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IR HA-HERES. See HERES.

IRKUTSK. See SIBERIA.

IRON: The invention of the art of working in brass and iron is ascribed to Tubal-cain (Gen. iv. 22), and thus placed in prehistoric times. The Israelites, therefore, derived their knowledge of the art from others. Further proof of this fact is furnished by the undoubtedly trustworthy report that Solomon brought Hiram, an artificer, from Tyre to make the brazen implements used in the Temple; from this it is apparent that at that time the Jews had not acquired the art. Indeed, as industrial pursuits in general among the Jews arose only after the time of Solomon, it may be assumed that the same was the case with the art of working in brass and iron. Outside of the cities the peasant continued for a long time to make (as he still makes at the present day, in some places) his own clothes and his own simple tools, and to be his own carpenter. As soon, however, as the Israelites began to settle in larger towns, and especially as the Canaanitish cities were opened to them, a division of labor took place; then, for the first time, such occupations as working in brass and iron began to develop among them. Without doubt the use of brass preceded that of iron: the kitchen utensils were of brass ("nehoshet"), as also were parts of the armor—helmet, shield, cuirass, greaves, bow, and, perhaps, sword (I Sam. xvii. 5 *et seq.*; II Sam. xxii. 35).

Iron does not seem to have taken the place of brass until a rather late date. Although the art of working in iron is mentioned in the Hexateuch (Num. xxxi. 22, xxxv. 16; Deut. iii. 11, xix. 5; Josh. xxii. 8), these are generally considered comparatively late passages, and would therefore only indicate something for the time in which they were written, but nothing for the period to which they refer. The same is claimed for I Sam. xvii. 7 and II

Kings vi. 5; these passages are said to

belong to a considerably later period.

In-troduction. The oldest passage from this point of view which presupposes the use of iron is II Sam. xii. 31, in which "harize ha-barzel" are mentioned. In Amos "haruzot ha-barzel," used by the Arameans, are spoken of. It may be inferred from II Sam. xii. 31 that the Israelites of that time were also familiar with the metal.

Iron was used in a great many ways: for manufacturing axes and hatchets (Deut. xix. 5; II Kings vi. 5); sickles, knives, swords, and spears (I Sam. xvii. 7); bolts, chains, and fetters (Ps. cv. 18; cvii. 10, 16; Isa. xlv. 2); nails, hooks, and hilts (Jer. xvii. 1; Job xix. 24). It was also used in making plows, thrashing-carts, and thrashing-boards (Amos i. 3; I Sam. xiii. 20; II Sam. xii. 31), as well as for sheathing war-chariots. The Israelites found such

"iron chariots" already in use among the Canaanites, and were compelled to avoid encountering the enemy in the open plain, where the latter could use their chariots.

Iron lends itself readily to figurative usage. Thus Egypt is called "kur ha-barzel" (the iron furnace; Deut. iv. 20); those who are sunk in misery are described as "asire 'oni u-barzel" (bound in affliction and iron; Ps. cvii. 10). A tyrannical ruler is characterized as "shebet barzel" (Ps. ii. 9), or "ol barzel" (Deut. xxviii. 48); an unbending neck is "gid barzel" (Isa. xlviii. 4). The teeth of the fourth great beast which Daniel saw in his vision are of iron (Dan. vii. 7; comp. II Macc. xi. 19; Ecclus. [Sirach] xxii. 15).

E. G. H.

W. N.

IR-SHEMESH (עִיר שֶׁמֶשׁ, "city of the sun"): A city of Dan, mentioned with Shaalabbin and Ajalon (Josh. xix. 41-42). Its parallel name in Judges (i. 35, Hebr.) is "Har-Heres" (the mountain of the sun). Some modern critics identify Ir-shemesh with BETH-SHEMESH, in Judah. See HERES.

E. G. H.

M. SEL.

ISAAC.—**Biblical Data:** Second patriarch; son of Abraham and Sarah. He was the child of a miracle, for at the time of his birth his mother, hitherto childless, was ninety years old, and his father a hundred. By the command of God the child was named "Isaac" (יִצְחָק; in poetical language יִשְׁחָק = "laughter"), because Abraham had, covertly, laughed in incredulity when, a year previously, he had received the promise of God that a son would be born to him by Sarah (Gen. xvii. 17); so also did Sarah as, standing at the door of the tent, she heard the promise reiterated by the angel (Gen. xviii. 12). Isaac was circumcised when he was eight days old, and at his weaning the parents manifested their joy by giving a great feast. As a solicitous mother Sarah urged Abraham to send away Ishmael, his son by the servant-maid Hagar, whom she had seen mocking Isaac. At first Abraham hesitated, but at the command of God he complied with the wish of his wife; Isaac was thus declared the sole heir of his father.

