16 And when he spoke these things, he answered him: Art thou the king's counsellor? be quiet, lest I kill thee. And the prophet departing, said: I know that God is minded to kill thee, because thou hast done this evil, and moreover hast not hearkened to my counsel.

17 Then Amasias king of Juda taking very bad counsel, sent to Joas the son of Joachaz the son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying: Come, let us see one another.

18 But he sent back the messengers, saying: The thistle that is in Libanus, sent to the cedar in Libanus, saying: Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and behold the beasts that were in the wood of Libanus passed by, and trod down the thistle.

19 Thou hast said: I have overthrown Edom, and therefore thy heart is lifted up with pride: stay at home, why dost thou provoke evil against thee, that both thou shouldst fall and Juda with thee.

20 Amasias would not hearken to him, because it was the Lord's will that he should be delivered into the hands of enemies, because of the gods of Edom.

21 So Joas king of Israel went up, and they presented themselves to be seen by one another: and Amasias king of Juda was in Bethsames of Juda:

22 And Juda fell before Israel, and they fled to their dwellings.

23 And Joas king of Israel took Amasias king of Juda, the son of Joas, the son of Joachaz, in Bethsames, and brought him to Jerusalem: and broke down the walls thereof from the gate of Ephraim, to the gate of the corner, four hundred cubits.

24 And he took all the gold, and silver, and all the vessels, that he found in the house of God, and with Obededom, and in the treasures of the king's house, moreover also the sons of the hostages, he brought back to Samaria.

25 And Amasias the son of Joas king of Juda lived, after the death of Joas the son of Joachaz king of Israel, fifteen years.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Amasias, the first and last, are written in the book of the kings of Juda and Israel.

27 And after he revolted from the Lord, they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem. [x] And he fled into Lachis, and they sent, and killed him there.

28 And they brought him back upon horses, and buried him with his fathers in the city of David.

CHAPTER 26.

Ozias reigneth prosperously, till he invadeth the priests' office, upon which he is struck with a leprosy.

AND [y] all the people of Juda took his son Ozias, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of Amasias his father.

2 He built Ailath, and restored it to the dominion of Juda, after that the king slept with his fathers.

3 Ozias was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem: the name of his mother was Jechelia of Jerusalem.

4 And he did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that Amasias his father had done.

5 And he sought the Lord in the days of Zacharias that understood and saw God: and as long as he sought the Lord, he directed him in all things.

6 Moreover he went forth and fought against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Geth, and the wall of Jabnia, and the wall of Azotus: and he built towns in Azotus, and among the Philistines.

7 And God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians, that dwelt in Gurbaal, and against the Ammonites.

8 And the Ammonites gave gifts to Ozias: and his name was spread abroad even to the entrance of Egypt for his frequent victories.

9 And Ozias built towers in Jerusalem over the gate of the corner, and over the gate of the valley, and the rest, in the same side of the wall, and fortified them.

10 And he built towers in the wilderness, and dug many cisterns, for he had much cattle both in the plains, and in the waste of the desert: he had also vineyards and dressers of vines in the mountains, and in Carmel: for he was a man that loved husbandry.

11 And the army of his fighting men, that went out to war, was under the

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x B. C. 775.

y B. C. 775. 4 Kings 14. 21.

hand of Jehiel the scribe, and Maasias the doctor, and under the hand of Henanias, who was one of the king's captains.

12 And the whole number of the chiefs by the families of valiant men were two thousand six hundred.

13 And the whole army under them three hundred and seven thousand five hundred: who were fit for war, and fought for the king against the enemy.

14 And Ozias prepared for them, that is, for the whole army, shields, and spears, and helmets, and coats of mail, and bows, and slings to cast stones.

15 And he made in Jerusalem engines of diverse kinds, which he placed in the towers, and in the corners of the walls, to shoot arrows, and great stones: and his name went forth far abroad, for the Lord helped him, and had strengthened him.

16 But when he was made strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction, and he neglected the Lord his God: and going into the temple of the Lord, he had a mind to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

17 And immediately Azarias the priest going in after him, and with him fourscore priests of the Lord, most valiant men,

18 Withstood the king and said: It doth not belong to thee, Ozias, to burn incense to the Lord, but to the priests, that is, to the sons of Aaron, [z] who are consecrated for this ministry: go out of the sanctuary, do not despise: for this thing shall not be accounted to thy glory by the Lord God.

19 And Ozias was angry, and holding in his hand the censer to burn incense, threatened the priests. And presently there rose a leprosy in his forehead before the priests, in the house of the Lord at the altar of incense.

20 And Azarias the high priest, and all the rest of the priests looked upon him, and saw the leprosy in his forehead, and they made haste to thrust him out. Yea himself also being frightened, hasted to go out, because he had quickly felt the stroke of the Lord.

21 [a] And Ozias the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and he dwelt in a house apart being full of the leprosy, for which he had been cast out of the house of the Lord. And Joatham his son governed the king's house, and judged the people of the land.

22 But the rest of the acts of Ozias first and last were written by Isaias the son of Amos, the prophet.

23 And Ozias slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the field of the royal sepulchres, because he was a leper: and Joatham his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER 27.

Joatham's good reign.

JOATHAM [b] was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: the name of his mother was Jerusa the daughter of Sadoc.

2 And he did that which was right before the Lord, according to all that Ozias his father had done, only that he entered not into the temple of the Lord, and the people still transgressed.

3 He built the high gate of the house of the Lord, and on the wall of Ophel he built much.

4 Moreover he built cities in the mountains of Juda, and castles and towers in the forests.

5 He fought against the king of the children of Ammon, and overcame them, and the children of Ammon gave him at that time a hundred talents of silver, and ten thousand measures of wheat, and as many measures of barley: so much did the children of Ammon give him in the second and third year.

