father's bed, then defiledst thou it; referring to his incest with Bilhah, his father's concubine wife, (¹⁸²²Genesis 35:22) which, though done forty years ago, was now remembered, and left an indelible spot on Reuben's character, and his posterity:

he went up to my couch: turning himself to his other sons, to take notice of the crime, as very abominable and detestable; affirming the truth of it, and

speaking of it with some vehemency, his affections being moved; and it may be could not bear to look at Reuben, but turned himself to his brethren; though he had forgiven the sin, and very probably Reuben had repented of it, and had forgiveness of God, which he might have, though in some sense vengeance was taken on this sinful invention of his, (^{<1998>}Psalm 99:8). There are various senses given of this phrase; some, as Aben Ezra, “my bed departed from me”; that is, he departed from his bed; or, as Kimchi ^{f1870}, “it ceased to be my bed”; he left it, he abstained from the bed of Bilhah upon its being defiled by Reuben: and others separate these words, and read **hl** [, singly, “it went up” ^{f1871}; either the excellency of Reuben went up, vanished and disappeared like smoke; or, as Ben Melech connects it with the beginning of the verse, “unstable as water”, giving the sense, “it”, the inundation of water, “ascended” and prevailed over thee; as waters ascend, meaning his lust ascended, and got the prevalence over him; but the accents will not admit of such a separation of the words; it is best to understand them in the first sense. As to the manner of the expression, of going up to a bed, it may be observed, that not only their beds in those times might be raised higher than ours, but that they were placed in an higher part of the room, and so there was an ascent to them: and Dr. Shaw ^{f1872} says this is the custom of the eastern people to this day,

“at one end of each chamber there is a little gallery, raised three, four, or five feet above the floor, with a balustrade in the front of it, with a few steps likewise leading up to it, here they place their beds.”

Ver. 5. *Simeon and Levi are brothers*, etc.] Not because they were so in a natural sense, being brethren both by father and mother’s side, for there were others so besides them; but because they were of like tempers, dispositions, and manners ^{f1873}, bold, wrathful, cruel, revengeful, and deceitful, and joined together in their evil counsels and evil actions, and so are joined together in the evils predicted of them:

instruments of cruelty are in their habitations: or vessels, utensils, household goods gotten by violence and rapine, and through the cruel usage of the Shechemites; these were in their dwellings, their houses were full of such mammon of unrighteousness, or spoil; or, as others, “instruments of cruelty” are “their swords” ^{f1874}; what they should only have used in their own defence, with these they shed the blood of the Shechemites very barbarously, (^{<1825>}Genesis 34:25). Some think the word

here used is the Greek word for a sword; and the Jews say ^{f1875} that Jacob cursed the swords of Simeon and Levi in the Greek tongue; and others say it is Persic, being used by Xenophon for Persian swords; but neither of them seems probable: rather this word was originally Hebrew, and so passed from thence into other languages; but perhaps the sense of it, which Aben Ezra gives, may be most agreeable, if the first sense is not admitted, that it signifies covenants, compacts, agreements ^{f1876}, such as these men made with the Shechemites, even nuptial contracts; for the root of the word, in the Chaldee language, signifies to espouse ^{f1877}; and these they abused to cruelty, bloodshed, and slaughter, in a most deceitful manner: in the Ethiopic language, the word signifies counsels; so De Dieu takes it here.

Ver. 6. *O my soul, come not thou into their secret*, etc.] Their cabinet counsels, combinations and conspiracies; this Jacob said, as abhorring the wicked counsel they had took of slaying the Shechemites; and lest any should think he was concerned in it, or connived at it, he expressed a detestation of the fact on his dying bed: the future tense may be put for the past; and so Onkelos renders it, “my soul was not in their secret”; and so the other two Targums paraphrase it, that when they got and consulted together, his soul was not pleased and delighted with their counsel, but abhorred it; or “my soul shall not come”, which Jarchi thinks prophetic refers to the case of Zimri, the son of Salu, of the tribe of Simeon, as the following clause to the affair of Korah, of the tribe of Levi, as foreseeing and disapproving them, and desiring they might not be called by his name, or his name called upon them, (^{<0254>}Numbers 25:14 16:1)

unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united; the same thing expressed in different words; by his “honour or glory” he means his soul, the more honourable part of man, or his tongue, with which man glorifies God; and hereby Jacob intimates, that he did not in thought, and much less in express words, give any consent unto, and approbation of the deed of those two sons of his, and that he never was, nor never desired to be with them in their meetings and consultations:

for in their anger they slew a man; Hamor or Shechem, together with all the males of the city; and so “man” may be put for “men”, the singular for the plural, as is frequent. The Targum of Jonathan is, a king and his governor; and the Targum of Jerusalem, kings with governors:

and in their selfwill they digged down a wall; not the wall of the city of Shechem, which does not appear to be walled, by their easy access into it; and if it was, they do not seem to have had proper instruments for such an undertaking, nor a sufficient number for such work, and which would have required longer time than they used, unless it was a poor wall indeed: rather the wall of Shechem's house, or the court before it, which they dug down, or broke through to get in and slay Hamor and Shechem, and take away their sister; though the word, as here pointed, always signifies an ox; and so the Samaritan and Septuagint versions render it, they hamstrung a bull, or houghed an ox, just in like manner as horses are said to be houghed, (^{<6106>}Joshua 11:6,9 ^{<6084>}2 Samuel 8:4) and which some understand ^{f1878}figuratively of a prince or ruler; so great personages are called bulls of Bashan, (^{<4922>}Psalms 22:12) and interpret it either of Hamor or of Shechem, who was a prince among his people, and furious in his lust towards Dinah, and so this clause is much the same with the former: and besides, him they enervated by circumcision, and took the advantage of this his condition at the worst, and slew him, which seems to be the true sense of the text, agreeably to (^{<0325>}Genesis 34:25,26) but the Jerusalem Targum paraphrases it of Joseph, whom his brethren sold, who was like unto an ox; and so Jarchi interprets it of him, whom they designed to slay, (see ^{<6317>}Deuteronomy 33:17) but it is better to take the words in a literal sense, either of the oxen that Simeon and Levi took from the Shechemites, which they plucked or drove away from their mangers, as some render the words ^{f1879}; and some of them they might hough or hamstring, that they might not get away from them, (see ^{<0328>}Genesis 34:28) or rather of Shechem himself, who was רֶשֶׁת, "a prince", a word which has some likeness and affinity to this in the text.

Ver. 7. *Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce*, etc.] It was sinful anger in the nature of it, and so criminal and detestable; it was strong, fierce, and furious in its operation and effects, and so justly cursed; not their persons, but their passions:

and their wrath, for it was cruel; it issued in the cruel and barbarous slaughter of the inhabitants of Shechem; the same thing as before in other words repeated, to express his great abhorrence of their wrath and rage. Aben Ezra thinks that the words may be considered either as a prophecy or a prayer, that their anger might cease: what follows is certainly a prophecy,

I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel; which he is said to do, because he foretold it would be done; as Jeremiah is said to root out and pull down kingdoms, because he prophesied thereof, (^{<2010>}Jeremiah 1:10) and this was fulfilled in the tribes of Simeon and Levi; as for the tribe of Simeon, that had not a distinct part by itself in the land of Canaan, but had their inheritance out of the portion, and within the inheritance of the tribe of Judah, (^{<0800>}Joshua 19:1-9) and their cities did not join to one another, as Aben Ezra observes, but lay scattered up and down in the tribe of Judah; and when they were increased and straitened for room, many of them went without the land, to the entrance of Gedor, where they of Ham, or the Egyptians, had dwelt, and others to Mount Seir in Edom, (^{<1009>}1 Chronicles 4:39,42) and it is a notion which prevails with the Jews, and which Jarchi takes notice of, that a great many of this tribe were scribes and teachers of the law, and even teachers of children, and by which they lived among the several tribes; and so the Jerusalem Targum,

“I will divide the tribe of Simeon, that they may be scribes and teachers of the law in the congregation of Jacob.”

And as for the tribe of Levi, it is well known that they had no inheritance in the land of Canaan, but had forty eight cities assigned them in the several tribes here and there; and thus Jacob’s prophecy had an exact accomplishment.

Ver. 8. *Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise*, etc.] His name signifies praise, and was given him by his mother, her heart being filled with praises to God for him, (^{<0235>}Genesis 29:35) and is here confirmed by his father on another account, because his brethren should praise him for many excellent virtues in him; and it appears, by instances already observed, that he had great authority, and was highly esteemed among his brethren, as his posterity would be in future times for their courage, warlike expeditions and success, and being famous for heroes, such as David, and others; and especially his famous seed the Messiah, and of whom he was a type, should be praised by his brethren, who are so through his incarnation, and by divine adoption, and who praise him for the glories and excellencies of his person, and the blessings of his grace:

thine hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; pressing them down by his superior power, subduing them, and causing them to submit to him, and which was verified in David, who was of this tribe, (^{<1080>}Psalm 18:40) and

especially in the Messiah, in a spiritual sense, who has conquered and subdued all his and his people's enemies, sin, Satan, the world and death:

thy father's children shall bow down before thee; before the kings that should spring from this tribe, and should rule over all the rest, as David and Solomon, to whom civil adoration and respect were given by them; and before the King Messiah, his son and antitype, in a way of religious worship, which is given him by the angels, the sons of God, and by all the saints and people of God, who are his father's children by adoption; these bow before him, and give him religious adoration as a divine Person, and submit to his righteousness as Mediator, and bow to the sceptre of his kingdom, and cast their crowns at his feet, and give him the glory of their whole salvation. This in some Jewish writings ^{f1880} is applied to the time of the Messiah's coming.