A critical event in Isaac's life occurred when God's command came that he should be offered as a sacrifice on a mountain in the land of Moriah (Gen. xxii. 2). Isaac showed himself in this trial to be worthy of his father. Without murmuring he suffered himself to be bound and laid upon the altar. But Abraham was prevented by God from consummating the sacrifice, and a ram that happened to be near was offered instead. At the age of thirty-six Isaac lost his mother. Abraham then charged Eliezer, his steward, with the mission of selecting a wife for Isaac from among his (Abraham's) own people. After a series of providential coincidences, Eliezer returned with Rebekah, whom Isaac, then forty, married (Gen. xxv. 20). For

Birth of Jacob and Esau. Isaac's prayers were heard, and Rebekah gave birth to the twins Esau and Jacob. As the children grew the gentle and good-natured Isaac came to prefer the boisterous and adventurous Esau, who gratified his father with

the choicest spoils of the chase, while the quiet and less adventurous Jacob was an object of special regard to Rebekah: a division of feeling which became later a source of jealousy and hatred between the two brothers.

A famine compelled Isaac to leave his abode "by the well of Lahai-roi." On this occasion he had his first vision. God appeared to him in a dream and warned him not to go down to Egypt, but to remain within the boundaries of Palestine, promising him great prosperity and numerous descendants. Isaac therefore settled among the Philistines at Gerar, where, fearing lest Rebekah's beauty should tempt the Philistines to kill him, he had recourse to a stratagem that had been used in similar circumstances by his father; he pretended that she was his sister. The Philistine king, however, was not long in finding out the truth, and, after rebuking Isaac for his deceit, adopted stringent measures for the protection of husband and wife.

In his new home Isaac devoted himself to husbandry, and succeeded so well that he incurred the envy of the Philistines. They commenced a petty persecution against him, stopping up the wells which his father had dug, and which Isaac's servants had reopened. The peace-loving Isaac submitted patiently to these persecutions until Abimelech enjoined him to remove from Gerar. Isaac then pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, shortly afterward settling at Beer-sheba, where God appeared to him for the second time and blessed him.

Persecuted by Philistines. An altar was built by Isaac on the spot where he had had the vision, and his servants dug a well. While living there Isaac received a visit from Abimelech, king of the Philistines, and Pichol, the chief captain of his army, who came to court his alliance.

Isaac's old age was not a happy one. He was assailed by infirmities, and became totally blind. To this was added the enmity between his two sons. With prevision of his death, Isaac recommended his son Esau to bring him some venison and receive his blessing. At the instigation of Rebekah, Jacob, profiting by the blindness of his father, presented himself in Esau's stead, and received the blessing intended for the latter. This infuriated Esau to such an extent that Jacob had to seek safety in flight. Isaac died at Hebron, at the age of 180, shortly after the return of Jacob and his family from Mesopotamia, and was buried by his two sons in the cave of Machpelah, beside Abraham and Sarah.

—**In Rabbinical Literature:** According to the Rabbis, Isaac was born in the month of Nisan, at noon, when the spring sun was shining in all its glory (*Rosh ha-Shanah* 10b; *Gen. R.* liii.). At that hour the sick were restored to health, the blind recovered their sight, and the deaf their hearing; the brightness of the sun and of the moon was intensified (*Tan.*, *Gen.* 37); a spirit of justice began to prevail in the world: hence the name יצחק, a compound of יצא and חוק (= "Law was issued"). In the numerical value of each letter of the name there is an allusion: thus, the י (= 10) alludes to the Decalogue; the ש (= 90), and the פ (= 100), to the respective ages of Sarah and Abraham at the birth of