6 And Joatham was strengthened, because he had his way directed before the Lord his God.

7 Now the rest of the acts of Joatham, and all his wars, and his works, are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Juda.

8 He was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem.

9 And Joatham slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Achaz his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER 28.

The wicked and unhappy reign of Achaz.

ACHAZ [c] was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned

z Ex 30. 7 et seq.
a 4 Kings 15. 5.

b B. C. 735. 4 Kings 15. 33.
c B. C. 731. 4 Kings 16. 2.

sixteen years in Jerusalem: he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord as David his father had done,

2 But walked in the ways of the kings of Israel; moreover also he cast statues for Baalim.

3 It was he that burnt incense in the valley of Benennom, and consecrated his sons in the fire according to the manner of the nations, which the Lord slew at the coming of the children of Israel.

4 He sacrificed also, and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.

5 And the Lord his God delivered him into the hands of the king of Syria, who defeated him, and took a great booty out of his kingdom, and carried *it* to Damascus: he was also delivered into the hands of the king of Israel, who overthrew him with a great slaughter.

6 For Phacee the son of Romelia slew of Juda a hundred and twenty thousand in one day, all valiant men. because they had forsaken the Lord the God of their fathers.

7 At the same time Zechri a powerful man of Ephraim, slew Maasias the king's son, and Ezricam the governor of his house, and Elcana who was next to the king.

8 And the children of Israel carried away of their brethren two hundred thousand women, boys, and girls, and an immense booty: and they brought it to Samaria.

9 At that time there was a prophet of the Lord there, whose name was Oded: and he went out to meet the army that came to Samaria, and said to them: Behold the Lord the God of your fathers being angry with Juda, hath delivered them into your hands, and you have butchered them cruelly, so that your cruelty hath reached up to heaven.

10 Moreover you have a mind to keep under the children of Juda and Jerusalem for your bondmen and bondwomen, which ought not to be done: for you have sinned in this against the Lord your God.

11 But hear ye my counsel, and release the captives that you have brought of your brethren, because a great indignation of the Lord hangeth over you.

12 Then some of the chief men of the sons of Ephraim, Azarias the son of Johanan, Barachias the son of Mosollamoth, Ezechias the son of Sellum, and Amasa the son of Adali, stood up against them that came from the war.

13 And they said to them: You shall not bring in the captives hither, lest we sin against the Lord. Why will you add to our sins, and heap up upon our former offences? for the sin is great, and the fierce anger of the Lord hangeth over Israel.

14 So the soldiers left the spoils, and all that they had taken, before the princes and all the multitude.

15 And the men, whom we mentioned above, rose up and took the captives, and with the spoils clothed all them that were naked: and when they had clothed and shod them, and refreshed them with meat and drink, and anointed them because of their labour, and had taken care of them, they set such of them as could not walk, and were feeble, upon beasts, and brought them to Jericho the city of palm trees to their brethren, and they returned to Samaria.

16 At that time king Achaz sent to the king of the Assyrians asking help.

17 And the Edomites came and slew many of Juda, and took a great booty.

18 The Philistines also spread themselves among the cities of the plains, and to the south of Juda: and they took Bethsames, and Aialon, and Gaderoth, and Socho, and Thamnan, and Gamzo, with their villages, and they dwelt in them.

19 For the Lord had humbled Juda because of Achaz the king of Juda, for he had stripped it of help, and had contemned the Lord.

20 And he brought against him Thelgathphalnasar king of the Assyrians, who also afflicted him, and plundered him without any resistance.

21 And Achaz stripped the house of the Lord, and the house of the kings, and of the princes, and gave gifts to the king of the Assyrians, and yet it availed him nothing.

22 Moreover also in the time of his distress he increased contempt against the Lord: king Achaz himself by himself,

CHAP. 28. Ver. 19. *For he had stripped it of help*: that is, Achaz stripped the kingdom of Juda of the divine assistance by his wickedness, and by his introducing idolatry.

23 Sacrificed victims to the gods of Damascus that struck him, and he said: The gods of the kings of Syria help them, and I will appease them with victims, and they will help me; whereas on the contrary they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel.

24 Then Achaz having taken away all the vessels of the house of God, and broken them, shut up the doors of the temple of God, and made himself altars in all the corners of Jerusalem.

25 And in all the cities of Juda he built altars to burn frankincense, and he provoked the Lord the God of his fathers to wrath.

26 But the rest of his acts, and all his works first and last are written in the book of the kings of Juda and Israel.

27 And Achaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of Jerusalem: for they received him not into the sepulchres of the kings of Israel. And Ezechias his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER 29.

Ezechias purifieth the temple, and restoreth religion.

NOW [g] Ezechias began to reign, when he was five and twenty years old, and he reigned nine and twenty years in Jerusalem: the name of his mother was Abia, the daughter of Zacharias.

2 And he did that which was pleasing in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had done.

3 In the first year and month of his reign he opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them.

4 And he brought the priests and the Levites, and assembled them in the east street.

5 And he said to them: Hear me, ye Levites, and be sanctified, purify the house of the Lord the God of your fathers, and take away all filth out of the sanctuary.

6 Our fathers have sinned and done evil in the sight of the Lord God, forsaking him: they have turned away their faces from the tabernacle of the Lord, and turned their backs.

7 They have shut up the doors that were in the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burnt incense, nor offered holocausts in the sanctuary of the God of Israel.

8 Therefore the wrath of the Lord hath been stirred up against Juda and Jerusalem, and he hath delivered them to trouble, and to destruction, and to be hissed at, as you see with your eyes.

9 Behold, our fathers are fallen by the sword, our sons, and our daughters, and wives are led away captives for this wickedness.

10 Now therefore I have a mind that we make a covenant with the Lord the God of Israel, and he will turn away the wrath of his indignation from us.