Ver. 9. *Judah is a lion's whelp*, etc.] Or as one; the note of similitude being wanting, as Aben Ezra and Ben Melech observe; he was comparable to a young lion for his strength, courage, and generosity; and it may refer to the infant state of this tribe in the times of the judges, who first went up against the Canaanites and overcame them, (~~<0000>~~Judges 1:1-4)

from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; alluding to the lion going up to the mountains, where it chiefly resides, after it has found its prey and satiated itself with it:

he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; one that is grown up, and has arrived to its full strength, such an one is a proper emblem of David king of Israel, of his royalty, courage, valour and conquests; and who having subdued the nations round about him, couched like a lion, and had rest from all his enemies; and especially this was verified in the times of Solomon his son, when he had peace on all sides, and Judah and Israel dwelt safely under their vines and fig trees, (~~<1000>~~1 Kings 4:24,25)

who shall rouse him up? a lion grown up and in its full strength, or a lioness, as some choose to interpret it, and which is the fiercest, and therefore the most dangerous to rouse up when laid down, either in its den, or with its prey in its paws: so dangerous it was to provoke the tribe of Judah, as its enemies after found, especially in the times of David: all this may be applied to Christ, the lion of the tribe of Judah; the lion being the king of beasts, and the strongest among them, may denote the kingly

power and authority of Christ, his great strength as the mighty God and mighty Saviour, his courage in engaging with all the powers of darkness, and valour in vanquishing all enemies; his generosity and lenity to those that stoop to him, and his fierceness to his adversaries, who took the prey from the mighty, and then ascended on high, leading captivity captive; where he sat down at the right hand of God at rest and ease, and who will dare to rouse him up, or be able to stand before him when once he is angry? This verse in some ancient^{f1881} writings of the Jews is interpreted of Messiah the son of David.

Ver. 10. *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah*, etc.] Which some understand of the tribe, that Judah should not cease from being a tribe, or that it should continue a distinct tribe until the coming of the Messiah, who was to be of it, and was, and that it might appear he sprung from it; but this was not peculiar to this tribe, for the tribe of Benjamin continued, and so did the tribe of Levi unto the coming of Christ: besides, by Judah is meant the tribe, and to say a tribe shall not depart from the tribe, is not only a tautology, but scarcely sense; it rather signifies dominion, power, and authority, as the sceptre always does, it being an emblem of it, (see ^{<0247>}Numbers 24:17 ^{<3011>}Zechariah 10:11) and this intends either the government, which was in the heads and princes of the tribe, which commenced as soon as it became a tribe, and lasted as long as it remained one, even unto the times of the Messiah; or kingly power and government, which the sceptre is generally thought to be an emblem of, and which first commenced in David, who was of the tribe of Judah, and continued unto the Babylonish captivity, when another sort of governors and government took place, designed in the next clause:

nor a lawgiver from between his feet; which may be rendered disjunctively, “or a lawgiver”; any ruler or governor, that has jurisdiction over others, though under another, as the word is used, (^{<0714>}Judges 5:14) and the sense is, that till the Messiah came there should be in the tribe of Judah, either a king, a sceptre bearer, as there was unto the captivity; or a governor, though under others, as there were unto the times of Christ under the Babylonians, Persians, Grecians, and Romans; such as Gedaliah, Zorobabel, etc. and particularly the sanhedrim, a court of judicature, the members of which chiefly consisted of the tribe of Judah, and the **ayçn**, or prince of it, was always of that tribe, and which retained its power to the latter end of Herod’s reign, when Christ was come; and though it was greatly diminished, it had some power remaining, even at the death of

Christ, but quickly after had none at all: and if by the “lawgiver” is meant a scribe or a teacher of the law, as all the Targums, Aben Ezra, Ben Melech, and others interpret it, who used to sit at the feet of a ruler, judge, or prince of the sanhedrim; it is notorious there were of these unto, and in the times of the Messiah: in short, it matters not for the fulfilment of this prophecy what sort of governors those were after the captivity, nor of what tribe they were; they were in Judah, and their government was exercised therein, and that was in the hands of Judah, and they and that did not depart from thence till Shiloh came; since those that were of the other tribes, after the return from the captivity all went by the name of Judah:

until Shiloh come; which all the three Targums interpret of the Messiah, as do many of the Jewish writers, ancient and modern ^{f1882}; and is the name of the Messiah in their Talmud ^{f1883}, and in other writings ^{f1884}; and well agrees with him, coming from a root which signifies to be “quiet”, “peaceable”, and “prosperous”; as he was of a quiet and peaceable disposition, came to make peace between God and men, and made it by the blood of his cross, and gives spiritual peace to all his followers, and brings them at length to everlasting peace and happiness; having prospered and succeeded in the great work of their redemption and salvation he undertook:

and unto him shall the gathering of the people be; not of the Jews, though there were great gatherings of them to hear him preach, and see his miracles; as there were of all his people to him at his death, and in him as their head and representative, (^{<4000>}Ephesians 1:10) but of the Gentiles; upon his death, the Gospel being preached to all nations, multitudes among them were converted to Christ, embraced his doctrines, professed his religion, and abode by him, (see ^{<2110>}Isaiah 11:10) some render it, the obedience of the people ^{f1885}, from the use of the word in (^{<3007>}Proverbs 30:17), which sense agrees with the former; for those who are truly gathered by the ministry of the word yield an obedience to his doctrines and ordinances; and others read, “the expectation of the people” ^{f1886}; the Messiah being the desire of all nations, (^{<3006>}Haggai 2:6) this, with what goes before, clearly shows that the Messiah must be come, since government in every sense has departed from Judah for 1900 years or thereabout, and the Gentiles have embraced the Messiah and his Gospel the Jews rejected: the various contradictory senses they put upon this prophecy show the puzzle and confusion they are in about it, and serve to confirm the true sense of it: some apply it to the city Shiloh, others to Moses, others to Saul, others to David; nay, some will have Shiloh to be

Jeroboam, or Ahijah the Shilonite, and even Nebuchadnezzar: there are two senses they put upon it which deserve the most notice, the one is, that “Shebet”, we render “sceptre”, signifies a “rod”; and so it does, but such a rod as is an ensign of government, as it must here, by what follows, (see ~~2991~~ Ezekiel 19:11), but they would have it to signify either a rod of correction ^{f1887}, or a staff of support; but what correction or affliction has befallen the tribe of Judah peculiar to it? was it not in a flourishing condition for five hundred years, under the reign of David’s family? and when the rest of the tribes were carried captive and never returned, Judah remained in its own land, and, when carried captive, after seventy years returned again to it; add to which, that this is a prediction, not of affliction and distress, that should abide in the tribe of Judah, but of honour and glory to it: and besides, Judah has had a far greater share of correction since the coming of the true Messiah than ever it had before: and what support have the Jews now, or have had for many hundred years, being out of their land, destitute of their privileges, living among other nations in disgrace, and for the most part in poverty and distress? the other sense is this, “the sceptre and lawgiver shall not depart from Judah for ever, when Shiloh comes ^{f1888}”; but this is contrary to the accents which separate and divide the phrase, “between his feet”, from that, “for ever”, as this version renders the word; though **d[** never signifies “for ever”, absolutely put, without some antecedent noun or particle; nor does **yk** signify “when”, but always “until”, when it is joined with the particle **d[**, as it is here; besides, this sense makes the prophecy to pass over some thousands of years before any notice is taken of Judah’s sceptre, which, according to the Jews, it had thousands of years ago, as well as contradicts a received notion of their own, that the Messiah, when he comes, shall not reign for ever, but for a certain time, and even a small time; some say forty years, some seventy, and others four hundred ^{f1889}.