Isaac; the פ (= 8) refers to the day of circumcision (*Gen. R.* liii.). Notwithstanding, there were slanderers who maintained that Abraham and Sarah had picked up a foundling, or, according to another haggadah, had taken a son of Hagar and pretended that he was their son. To silence these slanderers Abraham prepared a great feast on the occasion of the weaning of Isaac, whereat, by a miracle, Sarah was enabled to nurse all the sucklings that had been brought by the women invited to the feast. As there was no longer any doubt as to Sarah's maternity, the slanderers questioned Abraham's paternity. Then God imprinted on the face of Isaac the features of Abraham, and the likeness between father and son became so great that one was often mistaken for the other (*B. M.* 87a; *Yalk.*, *Gen.* 93). According to some Ishmael committed the crime of attracting Isaac to the fields and there casting at him arrows and balls under the pretext of play (מצחק), but in reality to get rid of him (*Gen. R.* liii.): for this reason Sarah insisted on Ishmael and his mother being dismissed.

A fertile subject in the Haggadah is the attempted sacrifice of Isaac, known as the "akedah." According to Jose ben Zimra, the idea of tempting Abraham was suggested by **The Sacrifice of Satan**, who said: "Lord of the Universe! Here is a man whom thou hast blessed with a son at the age of one hundred years, and yet, amidst all his feasts, he did not offer thee a single dove or young pigeon for a sacrifice" (*Sanh.* 87b; *Gen. R.* lv.). In Jose ben Zimra's opinion, the 'akedah took place immediately after Isaac's weaning. This, however, is not the general opinion. According to the Rabbis, the 'akedah not only coincided with, but was the cause of, the death of Sarah, who was informed of Abraham's intention while he and Isaac were on the way to Mount Moriah. Therefore Isaac must then have been thirty-seven years old (*Seder 'Olam Rabbah*, ed. Ratner, p. 6; *Pirke R. El.* xxxi.; *Tanna debe Eliyahu R.* xxvii.). Not only did he consent to the sacrifice, but he himself suggested it in the course of a discussion that arose between him and Ishmael concerning their respective merits. Ishmael asserted his superiority to Isaac on account of his having suffered himself to be circumcised at an age when he could have objected to it, while Isaac underwent the operation on the eighth day after his birth "Thou pridest thyself," replied Isaac, "on having given to God three drops of thy blood. I am now thirty-seven years old, and would gladly give my life if God wished it" (*Sanh.* 89b; *Gen. R.* lvi. 8).

While he was on the way to Mount Moriah Isaac was addressed by Satan in the following terms: "Unfortunate son of an unfortunate mother! How many days did thy mother pass in fasting and praying for thy birth! and now thy father, who has lost his mind, is going to kill thee." Isaac then endeavored to awaken the pity of his father (*Gen. R.* lv.). According to another haggadah Isaac rebuked Satan and told him that he was not willing to oppose the wish of his Creator and the command of his father (*Tan.*, *Gen.* xlii.). While Abraham was building the altar Isaac hid himself, fearing lest Satan should throw stones at him and render him

unfit for a sacrifice. The same fear caused him to ask to be bound on the altar; "for," said he, "I am young and may tremble at the sight of the knife" (Gen. R. lvi. 8).

The 'akedah is especially prominent in the Jewish liturgy. The remembrance of the incident by God is believed to be a sure guaranty of His forgiveness of the sins of Israel; hence the numerous 'akedah prayers, a specimen of which is found in the Mishnah. See 'Akedah.

The Akedah **DAH.** Isaac is presented in rabbinical literature as being the prototype of **Liturgy.** martyrs (Esth. R. i.). The great tractability of his character is shown by his conduct in the affair of the wells, which he abandoned without complaining of the injustice done him (Sanh. 111a). More than other patriarchs he pleads for Israel. When Abraham and Jacob, says the Talmud, were told that their children had sinned, they answered, "Let them be blotted out for the sanctification of Thy name"; but when God said to Isaac, "Thy children have sinned," Isaac answered, "Why are they my children more than Thine? When they answered, 'We will do [all that God shall command] and we will listen,' Thou calledst them 'My first-born'; yet now they are mine and not Thine! Moreover, how long can they have sinned? The duration of man's life is seventy years. In the first twenty years he is not punished [being irresponsible]; half of the remaining fifty is passed in sleeping. Half of the remainder is spent in praying, eating, etc. There remain only twelve and a half years. If thou art willing to bear the whole, it is for the better; if not, let half be borne by me and the other half by Thee. But if Thou insist upon my bearing the whole, I have already sacrificed myself for Thee" (Shab. 89b).