11 My sons, be not negligent: the Lord hath chosen you to stand before him, and to minister to him, and to worship him, and to burn incense to him.

12 Then the Levites arose, Mahath the son of Amasai, and Joel the son of Azarias, of the sons of Caath: and of the sons of Merari, Cis the son of Abdi, and Azarias the son of Jalaleel. And of the sons of Gerson, Joah the son of Zemma, and Eden the son of Joah.

13 And of the sons of Elisaphan, Samri, and Jahiel. Also of the sons of Asaph, Zacharias, and Mathanias.

14 And of the sons of Heman, Jahiel, and Semei: and of the sons of Idithun, Semeias, and Oziel.

15 And they gathered together their brethren, and sanctified themselves, and went in according to the commandment of the king, and the precept of the Lord, to purify the house of God.

16 And the priests went into the temple of the Lord to sanctify it, and brought out all the uncleanness that they found within to the entrance of the house of the Lord, and the Levites took it away, and carried it out abroad to the torrent Cedron.

17 And they began to cleanse on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the same month they came into the porch of the temple of the Lord, and they purified the temple in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the same month they finished what they had begun.

18 And they went in to king Ezechias, and said to him: We have sanctified all the house of the Lord, and the altar of holocaust, and the vessels thereof, and

[g] B. C. 727. 4 Kings 18. 1.

the table of proposition with all its vessels,

19 And all the furniture of the temple, which king Achaz in his reign had defiled, after his transgression; and behold they are all set forth before the altar of the Lord.

20 And king Ezechias rising early, assembled all the rulers of the city, and went up into the house of the Lord:

21 And they offered together seven bullocks, and seven rams, and seven lambs, and seven he goats for sin, for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, for Juda: and he spoke to the priests the sons of Aaron, to offer them upon the altar of the Lord.

22 Therefore they killed the bullocks, and the priests took the blood, and poured it upon the altar; they killed also the rams, and their blood they poured also upon the altar, and they killed the lambs, and poured the blood upon the altar.

23 And they brought the he goats for sin before the king, and the whole multitude, and they laid their hand upon them:

24 And the priests immolated them, and sprinkled their blood before the altar for an expiation of all Israel: for the king had commanded that the holocaust and the sin offering should be made for all Israel.

25 And he set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals, and psalteries, and harps according to the regulation of David the king, and of Gad the seer, and of Nathan the prophet: for it was the commandment of the Lord by the hand of his prophets.

26 And the Levites stood, with the instruments of David, and the priests with trumpets.

27 And Ezechias commanded that they should offer holocausts upon the altar: and when the holocausts were offered, they began to sing praises to the Lord, and to sound with trumpets, and divers instruments which David the king of Israel had prepared.

28 And all the multitude adored, and the singers, and the trumpeters, were in their office till the holocaust was finished.

29 And when the oblation was ended, the king, and all that were with him bowed down and adored.

30 And Ezechias and the princes commanded the Levites to praise the Lord with the words of David, and Asaph the seer: and they praised him with great joy, and bowing the knee adored.

31 And Ezechias added, and said: You have filled your hands to the Lord, come and offer victims, and praises in the house of the Lord. And all the multitude offered victims, and praises, and holocausts with a devout mind.

32 And the number of the holocausts which the multitude offered, was seventy bullocks, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs.

33 And they consecrated to the Lord six hundred oxen, and three thousand sheep.

34 But the priests were few, and were not enough to flay the holocausts: wherefore the Levites their brethren helped them, till the work was ended, and priests were sanctified, for the Levites are sanctified with an easier rite than the priests.

35 So there were many holocausts, and the fat of peace offerings, and the libations of holocausts: and the service of the house of the Lord was completed.

36 And Ezechias, and all the people rejoiced because the ministry of the Lord was accomplished. For the resolution of doing this thing was taken suddenly.

CHAPTER 30.

Ezechias inviteth all Israel to celebrate the pasch the solemnity is kept fourteen days.

AND Ezechias sent to all Israel and Juda: and he wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasses, that they should come to the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, and keep the phase to the Lord the God of Israel

2 For the king, taking counsel, and the princes, and all the assembly of Jerusalem, decreed to keep the phase the second month.

3 For they could not keep it in its time; because there were not priests enough sanctified, and the people was not as yet gathered together to Jerusalem.

4 And the thing pleased the king, and all the people.

5 And they decreed to send messengers to all Israel from Bersabee even to Dan, that they should come, and keep the phase to the Lord the God of Israel in

Jerusalem: for many had not kept it as it is prescribed by the law.

6 And the posts went with letters by commandment of the king, and his princes, to all Israel and Juda, proclaiming according to the king's orders: Ye children of Israel, turn again to the Lord the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Israel: and he will return to the remnant of you that have escaped the hand of the king of the Assyrians.

7 Be not like your fathers, and brethren, who departed from the Lord the God of their fathers, and he hath given them up to destruction, as you see.

8 Harden not your necks, as your fathers did: yield yourselves to the Lord, and come to his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified for ever: serve the Lord the God of your fathers, and the wrath of his indignation shall be turned away from you.

9 For if you turn again to the Lord: your brethren, and children shall find mercy before their masters, that have led them away captive, and they shall return into this land: for the Lord your God is merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him.

10 So the posts went speedily from city to city, through the land of Ephraim, and of Manasses, even to Zabulon, whilst they laughed at them and mocked them.

11 Nevertheless some men of Aser, and of Manasses, and of Zabulon, yielding to the counsel, came to Jerusalem.

12 But the hand of God was in Juda, to give them one heart to do the word of the Lord, according to the commandment of the king, and of the princes.

13 And much people were assembled to Jerusalem to celebrate the solemnity of the unleavened bread in the second month:

14 And they arose and destroyed the altars that were in Jerusalem, and took away all things in which incense was burnt to idols, and cast them into the torrent Cedron.