Ver. 11. *Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass’s colt unto the choice vine*, etc.] Which may be understood either of the tribe of Judah, and signify that vines should grow in such plenty, and so large and strong, that a man might fasten his ass to one of them, and if it ate and destroyed it, it would give no great concern, since the country abounded with them; or they would be so full of clusters that a man might load an ass from one of them. Some parts of the tribe of Judah were famous for vines, especially Engedi; hence we read of the vineyards of Engedi, (~~2014~~ Song of Solomon 1:14) or else of Shiloh the Messiah, which some interpret literally of him,

when the prophecy in (^{<300>}Zechariah 9:9) was fulfilled, as is recorded in (^{<420>}Matthew 21:2,5 ^{<410>}Mark 11:4) but others better, figuratively, of Christ's causing the Gentiles, comparable to an ass's colt, for their impurity, ignorance of, and sluggishness in spiritual things, to cleave to him the true vine, (^{<450>}John 15:1) in the exercise of faith, hope, and love, or to join themselves to his church and people, sometimes compared to a vine or vineyard, (^{<230>}Isaiah 5:1,2 27:2,3)

and he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: an hyperbolical expression, setting forth the great abundance of wine in this tribe, of which there was such plenty, that if they would, they might have used it instead of water to wash their clothes in, but not that they did do so, only might if they would; and may denote the great quantity of spiritual blessings flowing from the love of God, which come by Christ; and of his word and ordinances, which are comparable to wine and milk, and are a feast of fat things, of wine on the lees, well refined, (^{<230>}Isaiah 26:6 55:1) and may be applied to Christ, to the garment of his human nature, which, through his sufferings and death, was like a vesture dipped in blood, and he became red in his apparel, (^{<230>}Isaiah 63:1 ^{<690>}Revelation 19:16) or to his church and people, which cleave to him as a garment, and whose garments are washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb, (^{<600>}Revelation 1:5 7:14) these words are interpreted of the Messiah in the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, and are applied to him and his times in the Talmud ^{f1890}, and in other Jewish writings ^{f1891}: so wine is called the blood of the grape by the son of Sirach in the Apocrypha:

“The principal things for the whole use of man's life are water, fire, iron, and salt, flour of wheat, honey, milk, and the blood of the grape, and oil, and clothing.” (Sirach 39:26)

“He stretched out his hand to the cup, and poured of the blood of the grape, he poured out at the foot of the altar a sweetsmelling savour unto the most high King of all.” (Sirach 50:15)

Ver. 12. *His eyes shall be red with wine*, etc.] Signifying, not the intemperance of this tribe, and their immoderate use of wine, and the effect of it on them; but the goodness and generosity of their wine, that if drank plentifully of, and especially to excess, would have such an effect, (see ^{<420>}Proverbs 23:29,30) and, as applied to the Messiah, the antitype of Judah, and who was of this tribe, it may denote not so much the beauty of his eyes, as the Targums paraphrase it; as the joy and pleasure that sparkled

in his eyes when he shed his blood on the cross, enduring that, and despising the shame of it, for the joy of the salvation of his people; or the clearness of his sight in beholding the actions of his enemies, and especially of the fierceness and fury of his wrath against them, whose eyes are said to be an flames of fire, (~~<6611>~~ Revelation 1:14)

and his teeth white with milk; denoting the fruitfulness of his land, producing fine pastures, on which flocks and herds fed, and gave abundance of milk; and so Onkelos paraphrases the whole verse,

“his mountains shall be red with his vineyards, and his hills shall drop wine, and his valleys shall be white with corn and flocks of sheep;”

and much the same are the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem: the mystical sense may respect Christ and his people, and be expressive of the purity of his nature, life, and doctrine, and of the holiness of his members, their faith and conversation; or the clauses may be rendered, redder than wine, whiter than milk; but though whiteness recommends teeth, yet not redness the eyes; wherefore some ^{f1892} by transposing the first letters of the word for “red”, make it to signify black, as it does with the Arabs, and that colour of the eye is reckoned beautiful.

Ver. 13. *Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea*, etc.] Of the sea of Galilee, sometimes called the sea of Tiberias and of Gennesaret; and of the Mediterranean sea; and accordingly we find that the border of this tribe, when settled in the land of Canaan, was toward the sea, (~~<6690>~~ Joshua 19:10,11) and this was done, not at the discretion of Joshua, or at the choice of this tribe, but by lot; and which shows that Jacob said this under a spirit of prophecy, and which had its fulfilment two hundred years after; and is a full proof of the prescience and providence of God; and who, as he sets the bounds of the people, or of the nations of the world, and of the tribes of Israel, so the bounds of the habitations of particular persons, (~~<4472>~~ Acts 17:26) and he shall be for an haven of ships; shall have good ports commodious for ships to station in, and to cover them from storms and tempests; this tribe being situated by the sea shore ^{f1893}:

and his border shall be unto Zidon; not the city Zidon, for the tribe of Zebulun reached no further than Carmel, as Josephus observes;

“the Zebulunites (says he) obtained the land from Carmel, and the sea to the lake of Gennesaret.”

Now Carmel was forty miles at least from Zidon; but Phoenicia is meant, of which Zidon was the chief city; and so the Septuagint in (^{232D}Isaiah 23:2) put Phoenicia instead of Zidon; and whereas Carmel was the border of this tribe that way, it is also said by Jerom ^{f1894} to be the border of Phoenicia; so that Zebulun reaching to Carmel, its border may be truly said to be to Zidon or Phoenicia.

Ver. 14. *Issachar is a strong ass*, etc.] Or as one, the note of similitude being wanting, as Ben Melech observes; “a bony” ^{f1895} one, as the word signifies; not one that is lean, and nothing but skin and bones, as some interpret it, but that is strong and robust, able to carry burdens; and this tribe is compared to an ass, not for stupidity and sluggishness, but for its strength, and its use in husbandry, in which this tribe was chiefly occupied: the Targums of Jonathan and Jarchi interpret this figuratively, of his being strong to bear the yoke of the law: and it is a notion of the Jews, that this tribe were skilful in the doctrines of the law, and the intercalation of years, etc. from (^{132C}1 Chronicles 12:32) couching down between two burdens: one hanging on one side, and another on the other; which Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret of bales of goods; and may as well be understood of sacks of corn, or anything else, carried by these creatures, which, when they come into a good pasture, and for the sake of that and ease, will lie down with their burdens on them, and rise up again with them: the Targums of Onkelos and Jerusalem paraphrase it, “between two borders” ^{f1896}, or the borders of his brethren, as Jonathan, Zebulun and Dan, between which this tribe lay; and this is the reason Aben Ezra gives why Issachar, who was older than Zebulun, is mentioned after him, and between him and Dan, because his land lay between them; and so it may be observed, that in the division of the land in Joshua’s time, Issachar’s lot came up after Zebulun’s, (^{189D}Joshua 19:10-23) but Doctor Lightfoot thinks ^{f1897} it refers to the two kingdoms, between which it lay, that of Phoenicia on one side, and that of Samaria on the other.

Ver. 15. *And he saw that rest was good*, etc.] Not the house of the sanctuary, and attendance there, and the service of that, as the Targum of Jerusalem; nor the rest of the world to come, the happiness of a future state, as that of Jonathan; but rather, as Onkelos, the part and portion of the good land allotted him; he saw that a quiet industry exercised in a diligent cultivation and manuring his land was preferable to the hurry of a court, or the fatigue of a camp, or the dangers of the seas:

and the land that it was pleasant; a fine delightful country, which, if well looked after and improved, would produce plenty of pleasant fruits; and within this tribe were the rich vale of Esdraelon or Jezreel, and the fruitful mountains of Gilboa: of the former it is agreed by all travellers the like has never been seen by them, being of vast extent and very fertile, and formerly abounded with corn, wine, and oil; (see Gill on “~~2006~~ Hosea 1:5”) and the latter were famous for their fruitfulness, through the dews that descended on them, (~~1002~~ 2 Samuel 1:21)

and bowed his shoulders to bear; the fatigues of ploughing and sowing, and reaping, and carrying in the fruits of the earth:

and became a servant unto tribute; which greatly arises from agriculture and the fruits of the earth; and this tribe chose rather to pay more tribute than the rest, that they might abide at home and attend the business of their fields, when others were called to go forth to war.

Ver. 16. *Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.*] There is an elegant paronomasia, or an allusion to the name of Dan in those words, which signifies to judge, and the sense of them is, there should be heads, rulers, and judges of it, as the other tribes had; and this is the rather mentioned of him, because he is the first of the children of concubine wives as yet taken notice of; and what is here said of him is also to be understood of the rest of the sons of the concubines; for the meaning is not, that a judge should arise out of him as out of the other tribes, that should judge all Israel, restraining it to Samson, who was of this tribe, as the Targums and Jarchi; for no such judge did arise out of all the tribes of Israel; nor was Samson such a judge of Israel as David, who, according to Jarchi, is one of the tribes of Israel, namely, of Judah; for David did not judge as Samson, nor Samson as David, their form of government being different.

Ver. 17. *Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path,* etc.] Or be like that sort of serpents called the adder; or rather, that which has the name of Cerastes, which lies among sand, and being of the same colour is not easily discerned, and is often trampled upon unawares, and bites at once, unexpected; as Bothart^{f1898} from various writers has shown; particularly Diodorus Siculus^{f1899} says, of this kind of serpents, that their bites are deadly, and being of the same colour with the sand, few discern them, so that many ignorantly treading on them fall into danger unawares; and so Onkelos paraphrases it, that lies in wait by the way; and is by

another writer^{f1900} interpreted, a very grievous and hurtful serpent as the adder is:

that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward; for this sort of serpents lying in horse ways and cart ruts, snaps at and bites horses as they pass along, which bites affecting their legs and thighs, cause them to fall and throw their riders: this, by the Jewish writers, who are followed by many Christian interpreters, is applied to Samson, who by craft and policy managed the Philistines, as in the affair of the foxes, and especially in his last enterprise, when he got placed between the two pillars of the house, which answer, as some think, to the horse heels, as the multitude on the roof of the house to the riders: but though this may be illustrated in a particular person in this tribe, as a specimen of the genius and disposition of the whole tribe, yet the prophecy respects the whole tribe, and points at the situation of it, which was “by the way”, at the extreme part of the country; so that they had need of craft and policy as well as power to defend themselves against encroachers and invaders, and describes the general temper and disposition of this tribe, of which an instance may be seen in (~~4780~~ Judges 18:1-31) and it may have respect to the stumblingblocks and offences laid in this tribe to the rest of the tribes, by the idol of Micah, and more especially by the golden calf set up in Dan by Jeroboam.