To Isaac is attributed the institution of the "Min-hah" prayer (Ber. 26b). Like Abraham, he observed all the commandments, and made proselytes. He was one of the three over whom the Angel of Death had no power; one of the seven whose buried bodies were not devoured by worms; one of the three upon whom the "yezer ha-ra" (the seducer) had no influence (B. B. 17b). He caused the Shekinah to descend from the sixth to the fifth heaven (Gen. R. xix.).

I. BR.

ISAAC: Member of the embassy sent in 797 by Charlemagne to Harun al-Rashid, calif at Bagdad, probably as interpreter for the ambassadors, who were the noblemen Sigismund and Landfried. Both died on their way back, and Isaac became the sole bearer of the calif's answer and presents, among which latter was a magnificent elephant. When the emperor was informed of Isaac's return to France, he sent the notary Erchenbald to Liguria in order to prepare for the transportation of the elephant and the other presents. Isaac arrived at the port of Vendres in Oct., 801; but, as the Alps were covered with snow, he was obliged to pass the winter at Verceil. He reached Aix-la-Chapelle in the summer of 802, and the emperor received him in audience there.

Zunz ("G. S." i. 157) supposes that Isaac was the means of establishing relations between the French rabbis and the Geonim, as France is not mentioned

in the decisions of the latter before 850 ("Sha'are Zedek," p. 12).

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G.

M. SEL.

ISAAC B. ABBA MARI: French codifier; born in Provence about 1122; died after 1193 (in Marseilles?). Isaac's father, a great rabbinical authority, who wrote commentaries on the Talmud ("Ittur," i. 17, ed. Warsaw, section "Kinyan"), and responsa (l.c. p. 49, section "Shemat Ba'alim"), was his teacher. In his "Ittur" Isaac often mentions as another of his teachers his uncle, who, according to a manuscript note (see Neubauer, "Cat. Bodl. Hebr. MSS." No. 2356), was a pupil of Alfasi. Isaac carried on a friendly correspondence with Jacob Tam, whom he was in the habit of consulting on doubtful questions, though not as a pupil consulted a teacher. Abraham b. Nathan of Lunel and Abraham b. Isaac (RABaD II.) were related to him, while the son-in-law of the latter, Abraham b. David of Posquière, frequently consulted him on scientific questions. Isaac began his literary activity at the age of seventeen, when, at his father's suggestion, he wrote "Shehitah u-Terefot," rules for the slaughtering of animals and the eating of their flesh. At about the same time he wrote a small work on the precepts concerning zizit, at the request of Sheshet Benveniste "ha-Nasi" of Barcelona. Both works form a part of the legal codex "Ittur," or "Ittur Soferim," which occupied Isaac about twenty-three years (from 1170 to 1193). Until modern times only the first part of this work was known (Venice, 1608); the whole codex was published first by Schönblum (Lemberg, 1860), and included Isaac's "Aseret ha-Dibrot," which is really only a special name for a part of the "Ittur." The "Ittur" contains, in three parts, almost a complete code of laws, and is divided as follows: part i., jurisprudence, including the laws of marriage and divorce; part ii., rules concerning the slaughter of cattle, and concerning meat which it is permissible to eat; concerning circumcision, zizit, tefillin, marriage ceremonies; part iii., "Aseret ha-Dibrot," embracing a consideration of the rules governing the following ten subjects: (1) the Feast of Tabernacles; (2) lulab; (3) hallel; (4) shofar; (5) Yom Kippur; (6) megillah; (7) Hanukkah; (8) prohibition of leavened bread on the Passover; (9) the commandment concerning mazzah and mara; (10) general laws for feast-days.

The book belongs to the classic productions of rabbinical literature in France. Isaac shows in this work a knowledge of the two Talmuds such as almost no other person of his time possessed. With works on the Geonim, among them many responsa and treatises which are otherwise unknown to-day, he shows the same familiarity as with the productions of the northern French Talmudists. At the same time he proceeds independently in his criticism, without regard to the age or reputation of former authorities, and spares not even the Geonim and Alfasi, though he admired them greatly.

While Spanish and German Talmudists, up to the time of the "Tur," often mentioned the "Ittur," and authorities like Solomon ibn Adret, Asher b.