15 And they immolated the phase on the fourteenth day of the second month. And the priests and the Levites being at length sanctified offered holocausts in the house of the Lord.

16 And they stood in their order according to the disposition and law of Moses the man of God: but the priests received the blood which was to be poured out, from the hands of the Levites,

17 Because a great number was not sanctified: and therefore the Levites immolated the phase for them that came not in time to be sanctified to the Lord.

18 For a great part of the people from Ephraim, and Manasses, and Issachar, and Zabulon, that had not been sanctified, ate the phase otherwise than it is written: and Ezechias prayed for them, saying: The Lord who is good will shew mercy,

19 To all them, who with their whole heart, seek the Lord the God of their fathers: and will not impute it to them that they are not sanctified.

20 And the Lord heard him, and was merciful to the people.

21 And the children of Israel, that were found at Jerusalem, kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great joy, praising the Lord every day. the Levites also, and the priests, with instruments that agreed to their office.

22 And Ezechias spoke to the heart of all the Levites, that had good understanding concerning the Lord: and they ate during the seven days of the solemnity, immolating victims of peace offerings, and praising the Lord the God of their fathers.

23 And it pleased the whole multitude to keep other seven days: which they did with great joy.

24 For Ezechias the king of Juda had given to the multitude a thousand bullocks, and seven thousand sheep: and the princes had given the people a thousand bullocks, and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests was sanctified.

25 And all the multitude of Juda with the priests and Levites, and all the assembly, that came out of Israel; and the proselytes of the land of Israel, and that dwelt in Juda were full of joy.

26 And there was a great solemnity in Jerusalem, such as had not been in that city since the time of Solomon the son of David king of Israel.

27 And the priests and the Levites rose up and blessed the people: and their voice was heard: and their prayer came to the holy dwelling place of heaven.

CHAPTER 31.

Idolatry is abolished, and provisions made for the ministers.

AND when these things had been duly celebrated, all Israel that were found in the cities of Juda, went out, and they broke the idols, and cut down the groves, demolished the high places, and destroyed the altars, not only out of all Juda and Benjamin, but out of Ephraim also and Manasses, till they had utterly destroyed them: then all the children of Israel returned to their possessions and cities.

2 And Ezechias appointed companies of the priests, and the Levites, by their courses, every man in his own office, to wit, both of the priests, and of the Levites, for holocausts, and for peace offerings, to minister, and to praise, and to sing in the gates of the camp of the Lord.

3 And the king's part was, that of his proper substance the holocaust should be offered always morning and evening, and on the sabbaths, and the new moons and the other solemnities, as it is written in the law of Moses.

4 He commanded also the people that dwelt in Jerusalem, to give to the priests, and the Levites their portion, that they might attend to the law of the Lord.

Which when it was noised abroad in the ears of the people, the children of Israel offered in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey: and brought the tithe of all things which the ground bringeth forth.

6 Moreover the children of Israel and Juda, that dwelt in the cities of Juda, brought in the tithes of oxen, and sheep, and the tithes of holy things, which they had vowed to the Lord their God: and carrying them all, made many heaps.

7 In the third month they began to lay the foundations of the heaps, and in the seventh month, they finished them.

8 And when Ezechias and his princes came in, they saw the heaps, and they blessed the Lord and the people of Israel.

9 And Ezechias asked the priests and the Levites, why the heaps lay so.

10 Azarias the chief priest of the race of Sadoc answered him, saying: Since the firstfruits began to be offered in the house of the Lord, we have eaten, and have been filled, and abundance is left, because the Lord hath blessed his people: and of that which is left is this great store which thou seest.

11 Then Ezechias commanded to prepare storehouses in the house of the Lord. And when they had done so,

12 They brought in faithfully both the firstfruits, and the tithes, and all they had vowed. And the overseer of them was Chonenias the Levite, and Semei his brother was the second,

13 And after him Jehiel, and Azarias, and Nahath, and Asael, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Jesmachias, and Mahath, and Banaias, overseers under the hand of Chonenias, and Semei his brother, by the commandment of Ezechias the king, and Azarias the high priest of the house of God, to whom all things appertained.

14 But Core the son of Jemna the Levite, the porter of the east gate, was overseer of the things which were freely offered to the Lord, and of the firstfruits and the things dedicated for the holy of holies.

15 And under his charge were Eden, and Benjamin, Jesue, and Semeias, and Amarias, and Sechenias, in the cities of the priests, to distribute faithfully portions to their brethren, both little and great:

16 Besides the males from three years old and upward, to all that went into the temple of the Lord, and whatsoever there was need of in the ministry, and their offices according to their courses, day by day.

17 To the priests by their families, and to the Levites from the twentieth year and upward, by their classes and companies.

18 And to all the multitude, both to their wives, and to their children of both sexes, victuals were given faithfully out of the things that had been sanctified.

19 Also of the sons of Aaron who were in the fields and in the suburbs of each city, there were men appointed, to distribute portions to all the males, among the priests and the Levites.

20 So Ezechias did all things which we have said in all Juda, and wrought that which was good, and right, and truth, before the Lord his God,

31 In all the service of the ministry of the house of the Lord according to the law and the ceremonies, desiring to seek his God with all his heart, and he did it and prospered.

CHAPTER 32

Sennacherib invadeth Juda. His army is destroyed by an angel. Ezechias recovereth from his sickness. He dieth with glory.

AFTER these things, and this truth, Sennacherib king of the Assyrians came and entered into Juda, and besieged the fenced cities, desiring to take them.

2 And when Ezechias saw that Sennacherib was come, and that the whole force of the war was turning against Jerusalem,

3 He took counsel with the princes, and the most valiant men, to stop up the heads of the springs that were without the city: and as they were all of this mind,

4 He gathered together a very great multitude, and they stopped up all the springs, and the brook, that ran through the midst of the land, saying: Lest the kings of the Assyrians should come, and find abundance of water.