Ver. 18. *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.*]. Jacob finding his spirits faint and flag, stops and breathes awhile before he proceeded any further in blessing the tribes; and as he found he was a dying man, and knew not how soon he should expire, expresses what he had been thoughtful of and concerned about in time past, and still was; that he had been waiting and hoping for, and expecting a state of happiness and bliss in another world, where he should be saved from sin and Satan, and the world, and from all his enemies, and out of all his troubles; and this he firmly believed he should enjoy, and hoped it would not be long ere he did; and especially he may have a regard to the Messiah, the promised Saviour, and salvation by him he had knowledge of, faith in, and expectation of; who may be truly called the salvation of God, because of his contriving, providing, and appointing, whom he had promised and spoken of by all the prophets; and whom in the fulness of time he would send into the world to work out salvation for his people; and to him all the Targums apply the words, which are to this purpose:

“said our father Jacob, not for the salvation of Gideon, the son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation, do I wait; nor for the salvation of Samson the son of Manoah, which is a transitory salvation; but for the salvation of Messiah the son of David, (which is an everlasting one,) who shall bring the children of Israel to himself, and his salvation my soul desireth.”

and though Jacob might be affected with the evils he foresaw would rise up in the tribe of Dan, he had last mentioned, and with the troubles that should come upon all the tribes; and had some pleasing sights of the deliverances and salvations, that should be wrought for them, by judges and saviours that should be raised up; yet his chief view was to the Messiah, and salvation by him.

Ver. 19. *Gad, a troop shall overcome him*, etc.] There is a paronomasia, or an allusion to the name of Gad almost in every word of the verse, which signifies a troop: the whole is a prediction that this tribe would be a warlike one, and have the common fate of war, sometimes be conquered, and at other times conquer, but however should be at last entirely victorious; all the three Targums refer this to this tribe passing over Jordan at the head of the armies of Israel, into the land of Canaan, in Joshua’s time, which, when they had subdued, they returned to their own inheritance on the other side Jordan, (^{<0602>}Joshua 1:12-18 4:12,13 22:1-4) and so Jarchi; but it rather seems to refer to what befell them in their own tribe, which being seated on the other side Jordan was exposed to the incursions and spoils of the Moabites and Amonites; who came upon them like troops of robbers, and seized upon their possessions and retained them for some years; as in the times of the judges, (see ^{<0700>}Judges 10:7,8) and in after times we find the Ammonites in possession of their country, (^{<2400>}Jeremiah 49:1) whereby this part of the prophecy had its accomplishment:

but he shall overcome at the last; as the Gadites with the Reubenites and half tribe of Manasseh did overcome the Hagarites and Arabians, the war being of God, and succeeded, and they dwelt in their stead until the captivity of the ten tribes, (^{<1308>}1 Chronicles 5:18-22) and thus it is with the people of God in their present warfare state, who are often foiled with sin, Satan, and the world, their spiritual enemies; but at last they are more than conquerors over them all through Christ that has loved them.

Ver. 20. *Out of Asher his bread shall be fat*, etc.] Which signifies that this tribe would have a sufficiency of food out of their own land, without being

obliged to others, and that it would be of the best sort; it occupied a tract of land, as Andrichomius^{f1901} says, reaching from great Zidon to Carmel of the sea, a space of twenty miles in length; and in breadth, from the great sea to Asor, and even to Naason, a space of nine miles; the land of this tribe is very fat, he says, and exceeding fruitful in wine and oil, especially in the best wheat: and in this tribe, as the same writer^{f1902} observes, among other very fruitful places was the valley of Asher, called the fat valley, which began five miles from Ptolemais, and reached to the sea of Galilee, and contained more than ten miles in length; the soil of which was exceeding fat and fruitful, and produced the most delicate wine and wheat, and might be truly called the fat valley, (see ~~<1834>~~ Deuteronomy 33:24)

and he shall yield royal dainties; food fit for kings, of all sorts, flesh, fish, and fowl: here King Solomon had one of his purveyors to provide food for him and his household, (~~<1046>~~ 1 Kings 4:16). Asher's country answered to his name, which signifies happy or blessed: in those parts Christ was much in the days of his flesh on earth; in Cana of this tribe he turned water into wine and in this country discoursed concerning the bread of life himself, who is the best of bread and royal dainties.

Ver. 21. *Naphtali is a hind let loose*, etc.] Onkelos applies it to the tribe itself, and to the goodness of its land,

“as for Naphtali, his lot fell in a good land, and his inheritance a fruit bearing one,”

as it was; for in it was the most fruitful country of Gennesaret, which gave name to a sea or lake by it, and which abounded with gardens, with palm trees, fig trees, and olive trees; and which, Josephus says^{f1903} one might call the ambition of nature; and Strabo^{f1904}, an Heathen writer, says of it, that it was an happy blessed country, and bearing all sorts of good things; and Jarchi on the place observes, this is the vale of Gennesaret, which is as quick to bring forth fruit, as a hind is swift to run. Some will have this prophecy to be fulfilled in Barak, as Ben Gersom, Abendana, and others, who was of this tribe, and who at first was fearful like the hind, and backward to go out to war when called, but afterwards readily went out with Deborah, and at last gave goodly words in the song they both sung: but it better describes the genius, disposition, and manners of the tribe, who were kind and loving, swift and expeditious in their affairs; lovers of liberty, well spoken persons, humane, affable, courteous, of a good address and pleasing language, as follows:

he giveth goodly words; to those he converses with; and it may be applied, particularly to Christ and his disciples, and to the inhabitants of this tribe in his time, among whom they much were, (see ~~4043~~ Matthew 4:13 9:1) he himself is compared to the hind of the morning, (~~4271~~ Psalm 22:1) in the title, and to a roe or a young hart, (~~2189~~ Song of Solomon 2:9,17) (~~2184~~ Song of Solomon 8:14) for his amiableness and loveliness in himself, and for his lovingness to his people, and for his swiftness to do the will and work of his father, being sent out ^{f1905}, as the word here used signifies, by him into this world, on the business of man's salvation: and so his disciples, who were Galilaeans, were swift to obey his call, and left all and followed him, and were sent out by him to preach his Gospel; and both he and they may be said to "give goodly words", as the doctrines of the Gospel are, words of grace, truth, and life; wholesome, comfortable, pleasant and delightful; good tidings of good things, of peace, pardon, righteousness, salvation and eternal life by Christ: and the inhabitants of this country in Christ's time were swift to run after him, and hear him; panted after him as the hart after the water brooks, and both received and gave out the goodly words of the Gospel, and were made free thereby, and so like an hind let loose. Bochart gives a different version of these words, which is countenanced by the Septuagint version, Naphtali is a tree full of shoots, or "a tree shot out, sprouting out beautiful branches"; but as this is contrary to the points, and coincides with the next verse, it is rejected by many learned men.

Ver. 22. *Joseph is a fruitful bough*, etc.] Or as one, like the bough or branch of a tree laden with fruit, as he was with children; one of which he called Ephraim from his fruitfulness, and both his sons became numerous, and the heads of two tribes in Israel; and with other temporal fruits and blessings, as riches, honour, etc. and especially with the fruits of grace and righteousness:

[even] a fruitful bough by a well; those are the most fruitful that are near a well or fountain of water, as such trees are which are planted by rivers of water, (see ~~4908~~ Psalm 1:3) this being repeated may have respect to the two boughs or branches of Joseph's family, or the two fruitful and numerous tribes that sprung from him:

whose branches run over the wall; as such trees that are set against one, and by the reflected heat of the sun grow the more, and become more fruitful. The word for "branches" is "daughters", which some refer to the daughters of Manasseh and Zelophehad, who received their inheritance on

both sides of Jordan; and others interpret it of the cities of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, as cities are sometimes called.

Ver. 23. *The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him.*] His brethren who grieved him with their ill usage, shot out bitter words against him, and hated him for his dreams, and because his father loved him; and they could not speak peaceably to him, they mocked at him, conspired to kill him, stripped him of his clothes, cast him into a pit, and then sold him; in all which he was a type of Christ, as used by the Jews. His mistress also, and Satan by her, grieved him with her temptations and solicitations to sin, which were as fiery darts shot at him; but being resisted, her impure love was turned into hatred to him, and she shot her lies, calumnies, and reproaches, as so many darts at him; and, as the Targum of Jonathan, the magicians of Egypt, who envied him for his superior knowledge, and perhaps many others in Pharaoh's court, who were displeased at his preferments, might bring accusations to Pharaoh against him, out of hatred to him; and Satan and his principalities and powers, whose temptations are compared to fiery darts, are not to be exempted, which they shoot at and grieve the people of God, who are hated by them. Perhaps reference may be had to the wars of the posterity of Joseph under Joshua, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, with the Canaanites.