5 He built up also with great diligence all the wall that had been broken down, and built towers upon it, and another wall without: and he repaired Mello in the city of David, and made all sorts of arms and shields:

6 And he appointed captains of the soldiers of the army: and he called them all together in the street of the gate of the city, and spoke to their heart, saying:

7 Behave like men, and take courage: be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of the Assyrians, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there are many more with us than with him.

8 For with him is an arm of flesh: with us the Lord our God, who is our helper, and fighteth for us. And the people were encouraged with these words of Ezechias king of Juda.

9 After this, Sennacherib king of the Assyrians sent his servants to Jerusalem, (for he with all his army was besieging Lachis,) to Ezechias king of Juda, and to all the people that were in the city, saying:

10 Thus saith Sennacherib king of the Assyrians: In whom do you trust, that you sit still besieged in Jerusalem?

11 Doth not Ezechias deceive you, to give you up to die by hunger and thirst, affirming that the Lord your God shall deliver you from the hand of the king of the Assyrians?

12 Is it not this same Ezechias, that hath destroyed his high places, and his altars, and commanded Juda and Jerusalem, saying: You shall worship before one altar, and upon it you shall burn incense?

13 Know you not what I and my fathers have done to all the people of the lands? have the gods of any nations and lands been able to deliver their country out of my hand?

14 Who is there among all the gods of the nations, which my fathers have destroyed, that could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of this hand?

15 Therefore let not Ezechias deceive you, nor delude you with a vain persuasion, and do not believe him. For if no god of all the nations and kingdoms, could deliver his people out of my hand, and out of the hand of my fathers, consequently neither shall your God be able to deliver you out of my hand.

16 And many other things did his servants speak against the Lord God, and against Ezechias his servant.

17 He wrote also letters full of blasphemy against the Lord the God of Israel, and he spoke against him: As the gods of other nations could not deliver their people out of my hand, so neither can the God of Ezechias deliver his people out of this hand.

18 Moreover he cried out with a loud voice, in the Jews' tongue, to the people that sat on the walls of Jerusalem, that he might frighten them, and take the city.

19 And he spoke against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, the works of the hands of men.

20 And Ezechias the king, and Isaias the prophet the son of Amos, prayed against this blasphemy, and cried out to heaven.

21 [k] And the Lord sent an angel, who

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j B. C. 701. 4 Kings 18. 13.

Eccli. 48. 20; Isa. 36. 1. — *k* Tob. 1. 21.

cut off all the stout men and the warriors, and the captains of the army of the king of the Assyrians: and he returned with disgrace into his own country. And when he was come into the house of his god, his sons that came out of his bowels, slew him with the sword.

22 And the Lord saved Ezechias and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of the hand of Sennacherib king of the Assyrians, and out of the hand of all, and gave them treasures on every side.

23 Many also brought victims, and sacrifices to the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Ezechias king of Juda: and he was magnified thenceforth in the sight of all nations.

24 [l] In those days Ezechias was sick even to death, and he prayed to the Lord: and he heard him, and gave him a sign.

25 But he did not render again according to the benefits which he had received, for his heart was lifted up: and wrath was enkindled against him, and against Juda and Jerusalem.

26 And he humbled himself afterwards, because his heart had been lifted up, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and therefore the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Ezechias.

27 And Ezechias was rich, and very glorious, and he gathered himself great treasures of silver and of gold, and of precious stones, of spices, and of arms, of all kinds, and of vessels of great price.

28 Storehouses also of corn, of wine, and of oil, and stalls for all beasts, and folds for cattle.

29 And he built himself cities: for he had flocks of sheep, and herds without number, for the Lord had given him very much substance.

30 This same Ezechias was he that stopped the upper source of the waters of Gihon, and turned them away underneath toward the west of the city of David: in all his works he did prosperously what he would.

31 But yet in the embassy of the princes of Babylon, that were sent to him, to inquire of the wonder that had happened upon the earth, God left him that he might be tempted, and all things might be made known that were in his heart.

32 Now the rest of the acts of Ezechias, and of his mercies are written in the book of the kings of Juda and Israel.

33 And Ezechias slept with his fathers, [m] and they buried him above the sepulchres of the sons of David: and all Juda, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem celebrated his funeral: and Manasses his son reigned in his stead.

CHAPTER 33.

Manasses for his manifold wickedness is led captive to Babylon: he repenteth, and is restored to his kingdom, and destroyeth idolatry: his successor Amon is slain by his servants.

MANASSES [n] was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.

2 And he did evil before the Lord, according to all the abominations of the nations, which the Lord cast out before the children of Israel:

3 And he turned, and built again the high places which Ezechias his father had destroyed: and he built altars to Baalim, and made groves, and he adored all the host of heaven, and worshipped them.

4 He built also altars in the house of the Lord, whereof the Lord had said: [o] In Jerusalem shall my name be for ever.

5 And he built them for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord.

6 And he made his sons to pass through the fire in the valley of Benennom: he observed dreams, followed divinations, gave himself up to magic arts, had with him magicians, and enchanters: and he wrought many evils before the Lord, to provoke him to anger.

7 [p] He set also a graven, and a molten statue in the house of God, of which God had said to David, and to Solomon his son: In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever.

8 And I will not make the foot of Israel to be removed out of the land which I have delivered to their fathers: yet so if they will take heed to do what I have commanded them, and all the law, and the ceremonies, and judgments by the hand of Moses.

9 So Manasses seduced Juda, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to do evil beyond

l 4 Kings 20. 8; Isa. 88. 1.—*m* B. C. 698.

n B. C. 698. 4 Kings 21. 1.
o 2 Kings 7. 10.—*p* 3 Kings 8. 17.

CHAP. 33. Ver. 3. *The host of heaven.* The sun, moon, and stars.

all the nations, which the Lord had destroyed before the face of the children of Israel.

10 And the Lord spoke to him, and to his people, and they would not hearken.

11 Therefore he brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of the Assyrians, and they took Manasses, and carried him bound with chains and fetters to Babylon.

12 And after that he was in distress he prayed to the Lord his God: and did penance exceedingly before the God of his fathers.

13 And he entreated him, and besought him earnestly: and he heard his prayer, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom, and Manasses knew that the Lord was God.

14 After this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon in the valley, from the entering in of the fish gate round about to Ophel, and raised it up to a great height: and he appointed captains of the army in all the fenced cities of Juda:

15 And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord: the altars also which he had made in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and he cast them all out of the city.

16 And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed upon it victims, and peace offerings, and praise: and he commanded Juda to serve the Lord the God of Israel.

17 Nevertheless the people still sacrificed in the high places to the Lord their God.

18 But the rest of the acts of Manasses, and his prayer to his God, and the words of the seers that spoke to him in the name of the Lord the God of Israel, are contained in the words of the kings of Israel.

19 His prayer also, and his being heard, and all his sins, and contempt, and places wherein he built high places, and set up groves, and statues before he did penance, are written in the words of Hozai

20 And Manasses slept [q] with his fathers, and they buried him in his house: and his son Amon reigned in his stead.

21 Amon was two and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem.

22 And he did evil in the sight of the Lord, as Manasses his father had done: and he sacrificed to all the idols which Manasses his father had made, and served them.

23 And he did not humble himself before the Lord, as Manasses his father had humbled himself, but committed far greater sins.

24 And his servants conspired against him, and slew him in his own house.

25 But the rest of the multitude of the people slew them that had killed Amon, and made Josias his son king in his stead.

CHAPTER 34.

Josias destroyeth idolatry, repaireth the temple, and reneweth the covenant between God and the people.

JOSIAS [r] was eight years old when he began to reign, [s] and he reigned one and thirty years in Jerusalem.

2 And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father: he declined not, neither to the right hand, nor to the left.

3 And in the eighth year of his reign, when he was yet a boy, he began to seek the God of his father David: and in the twelfth year after he began to reign, he cleansed Juda and Jerusalem from the high places, and the groves, and the idols, and the graven things.

4 And they broke down before him the altars of Baalim, and demolished the idols that had been set upon them: and he cut down the groves and the graven things, and broke them in pieces: and strewed the fragments upon the graves of them that had sacrificed to them.

5 And he burnt the bones of the priests on the altars of the idols, and he cleansed Juda and Jerusalem.

6 And in the cities of Manasses, and of Ephraim, and of Simeon, even to Nephtali he demolished all.

7 And when he had destroyed the altars, and the groves, and had broken the idols in pieces, and had demolished all profane temples throughout all the land of Israel. he returned to Jerusalem.

8 Now in the eighteenth year [t] of his

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q B. C. 643. — *r* 4 Kings 22. 1.

s B. C. 641. — *t* B. C. 624.

reign, when he had cleansed the land, and the temple of the Lord, he sent Saphan the son of Eselias, and Maasias the governor of the city, Joha the son of Joachaz the recorder, to repair the house of the Lord his God.

9 And they came to Helcias the high priest: and received of him the money which had been brought into the house of the Lord, and which the Levites and porters had gathered together from Manasses, and Ephraim, and all the remnant of Israel, and from all Juda, and Benjamin, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

10 Which they delivered into the hands of them that were over the workmen in the house of the Lord, to repair the temple, and mend all that was weak.

11 But they gave it to the artificers, and to the masons, to buy stones out of the quarries, and timber for the couplings of the building, and to rafter the houses, which the kings of Juda had destroyed.

12 And they did all faithfully. Now the overseers of the workmen were Jahath and Abdias of the sons of Merari, Zacharias and Mosollam of the sons of Caath, who hastened the work: all Levites skilful to play on instruments.

13 But over them that carried burdens for divers uses, were scribes, and masters of the number of the Levites, and porters.

14 Now when they carried out the money that had been brought into the temple of the Lord, Helcias the priest found the book of the law of the Lord, by the hand of Moses.

15 And he said to Saphan the scribe: I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord: and he delivered it to him.

16 But he carried the book to the king, and told him, saying: Lo, all that thou hast committed to thy servants, is accomplished.

17 They have gathered together the silver that was found in the house of the Lord: and it is given to the overseers of the artificers, and of the workmen, for divers works.

18 Moreover Helcias the priest gave me this book. And he read it before the king.

19 And when he had heard the words of the law, he rent his garments:

20 And he commanded Helcias, and Ahicam the son of Saphan, and Abdon the son of Micha, and Saphan the scribe, and Asaa the king's servant, saying:

21 Go, and pray to the Lord for me, and for the remnant of Israel, and Juda, concerning all the words of this book, which is found: for the great wrath of the Lord hath fallen upon us, because our fathers have not kept the words of the Lord, to do all things that are written in this book.

22 And Helcias and they that were sent with him by the king, went to Olda the prophetess, the wife of Sellum the son of Thecuath, the son of Hasra keeper of the wardrobe: who dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second part: and they spoke to her the words above mentioned.

23 And she answered them: Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: Tell the man that sent you to me:

24 Thus saith the Lord: Behold I will bring evils upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, and all the curses that are written in this book which they read before the king of Juda.

25 Because they have forsaken me, and have sacrificed to strange gods, to provoke me to wrath with all the works of their hands, therefore my wrath shall fall upon this place, and shall not be quenched.

26 But as to the king of Juda that sent you to beseech the Lord, thus shall you say to him: Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel: Because thou hast heard the words of this book,

27 And thy heart was softened, and thou hast humbled thyself in the sight of God for the things that are spoken against this place, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and reverencing my face, hast rent thy garments, and wept before me: I also have heard thee, saith the Lord.