Ver. 24. *But his bow abode in strength,* etc.] For as his enemies were archers, and had bows and arrows, so had he, and repelled force by force; but then his bow and arrows were of a different sort, the virtues and graces that he was possessed of, as innocence and integrity, chastity, fortitude, wisdom, prudence and patience, faith, hope, and the like, which remained unmoved, and in their full exercise, notwithstanding the powerful attacks made upon them; and so his posterity were unmoved and unshaken, and stood firm and undaunted, notwithstanding the powerful enemies they had to deal with, until they were wholly subdued:

and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; so that he held his bow, and drew it with great strength against his enemies, as an archer being used to the bow, his nerves become strong, and he is not weakened by drawing it, nor weary of using it; but Joseph had not his strength of himself, but from the Lord, the mighty One, that had strengthened his father Jacob, and supported him under all his trouble: saints, like Joseph, have their strength, as well as their

righteousness, in and from Christ; and when they are weak in themselves, they are strong in him, to exercise grace and perform duty:

from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel; from Jacob descended Joseph; or from the God of Jacob it was that Joseph through divine Providence was sent into Egypt to be as a shepherd, to feed his father's family, and as a stone to uphold and support it; in which he was a type of Christ, the great and good Shepherd of the flock, and the stone that is laid in Zion, on which the whole spiritual Israel of God is built; the foundation stone on which they are laid, and are safe, and the corner stone which knits them together. And some think that Christ is principally meant, who in his office capacity was from the mighty God of Jacob, a Shepherd of his providing and appointing, and a stone of his laying; and so Nachmahides says, the stone here made mention of is the same as in (~~1822~~ Psalm 118:22).

Ver. 25. *Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee*, etc.] The same with the mighty God of Jacob, by whom his hands had been made strong, and he would be still helped, protected, and defended against his powerful enemies; and by whom Christ, the antitype, was helped as man and Mediator against his enemies, and to do all the work he engaged in; and by whom all the Lord's people are helped to fight his battles with their spiritual enemies, to withstand temptations, exercise every grace, and do the will and work of God:

and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above; with those blessings which may be ascribed to the sun, moon, and stars, and their influences as means, and to the rain and dew which descend from thence; and as with such temporal blessings, so with spiritual ones in heavenly things in Christ:

blessings of the deep that lieth under; of rivers, fountains and springs that rise out of the earth from below, which water and make fruitful:

blessings of the breasts, and of the womb an increase of children, and of cattle, and those healthy, thriving, and prosperous, which are great temporal mercies; as are the word and ordinances spiritual ones, those breasts of consolation, which such that are born again partake of, and grow thereby.

Ver. 26. *The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors*, etc.] Jacob's blessings were greater and more numerous, both those which he himself had, and bestowed upon his offspring, than

those that Abraham and Isaac had, he having more children than they, and blessings for everyone of them; whereas they each of them had but two, and one of these two were excluded the blessing: and besides, though these blessings were the same in substance bestowed on his progenitors, and by them on him, yet these were more clearly and distinctly given out by him to his posterity, and were nearer their accomplishment:

unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, they shall be on the head of Joseph: that is, continue on him as long as the everlasting hills continue, particularly those of a spiritual kind, for they endure for ever. The word for “bounds” signifies “desire”; and Onkelos paraphrases the words,

“which the princes that were of old desired:”

meaning either the angels who desire to look into heavenly things, or the patriarchs, who were desirous of the coming of the Messiah, and salvation by him; and so the Vulgate Latin version is, “until the desire of the everlasting hills should come”; that is, Christ, who is the desire of all nations, in whom all nations of the earth are to be blessed, and therefore desirable; blessings of all kinds are upon the head of the just, as they were on Joseph, (^{<3006>}Proverbs 10:6)

and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren; who shunned company and conversation with him, and at length sold him into Egypt, where he was parted from them, and remained separate for many years; and when they came to dwell in the land of Egypt, they lived in Goshen, and he at Pharaoh’s court, where he was distinguished with peculiar honours, and advanced above them. Of Christ his antitype, (see ^{<3026>}Hebrews 7:26).

Ver. 27. *Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf,* etc.] All the three Targums apply this prophecy to the priests offering the daily sacrifice, morning and evening, in the temple, which stood in the lot of Benjamin, and dividing what was left, and eating it. But it respects the tribe itself, compared to a wolf for its fortitude, courage, and valour, as well as for its rapaciousness, it being a warlike tribe; and the Jewish writers ^{f1906} say, that it is compared to a wolf, because of its strength. Wolves, said to be devoted to Mars, are called “martial” wolves by Virgil ^{f1907} and Horace ^{f1908}; and we have an early instance of the valour and success of this tribe in a war waged with all the other tribes, and in two pitched battles, in one with 26,000 men it beat 400,000, (^{<0215>}Judges 20:15-25), and if this tribe is compared to a wolf for

rapaciousness, this may be illustrated by the remainder of those, after the loss of a third battle, catching and carrying away the daughters of Shiloh, and making them their wives, (^{<07223>}Judges 21:23). Some apply this to particular persons of this tribe, as to Saul the first king of Israel, who was of Benjamin; and who as soon as he took the kingdom of Israel, in the morning, in the beginning of that state, fought against all his enemies on every side, against Moab, Ammon, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines, and the Amalekites, (^{<09447>}1 Samuel 14:47,48) and to Mordecai and Esther, who were of the same tribe, who after the captivity, and in the evening of that state, divided the spoil of Haman, (^{<1781>}Esther 8:1) this is observed by Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Ben Gersom. Some of the Christian fathers have applied the prophecy to the Apostle Paul, who was of the tribe of Benjamin; who in the morning of his youth was a fierce and ravenous persecutor, and made havoc of the church of God: and in the evening, or latter part of his life, spent his days in dividing the spoil of Satan among the Gentiles, taking the prey out of his hands, turning men from the power of Satan unto God, and distributed food to the souls of men. In a spiritual sense he was a warlike man, a good soldier of Christ, and accoutred as such, had a warfare to accomplish, and enemies to fight with; and did fight the good fight of faith, conquered, and was more than a conqueror through Christ, and is now crowned: and why may it not be applied to Christ himself, seeing the blessing of Benjamin by Moses, (^{<16512>}Deuteronomy 33:12) seems to belong to him? he is God's Benjamin, the son and man of his right hand, as dear to him as his right hand, in whom his power has been displayed, and who is exalted at his right hand; and may as well be compared to a wolf as to a lion, as he is the lion of the tribe of Judah, and as God himself is compared to a lion and bear, (^{<2837>}Hosea 13:7,8) and who is expressly said to divide the spoil with the strong, (^{<25912>}Isaiah 53:12) spoiled principalities and powers, delivered his people as a prey out of the hands of the mighty, and will make an utter destruction of all his and their enemies. Some of these things were done in the morning of the Gospel dispensation, and others will be done in the evening of it, (^{<50215>}Colossians 2:15 ^{<60911>}Revelation 19:11,15).

Ver. 28. *All these are the twelve tribes of Israel*, etc.] The twelve sons of Jacob before mentioned were heads of twelve tribes, who were afterwards seated, and had their part in the land of Canaan; there were indeed thirteen tribes, two springing from Joseph; but then the tribe of Levi had no part in the land of Canaan, which was divided into twelve parts; this shows that

the above predictions respect not the persons of the patriarchs, but their tribes:

and this [is it] that their father spake unto them, and blessed them: the above is the sum and substance of what he had delivered in his patriarchal benediction of them, a little before his death; and though some of them, as Reuben, Simeon, and Levi, may seem rather to be cursed than blessed, yet the greater part of them were clearly and manifestly blessed; and what he said by way of correction and rebuke to the others, might be blessed to them for their good; nor is it improbable, that after he had delivered out the above predictions, he might wish for and implore a blessing on them all; and certain it is, that they all had a part in the blessing of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as it related to the land of Canaan:

everyone according to his blessing he blessed them; according to the blessing which was appointed to them of God, and was in later times bestowed on them, Jacob under a spirit of prophecy was directed to bless them with, or to foretell what blessings should come upon them, and which accordingly did.

Ver. 29. *And he charged them, and said unto them,* etc.] The same charge he had given to Joseph he here renews, and lays it upon his sons, who were everyone of them to go along with Joseph to bury him in Canaan:

I [am] to be gathered unto my people; the people of God, the spirits of just men made perfect, the souls of all the saints who before this time had departed this life, and were in a state of happiness and bliss; called his people, because he and they were of the same mystical body the church, belonged to the same general assembly, and church of the firstborn; the company of God's elect, who were in the same covenant of grace, and partakers of the same blessings and promises of grace: this shows that the souls of men are immortal; that there is a future state after death, which is a state of happiness, and into which saints immediately enter as soon as they die, and where Jacob expected to be in a short time:

bury me with my fathers; the other part of himself, his body, which should not be gathered to his people, as his soul would be, he orders to be interred with his fathers Abraham and Isaac:

in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite; which is more particularly described in the following verse, being the place of his father's sepulchre.

Ver. 30. *In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan,* etc.] This is so exactly described, that there might be no mistake about the place, (see ^{<012317>}Genesis 23:17,19):

which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite, for a possession of a burying place; this is observed if any of the successors of Ephron, or any of the Hittites, should lay any claim unto it, or dispute the right of Jacob's sons to bury him there.

Ver. 31. *There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife,* etc.] Abraham buried Sarah there himself, and his two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him there:

there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; we have no other account of the death of Rebekah, and her burial, but here; it is probable she died before Isaac, and that Isaac buried her in this cave; and here Esau and Jacob buried him:

and there I buried Leah; of whose death and burial we also read nowhere else but here; it is probable she died before Isaac, and that Isaac buried her in this cave; and here Esau and Jacob buried him:

Ver. 32. *The purchase of the field, and of the cave that is there, was from the children of Heth.*] Which is repeated for the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of, that both the field and cave were bought by Abraham of Ephron the Hittite, and that the children of Heth were witnesses of the bargain, and of the payment of the money, and by whom the estate was made sure to Abraham; all which might be urged, if any controversy should arise about it; (see ^{<012316>}Genesis 23:16-20)

Ver. 33. *And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons,* etc.] Had given all the proper directions and instructions concerning his interment in the land of Canaan: he gathered up his feet into the bed; on which he sat while he blessed his sons, and gave orders to them about his burial; but now he gathered up his feet into the bed, laid himself along, and composed himself in a proper posture to die. What authority the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem on (^{<01421>}Genesis 49:21) had for saying this bed was a bed of gold, I know not:

and he yielded up the ghost; he expired, he died an easy death, without any pain or sickness: which Ben Melech says this phrase is expressive of. He died in the year of his age one hundred and forty seven, and not one

hundred and forty four, as a Jewish chronologer^{f1909} wrongly puts it, and in the year of the world 2315, and before Christ 1689, according to Bishop Usher^{f1910}: and was gathered unto his people: (see Gill on “~~4429~~Genesis 49:29”).

CHAPTER 50

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 50

This chapter contains a short account of what happened from the death of Jacob to the death of Joseph, and is chiefly concerned with the funeral of Jacob; it first gives an account how Joseph was affected with his father's death, of his orders to the physicians to embalm him, and of the time of their embalming him, and of the Egyptians mourning for him, (~~GEN~~Genesis 50:1-3), next of his request to Pharaoh to give him leave to go and bury his father in Canaan, and his grant of it, (~~GEN~~Genesis 50:4-6) and then of the grand funeral procession thither, the mourning made for Jacob, and his interment according to his orders, (~~GEN~~Genesis 50:7-13) upon the return of Joseph and his brethren to Egypt, they fearing his resentment of their former usage of him, entreat him to forgive them; which they said they did at the direction of their father, to which Joseph readily agreed, and comforted them, and spoke kindly to them, and bid them not fear any hurt from him, for whatever were their intention, God meant it, and had overruled it for good, (~~GEN~~Genesis 50:14-21) and the chapter is concluded with an account of Joseph's age and death, and of his posterity he saw before his death, and of the charge he gave to his brethren to carry his bones with them, when they should depart from Egypt, (~~GEN~~Genesis 50:22-26).

Ver. 1. *And Joseph fell upon his father's face*, etc.] Laid his own face to the cold face and pale cheeks of his dead father, out of his tender affection for him, and grief at parting with him; this shows that Joseph had been present from the time his father sent for him, and all the while he had been blessing the tribes, and giving orders about his funeral:

and wept upon him; which to do for and over the dead is neither unlawful nor unbecoming, provided it is not carried to excess, as the instances of David, Christ, and others show:

and kissed him; taking his farewell of him, as friends used to do, when parting and going a long journey, as death is. This was practised by Heathens, who had a notion that the soul went out of the body by the

mouth, and they in this way received it into themselves: so Augustus Caesar died in the kisses of Livia, and Drusius in the embraces and kisses of Caesar^{f1911}. Joseph no doubt at this time closed the eyes of his father also, as it is said he should, and as was usual; (see ~~Gen~~ Genesis 46:4).

Ver. 2. *And Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalm his father*, etc.] Which he did, not merely because it was the custom of the Egyptians, but because it was necessary, his father's corpse being to be carried into Canaan to be interred there, which would require time; and therefore it was proper to make use of some means for the preservation of it, and these men were expert in this business, which was a branch of the medicinal art, as Pliny^{f1912} and Mela^{f1913} suggest; and of these Joseph had more than one, as great personages have their physicians ready to attend them on any occasion, as kings and princes, and such was Joseph, being viceroy of Egypt. Herodotus^{f1914} says the Egyptians had physicians peculiar to every disease, one for one disease, and another for another; and Homer^{f1915} speaks of them as the most skilful of all men; though the Septuagint render the word by *ἐνταφιασταί*, the “buriers”, such who took care of the burial of persons, to provide for it, and among the rest to embalm, dry, and roll up the bodies in linen:

and the physicians embalmed him; the manner of embalming, as Herodotus^{f1916} relates, was this,

“first with a crooked iron instrument they extracted the brain through the nostrils, which they got out partly by this means, and partly by the infusion of medicines; then with a sharp Ethiopian stone they cut about the flank, and from thence took out all the bowels, which, when they had cleansed, they washed with palm wine (or wine of dates), and after that again with odours, bruised; then they filled the bowels (or hollow place out of which they were taken) with pure myrrh beaten, and with cassia and other odours, frankincense excepted, and sewed them up; after which they seasoned (the corpse) with nitre, hiding (or covering it therewith) seventy days, and more than that they might not season it; the seventy days being ended, they washed the corpse, and wrapped the whole body in bands of fine linen, besmearing it with gum, which gum the Egyptians use generally instead of glue.”

And Diodorus Siculus^{f1917}, who gives much the same account, says, that every part was retained so perfectly, that the very hairs of the eyebrows,

and the whole form of the body, were invariable, and the features might be known; and the same writer tells us, that the expense of embalming was different; the highest price was a talent of silver, about one hundred and eighty seven pounds and ten shillings of our money, the middlemost twenty pounds, and the last and lowest were very small. The embalmers he calls *ταριχενται*, and says they were in great esteem, and reckoned worthy of much honour, and were very familiar with the priests, and might go into holy places when they pleased, as the priests themselves.

Ver. 3. *Forty days were fulfilled for him*, etc.] Were spent in embalming him:

for so are fulfilled the days of those that are embalmed; so long the body lay in the pickle, in ointment of cedar, myrrh and cinnamon, and other things, that it might soak and penetrate thoroughly into it: and so Diodorus Siculus^{f1918} says, that having laid more than thirty days in such a state, it was delivered to the kindred of the deceased:

and the Egyptians mourned for him seventy days; during the time of their embalming him; for longer than seventy days the body might not lie in the pickle, as before observed, from Herodotus. According to Diodorus Siculus^{f1919}, the Egyptians used to mourn for their kings seventy two days: the account he gives is, that

“upon the death of a king, all Egypt went into a common mourning, tore their garments, shut up their temples, forbid sacrifices, kept not the feasts for seventy two days, put clay upon their heads^{f1920}, girt linen clothes under their breasts; men and women, two or three hundred together, went about twice a day, singing in mournful verses the praises of the deceased; they abstained from animal food, and from wine, and all dainty things; nor did they use baths, nor ointments, nor lie in soft beds, nor dared to use venery, but, as if it was for the death of a beloved child, spent the said days in sorrow and mourning.”

Now these seventy days here are either a round number for seventy two, or two are taken from them, as Quistorpius suggests, to make a difference between Jacob, and a king of theirs, who yet being the father of their viceroy, they honoured in such a manner. Jarchi accounts for the number thus, forty for embalming, and thirty for mourning; which latter was the usual time for mourning with the Jews for principal men, and which the

Egyptians added to their forty of embalming; (see ~~<019>~~ Numbers 20:29
~~<648>~~ Deuteronomy 34:8)

Ver. 4. *And when the days of his mourning were past*, etc.] The forty days before mentioned, in which both the Egyptians and Jacob's family mourned for him. An Arabic writer ^{f1921} says, the Egyptians mourned for Jacob forty days, which was the time of embalming; but the text is express for seventy days:

Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh; to the court of Pharaoh, the principal men there; so the Targum of Jonathan and the Septuagint version, to the great men or princes of the house of Pharaoh: it may seem strange that Joseph, being next to Pharaoh in the administration of the government, should make use of any to speak for him to Pharaoh on the following account. It may be, that Joseph was not in so high an office, and in so much power and authority, as in the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine; and it is certain that that branch of his office, respecting the corn, must have ceased; or this might have been a piece of policy in Joseph to make these men his friends by such obliging treatment, and by this means prevent their making objections to his suit, or plotting against him in his absence; or if it was the custom in Egypt, as it afterwards was in Persia, that no man might appear before the king in a mourning habit, (~~<104>~~ Esther 4:2) this might be the reason of his not making application in person: moreover, it might not seem so decent for him to come to court, and leave the dead, and his father's family, in such circumstances as they were: besides, he might speak to them not in person, but by a messenger, since it is highly probable he was now in Goshen, at a distance from Pharaoh's court; unless it can be supposed that these were some of Pharaoh's courtiers who were come to him in Goshen, to condole his father's death:

saying, if now I have found grace in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh; however, as these men had the ear of Pharaoh, and an interest in him, Joseph entreats the favour of them to move it to him:

saying, as follows, in his name.

Ver. 5. *My father made me swear, saying, lo, I die*, etc.] Having reason to believe he should not live long, he sent for Joseph, and took an oath of him to do as follows; this Joseph would have observed to Pharaoh, to show the necessity of his application to him, and the reasonableness of his request.