28 For now I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be brought to thy tomb in peace: and thy eyes shall not see all the evil that I will bring upon this place, and the inhabitants thereof. [u] They therefore reported to the king all that she had said.

29 And he called together all the ancients of Juda and Jerusalem.

30 And went up to the house of the Lord, and all the men of Juda, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests and the

[u] 4 Kings 23. 1.

Levites, and all the people from the least to the greatest. And the king read in their hearing, in the house of the Lord, all the words of the book.

31 And standing up in his tribunal, he made a covenant before the Lord to walk after him, and keep his commandments, and testimonies, and justifications with all his heart, and with all his soul, and to do the things that were written in that book which he had read.

32 And he adjured all that were found in Jerusalem and Benjamin to do the same: and the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of the Lord the God of their fathers.

33 And Josias took away all the abominations out of all the countries of the children of Israel: and made all that were left in Israel, to serve the Lord their God. As long as he lived they departed not from the Lord the God of their fathers.

CHAPTER 35.

Josias celebrateth a most solemn pasch. He is slain by the king of Egypt.

AND [a] Josias kept a phase to the Lord in Jerusalem, and it was sacrificed on the fourteenth day of the first month.

2 And he set the priests in their offices, and exhorted them to minister in the house of the Lord.

3 And he spoke to the Levites, by whose instruction all Israel was sanctified to the Lord, saying: Put the ark in the sanctuary of the temple, which Solomon the son of David king of Israel built: for you shall carry it no more: but minister now to the Lord your God, and to his people Israel.

4 And prepare yourselves by your houses, and families according to your courses, as David king of Israel commanded, and Solomon his son hath written.

5 And serve ye in the sanctuary by the families and companies of Levi.

6 And being sanctified kill the phase, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the words which the Lord spoke by the hand of Moses.

7 And Josias gave to all the people that were found there in the solemnity of the phase, of lambs and of kids of the flocks, and of other small cattle thirty thousand, and of oxen three thousand, all these were of the king's substance.

8 And his princes willingly offered what they had vowed, both to the people and to the priests and the Levites. Moreover Helcias, and Zacharias, and Jahiel rulers of the house of the Lord, gave to the priests to keep the phase two thousand six hundred small cattle, and three hundred oxen.

9 And Chonenias, and Semeias and Nathanael, his brethren, and Hasabias, and Jehiel, and Jozabad princes of the Levites, gave to the rest of the Levites to celebrate the phase five thousand small cattle, and five hundred oxen.

10 And the ministry was prepared, and the priests stood in their office: the Levites also in *their* companies, according to the king's commandment.

11 And the phase was immolated: and the priests sprinkled the blood with their hand, and the Levites flayed the holocausts:

12 And they separated them to give them by the houses and families of every one, and to be offered to the Lord, as it is written in the book of Moses, and with the oxen they did in like manner.

13 And they roasted the phase with fire, according to that which is written in the law: but the victims of peace offerings they boiled in caldrons, and kettles, and pots, and they distributed them speedily among all the people.

14 And afterwards they made ready for themselves, and for the priests: for the priests were busied in offering of holocausts and the fat until night: wherefore the Levites prepared for themselves, and for the priests the sons of Aaron last.

15 And the singers the sons of Asaph stood in their order, according to the commandment of David, and Asaph, and Heman, and Idithun the prophets of the king: and the porters kept guard at every gate, so as not to depart one moment from their service. and therefore their brethren the Levites prepared meats for them.

16 So all the service of the Lord was duly accomplished that day, both in keeping the phase, and offering holocausts upon the altar of the Lord, according to the commandment of king Josias.

[a] 4 Kings 23. 21.

17 And the children of Israel that were found there, kept the phase at that time, and the feast of unleavened bread seven days.

18 There was no phase like to this in Israel, from the days of Samuel the prophet: neither did any of all the kings of Israel keep such a phase as Josias kept, with the priests, and the Levites, and all Juda, and Israel that were found, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

19 In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josias was this phase celebrated.

20 [w] After that Josias had repaired the temple, Nechao king of Egypt came up to fight in Charcamis by the Euphrates: and Josias went out to meet him.

21 But he sent messengers to him, saying: What have I to do with thee, O king of Juda? I come not against thee this day, but I fight against another house, to which God hath commanded me to go in haste: forbear to do against God, who is with me, lest he kill thee.

22 Josias would not return, but prepared to fight against him, and hearkened not to the words of Nechao from the mouth of God, [x] but went to fight in the field of Mageddo.

23 And there he was wounded by the archers, and he said to his servants: Carry me out of the battle, for I am grievously wounded.

24 And they removed him from the chariot into another, that followed him after the manner of kings, and they carried him away to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in the monument of his fathers, and all Juda and Jerusalem mourned for him,

25 Particularly Jeremias: whose lamentations for Josias all the singing men and singing women repeat unto this day, and it became like a law in Israel: Behold it is found written in the Lamentations.

26 Now the rest of the acts of Josias and of his mercies, according to what was commanded by the law of the Lord:

27 And his works first and last, are written in the book of the kings of Juda and Israel.

w 4 Kings 23. 29. B. C. 610.
x Zach. 12. 11.

CHAPTER 36.

The reigns of Joachaz, Joakim, Joachin, and Sedecias: the captivity of Babylon released at length by Cyrus.

THEN [y] the people of the land took Joachaz the son of Josias, and made him king instead of his father in Jerusalem.

2 Joachaz was three and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem.

3 And the king of Egypt came to Jerusalem, and deposed him, and condemned the land in a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.

4 And he made [z] Eliakim his brother king in his stead, over Juda and Jerusalem: and he turned his name to Joakim: but he took Joachaz with him, and carried him away into Egypt.