The words of dying men are always to be regarded; their dying charge is always attended to by those who have a regard to duty and honour; but much more when an oath is annexed to them, which among all nations was reckoned sacred:

in the grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me; it was usual with persons in their lifetime to prepare graves or sepulchres for themselves, as appears from the instances of Shebna, Joseph of Arimathea, and others, and so Jacob provided one for himself; and when he is said to “dig” it, it is not to be supposed that he dug it himself, but ordered it to be dug by his servants, and very probably this was done at the time he buried Leah. Onkelos renders it, “which I have bought”, possessed or obtained by purchase; and so the word is used in (^{<XRD>}Hosea 3:2) but the cave of Machpelah, in which Jacob’s grave was, was not bought by him, but by Abraham; for to say, as some Jewish writers ^{f1922} suggest, that he bought Esau’s part in it with a mess of pottage, is without foundation; it is better to take the words in the first sense. And now, since it was Jacob’s desire, yea, his dying charge, to be buried in the grave he had provided for himself, the mention of this to an Egyptian king could not fail of having its desired effect; since the Egyptians, as the historian ^{f1923} says, were more careful about their graves than about their houses:

now therefore let me go up, I pray thee; to the land of Canaan, which lay higher than Egypt;

and bury my father; there, in the grave he has provided for himself:

and I will come again: to the land of Egypt; this he would have said, lest it should be thought he only contrived this to get an opportunity of going away to Canaan with all his wealth and riches.

Ver. 6. *And Pharaoh said*, etc.] To Joseph, by the courtiers that waited upon him at Joseph’s request, who having delivered it to him had this answer:

go up, and bury thy father, as he made thee swear; the oath seems to be the principal thing that influenced Pharaoh to grant the request, it being a sacred thing, and not to be violated; otherwise, perhaps, he would not have chosen that Joseph should have been so long absent from him, and might have thought a grave in Egypt, and an honourable interment there, which

he would have spared no cost to have given, might have done as well, or better.

Ver. 7. *And Joseph went up to bury his father*, etc.] According to his request; having obtained leave of Pharaoh, and being desirous of paying his last respects, and doing his last office to so dear a parent, with all the honour and decency this service could be done with:

and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh; a great number of them, some must be left to wait upon him; who these were the next words explain:

the elders of his house: his senators and counsellors, his courtiers and principal officers of state:

and all the elders of the land of Egypt; governors of provinces and cities, the chief officers, civil and military; all which was done by the orders of Pharaoh, out of respect to Joseph and his family, and to make the funeral procession grand and honourable.

Ver. 8. *And all the house of Joseph, and his brethren, and his father's house*, etc.] Joseph and his two sons, and his servants, and his eleven brethren and their sons that were grown up, and as many of his father's domestics as could be spared attended the funeral:

only their little ones, and their flocks, and their herds, they left in the land of Goshen; there must be some servants left, though they are not mentioned, to take care of the little ones, and of the flocks and herds; and these being left behind, plainly show they intended to return again, and did not make this an excuse to get out of the land.

Ver. 9. *And there went up with him both chariots and horsemen*, etc.] Which was done both for the sake of honour and grandeur, and for safety and defence, should they be attacked by robbers in the deserts, or opposed by the Canaanites, and be refused the use of the cave of Machpelah, and the right to it disputed:

and it was a very great company; both for quantity and quality; the attendants at this funeral were very numerous, and many of them great personages, and upon the whole was a very honourable company, as the word ^{f1924} signifies, and made a very great figure and grand appearance:

or a very great army^{f1925}, consisting of chariots and horsemen fit for war; if there should be any occasion for it: and the Jews^{f1926} pretend that Esau came out with a large army, and met Joseph at the cave of Machpelah, and endeavoured to hinder the burial of Jacob there, where he lost his life, having his head struck off with the sword of Chushim, the son of Dan: some say it was Zepho, the grandson of Esau, with the sons of Esau, that made the disturbance there, on which a battle ensued, in which Joseph was the conqueror, and Zepho was taken captive, (see Gill on "~~0391~~Genesis 36:11"), the Jews^{f1927} give us the order and manner of the above procession thus; first Joseph, next the servants of Pharaoh, or the princes, then the elders of the court of Pharaoh, then all the elders of the land of Egypt, then the whole house of Joseph, next to them the brethren of Joseph, who were followed by their eldest sons, and after them were the chariots, and last of all the horses.

Ver. 10. *And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad*, etc.] Which was either the name of a man the owner of it, or of a place so called from the thorns and brambles which grew here, and with which the threshingfloor was surrounded, as Jarchi says, (see "~~0704~~Judges 9:14 ~~0580~~Psalms 58:9) and it was usual to make a hedge of thorns round about a threshingfloor^{f1928}, that it might be preserved; mention is made in the Talmud^{f1929} of the wilderness of Atad, perhaps so called from the thorns and brambles in it: Jerom says^{f1930} it was three miles from Jericho and two from Jordan, and was in his time called Bethagla, the place of a circuit, because there they went about after the manner of mourners at the funeral of Jacob. This, according to some^{f1931}, was two hundred and forty miles from On, where Joseph was supposed to live, sixteen from Jerusalem, and forty from Hebron, where Jacob was buried: nay, Austin^{f1932} says it was above fifty miles from that place, as affirmed by those who well knew those parts:

which is beyond Jordan; as it was to those that came out of Egypt:

and there they mourned with a great and very sore lamentation; being now entered into the country where the corpse was to be interred; and perhaps they might choose to stop here and express tokens of mourning, that the inhabitants might be apprised of their design in coming, which was not to invade them and make war upon them, only to bury their dead: this mourning seems to be made chiefly by the Egyptians, which was done in an external way, and it may be by persons brought with them for that purpose;

since both the name of the place after given was from their mourning there, and the mourning of Joseph is next observed as distinct from theirs:

and he made a mourning for his father seven days; which was the time of mourning, afterwards observed by the Jews, (see ^{<8813>}1 Samuel 31:13), this Joseph ordered and observed after he had buried his father, as Aben Ezra says, is affirmed by their ancient Rabbins, and perhaps might be at this same place upon their return.

Ver. 11. *And when the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites*, etc.] Who were at this time in the possession of the country where the threshingfloor of Atad was: when they

saw the mourning in the floor of Atad; for so large a company of people, and such a grand funeral procession, brought multitudes from all the neighbouring parts to see the sight; and when they observed the lamentation that was made, saw their mournful gestures and actions, and heard their doleful moan:

they said, this is a grievous mourning to the Egyptians; they concluded they must have lost some great man, to make such a lamentation for him:

wherefore the name of it was called Abelmizraim, which is beyond Jordan; they changed the name of the place, and gave it another upon this occasion, which signifies the mourning of Egypt or of the Egyptians, they being the principal persons that used the outward and more affecting tokens of mourning; though the whole company might be taken for Egyptians by the Canaanites, because they came out of Egypt.

Ver. 12. *And his sons did unto him according as he commanded them.*] Not only Joseph, but all the sons of Jacob were concerned in the burial of him, being all charged by him with it, and who were obedient to his commands as follows; (see ^{<1429>}Genesis 49:29).

Ver. 13. *For his sons carried him into the land of Canaan*, etc.] That is, they took care that he was carried there, as he desired to be; for it cannot be thought that they carried him on their shoulders thither, in like manner as the devout men carried Stephen to his burial, (^{<481>}Acts 8:2)

and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah, etc. the very place where he chose to be buried, (^{<1479>}Genesis 47:29,30).

Ver. 14. *And Joseph returned into Egypt*, etc.] As he promised he would, (^{Q1515}Genesis 50:5)

he and his brethren; the eleven sons of Jacob; for though they had not made the same promise, nor Joseph for them, yet they returned, having left their little ones, flocks and herds, in Egypt:

and all that went up with him to bury his father; the elders and great men of the land of Egypt, with their attendants:

after he had buried his father; in the land of Canaan, which, though given to the seed of Jacob, the time was not come for them to possess it, nor the time of their departure out of Egypt thither, which was to be a good while hence, and after another manner.

Ver. 15. *And when Joseph's brethren saw that their father was dead*, etc.] And buried; for this and what follows were after their return to Egypt, from the burial of their father; though some think it was before, and as soon as they saw their father was dead, when they thought it a proper time, while Joseph's heart was tender and affected with his father's death, to compromise matters with him: but there is no reason to invert the order of the narration, for this "seeing" is not to be understood of their bodily sight, but of the contemplation of their minds; they considered with themselves that their father was now dead and buried, they had lost an affectionate parent, who was concerned for the welfare and peace of all his family, but what a turn things would now take they knew not:

they said, Joseph will peradventure hate us, and will certainly requite us all the evil which we did unto him; their sin came fresh to their remembrance, guilt arose in their consciences and flew in their faces, and this caused fear and distrust where there was no reason for it, and led them to treat Joseph's character very ill; who was far from being of such a temper and disposition suggested by them, as if he retained hatred in his breast, and was of a revengeful spirit, only hid it during his father's life, because he would not grieve him.

Ver. 16. *And they sent a messenger unto Joseph*, etc.] Not Bilhah, as the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem, nor her sons, Dan and Naphtali, as Jarchi, grounding it on (^{Q1516}Genesis 37:1-36) though it is not improbable that some from among themselves were deputed, who were most interested in Joseph; since it is not very likely they would commit such an affair to a stranger or to a servant; and the most proper persons to be sent on such an

errand seem to be Judah and Benjamin, the latter as having had no concern in the affair of selling him, and was his own brother by father and mother's side, and very dear to him; and the former, because he saved his life, when the rest, excepting Reuben, were for shedding his blood, and had endeared himself also to Joseph, by his tender concern both for his father and his brother Benjamin; however, they thought fit first to sound Joseph by a messenger, how he stood affected to them, before they appeared in a body in person, to whom they gave a charge, as the words may be rendered, "they commanded unto Joseph"^{f1933}; that is, they commanded those that were deputed by them to him:

saying, thy father did command before he died; some think, this was no better than a lie, which their fear prompted them to; and that they framed the following story, the more to work upon the mind of Joseph, and dispose it in their favour; seeing it is a question whether Jacob ever knew anything of the affair of their ill usage to Joseph; since otherwise it would have been, in all likelihood, taken notice of in his last dying words, as well as the affair of Reuben, and that of Simeon and Levi; and besides, had he been apprised of it, he knew such was the clemency and generosity of Joseph, that he had nothing to fear from him, nor could he entertain any suspicion of a malevolent disposition in him towards his brethren, or that he would ever use them ill for former offences:

saying, as follows:

Ver. 17. *So shall ye say unto Joseph, forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin*, etc.] Their very great sin, and therefore more words than one are used to express it: unless this repetition should be intended, and signifies that their crime was a trespass against God, and a sin against their brother; and however they are directed to ask forgiveness for it, and urge the relation they stood in to Joseph, in order to obtain it, which they were ready to acknowledge as a very great evil, and of which they repented:

and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father; they urge not only the common relation they stood in to Jacob, but what they stood in to the God of Jacob, being his servants, his worshippers, as Joseph also was; and therefore, being his brethren not only in nature but in religion and grace, they hoped he would forgive their trespass:

and Joseph wept when they spake unto him; by their messenger; being troubled that they should be in such anxiety and distress of mind, which he had a fellow feeling with, and that they should have no better opinion of him, but entertain such distrust of him, notwithstanding all the kindness he had shown them, as to imagine that he should ever deal hardly with them for their former ill usage of him, which was forgiven and forgotten by him long ago.

Ver. 18. *And his brethren also went*, etc.] The messengers being returned to them, and acquainting them with what Joseph had said, they took courage and went from Goshen to Joseph's house or palace, be it where it may:

and fell down before his face; in an humble suppliant manner:

and they said, behold, we be thy servants; they were content to be so, would he but forgive their sin, and not resent their ill behaviour to him; thus they further fulfilled his dream of the eleven stars making obeisance to him, (~~Gen 37:9~~ Genesis 37:9).

Ver. 19. *And Joseph said unto them, fear not*, etc.] That any hurt would be done by him to them, or that he would use them ill for their treatment of him:

for am I in the place of God? to receive such homage from you, that you should be my servants, as Saadiah Gaon gives the sense; or rather to take vengeance for injury done, which belongs to God alone: or, “am I not under God”^{f1934}? subject to him, a servant of his, and why should you be mine? nor is it in my power, if I had a will to it, to change his purposes, to alter his providences, or contradict his will, and do hurt to those whom God hath blessed; and so may have regard to the late patriarchal benediction of his father, under the direction of the Holy Spirit: or, “am I in the place of God?” and under him a father of them, as he had been a provider for them, and a supporter of them, and still would be.

Ver. 20. *But as for you, ye thought evil against me*, etc.] That must be said and owned, that their intentions were bad; they thought to have contradicted his dreams, and made them of none effect, to have taken away his life, or however to have made him a slave all his days:

[but] God meant it unto good; he designed good should come by it, and he brought good out of it: this shows that this action, which was sinful in

itself, fell under the decree of God, or was the object of it, and that there was a concourse of providence in it; not that God was the author of sin, which neither his decree about it, nor the concourse of providence with the action as such supposes; he leaving the sinner wholly to his own will in it, and having no concern in the ataxy or disorder of it, but in the issue, through his infinite wisdom, causes it to work for good, as follows:

to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive; the nation of the Egyptians and the neighbouring nations, as the Canaanites and others, and particularly his father's family: thus the sin of the Jews in crucifying Christ, which, notwithstanding the determinate counsel of God, they most freely performed, was what wrought about the greatest good, the salvation of men.

Ver. 21. *Now therefore, fear ye not*, etc.] Which, is repeated to dispossess them of every fear they might entertain of him on any account whatever:

I will nourish you, and your little ones; provide food for them, and their families, not only for themselves and their sons, now grown up, but their grandchildren and even the youngest and latest of their families should share in his favours:

and he comforted them, and spake kindly to them; even “to their heart”^{f1935}; such things as were quite pleasing and agreeable to them, served to banish their fears, revive their spirits, and afford comfort to them. Just so God and Christ do with backsliding sinners, and would have done with his own people by his servants; (see ²³⁰¹Isaiah 40:1,2).

Ver. 22. *And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house*, etc.] Comfortably, quietly, and in great prosperity, not only he, but his brethren and their families, as long as he lived:

and Joseph lived one hundred and ten years; and all but seventeen of them in Egypt, for at that age it was when he was brought thither: thirteen years he lived in Potiphar's house, and in prison, for he was thirty years of age when he was brought to Pharaoh, and stood before him, and fourscore years he lived in the greatest honour and prosperity that a man could well wish for.

Ver. 23. *And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation*, etc.] His great grandchildren's children; and which shows, as most interpreters

observe, that Jacob's prediction, that Ephraim should be the greatest and most numerous, very early began to take place:

and the children also of Machir, the son of Manasseh, were brought up upon Joseph's knees; Machir had but one son by his first wife, whose name was Gilead; but marrying a second wife, he had two sons, Peresh and Sheresh; (see ^{<1714>}1 Chronicles 7:14-16) who might be born before the death of Joseph, and be said to be brought up upon his knees, being educated by him, and often took up in his lap, and dandled on his knees, as grandfathers, being fond of their grandchildren, are apt to do.

Ver. 24. *And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die*, etc.] Some time before his death he called them together, and observed to them, that he expected to die in a little time, as all must:

and God will surely visit you; not in a way of wrath and vindictive justice, as he sometimes does, but in a way of love, grace, and mercy:

and bring you out of this land; the land of Egypt, in which they then dwelt: *unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob*; meaning the land of Canaan, which he swore to those patriarchs that he would give to their posterity.

Ver. 25. *And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel*, etc.] Not of his brethren only, but of their posterity, as many of them as were now grown up, that so it might be communicated from one to another, and become well known to that generation which should depart out of Egypt:

saying, God will surely visit you; which he repeats for the certainty of it, and that it might be observed:

and ye shall carry up my bones from hence; when they should go from thence to Canaan's land; he did not desire them to carry him thither when he should die, which he knew would give umbrage to the Egyptians, and they would not be so able to obtain leave to do it as he had for his father. This was accordingly done; when Israel went out of Egypt, Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, and they were buried in Shechem; (see ^{<1739>}Exodus 13:19 ^{<1742>}Joshua 24:32).

Ver. 26. *So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old*, etc.] The exact age assigned him by Polyhistor^{f1936}, from Demetrius an Heathen. The Jewish writers^{f1937} say, that he died the first of the twelve patriarchs,

though he was the youngest of them; he died, according to Bishop Usher ^{f1938}, in the year of the world 2369, and before Christ 1635:

and they embalmed him; his servants, the physicians, according to the manner of the Egyptians, and as his father Jacob had been embalmed, (see Gill on “~~“4612”~~Genesis 50:2”),

and he was put into a coffin in Egypt; in an ark or chest, very probably into such an one in which the Egyptians had used to put dead bodies when embalmed; which Herodotus ^{f1939} calls a ψηκκα, or chest, and which they set up against a wall: in what part of Egypt this coffin was put is not certain, it was most likely in Goshen, and in the care and custody of some of Joseph’s posterity; so Leo Africanus says ^{f1940}, that he was buried in Fioum, the same with the Heracleotic nome, supposed to be Goshen; (see Gill on “~~“4471”~~Genesis 47:11”), and was dug up by Moses, when the children of Israel departed. The Targum of Jonathan says, it was sunk in the midst of the Nile of Egypt; and an Arabic writer ^{f1941} says, the corpse of Joseph was put into a marble coffin, and cast into the Nile: the same thing is said in the Talmud ^{f1942}, from whence the story seems to be taken, and where the coffin is said to be a molten one, either of iron or brass; which might arise, as Bishop Patrick observes, from a mistake of the place where such bodies were laid; which were let down into deep wells or vaults, and put into a cave at the bottom of those wells, some of which were not far from the river Nile; and such places have been searched for mummies in late times, where they have been found, and the coffins and clothes sound and incorrupt. And so some of the Jewish writers say ^{f1943} he was buried on the banks of the river Sihor, that is, the Nile; but others ^{f1944} say he was buried in the sepulchre of the kings, which is much more likely.