5 Joakim was five and twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and he did evil before the Lord his God.

6 Against him came up Nabuchodonosor king of the Chaldeans, and led him bound in chains into Babylon.

7 And he carried also thither the vessels of the Lord, and put them in his temple.

8 But the rest of the acts of Joakim, and his abominations, which he wrought, and the things that were found in him, are contained in the book of the kings of Juda and Israel. And Joachin his son reigned in his stead.

9 Joachin was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord.

10 And at the return of the year, king Nabuchodonosor sent, and brought him to Babylon, carrying away at the same time the most precious vessels of the house of the Lord: [a] and he made Sedecias his uncle king over Juda and Jerusalem.

11 Sedecias was one and twenty years old when he began to reign: and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem.

12 And he did evil in the eyes of the Lord his God, and did not reverence the face of Jeremias the prophet speaking to him from the mouth of the Lord.

y B. C. 610. 4 Kings 23. 30.
z Matt. 1. 11. — a 4 Kings 24. 1; Jer. 37. 1.

CHAP. 36. Ver. 9. *Eight years old.* He was associated by his father to the kingdom, when he was but eight years old, but after his father's death, when he reigned alone, he was eighteen years old. 4 Kings 24. 8.

13 He also revolted from king Nabuchodonosor, [a] who had made him swear by God: and he hardened his neck and his heart, from returning to the Lord the God of Israel.

14 Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people wickedly transgressed according to all the abominations of the Gentiles: and they defiled the house of the Lord, which he had sanctified to himself in Jerusalem.

15 And the Lord the God of their fathers sent to them, by the hand of his messengers, rising early, and daily admonishing them: because he spared his people and his dwelling place.

16 But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused the prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, and there was no remedy.

17 For he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, and he slew their young men with the sword in the house of his sanctuary, he had no compassion on young man, or maiden, old man or even him that stooped for age, but he delivered them all into his hands.

18 And all the vessels of the house of the Lord, great and small, and the treasures of the temple and of the king, and of the princes he carried away to Babylon.

19 And the enemies set fire to the house of God, and broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burnt all the towers, and whatsoever was precious they destroyed.

20 Whosoever escaped the sword, was led into Babylon, and there served the king and his sons till the reign of the king of Persia.

21 That the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias might be fulfilled, and the land might keep her sabbaths: for all the days of the desolation she kept a sabbath, till the seventy years were expired.

22 [c] But in the first year [d] of Cyrus king of the Persians, to fulfil the word of the Lord, which he had spoken by the mouth of Jeremias, the Lord stirred up the heart of Cyrus king of the Persians: who commanded it to be proclaimed through all his kingdom, and by writing also, saying:

23 Thus saith Cyrus king of the Persians: All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord the God of heaven given to me, and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea: who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.

THE

FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.

This Book taketh its name from the writer: who was a holy priest, and doctor of the law. He is called by the Hebrews, Ezra.

CHAPTER 1.

Cyrus king of Persia releaseth God's people from their captivity, with license to return and build the temple in Jerusalem: and restoreth the holy vessels which Nabuchodonosor had taken from thence.

IN the first year [e] of Cyrus king of the Persians, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of the Persians: and he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and in writing also, saying:

2 Thus saith Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord the God of heaven hath given to me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea.

3 Who is there among you of all his people? His God be with him. Let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judea, and build the house of the Lord the God of Israel: he is the God that is in Jerusalem.

4 And let all the rest in all places wheresoever they dwell, help him every man from his place, with silver and gold, and

[a] B. C. 587.
[c] Esd. 1. 1. and 6. 3; Jer. 25. 12. and 29. 10.
[d] B. C. 538.
[e] B. C. 538. 2 Par. 36. 22; Jer. 25. 12, and 29. 10.

goods, and cattle, besides that which they offer freely to the temple of God, which is in Jerusalem.

5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Juda and Benjamin, and the priests, and Levites, and every one whose spirit God had raised up, to go up to build the temple of the Lord, which was in Jerusalem.

6 And all they that were round about, helped their hands with vessels of silver, and gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with furniture, besides what they had offered on their own accord.

7 And king Cyrus brought forth the vessels of the temple of the Lord, which Nabuchodonosor had taken from Jerusalem, and had put them in the temple of his god.

8 Now Cyrus king of Persia brought them forth by the hand of Mithridates the son of Gazabar, and numbered them to [f] Sassabasar the prince of Juda.

9 And this is the number of them: thirty bowls of gold, a thousand bowls of silver, nine and twenty knives, thirty cups of gold,

10 Silver cups of a second sort, four hundred and ten: other vessels a thousand.

11 All the vessels of gold and silver, five thousand four hundred: all these Sassabasar brought with them that came up from the captivity of Babylon to Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 2.

The number of them that returned to Judea their oblations.

NOW [g] these are the children of the province, that went out of the captivity, which Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon had carried away to Babylon, and who returned to Jerusalem and Juda, every man to his city.

2 Who came with Zorobabel, Josue, Nehemia, Saraia, Rahelaia, Mardochai, Belsan, Mesphar, Beguai, Rehum, Baana. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

3 The children of Pharos two thousand one hundred seventy-two.

4 The children of Sephatia, three hundred seventy-two.

5 The children of Area, seven hundred seventy-five.

6 The children of Phahath Moab, of the children of Josue: Joab, two thousand eight hundred twelve.

7 The children of Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty-four.

8 The children of Zethua, nine hundred forty-five.

9 The children of Zachai, seven hundred sixty.

10 The children of Bani, six hundred forty-two.

11 The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty-three.

12 The children of Azgad, a thousand two hundred twenty-two.

13 The children of Adonicam, six hundred sixty-six.

14 The children of Beguai, two thousand fifty-six.

15 The children of Adin, four hundred fifty-four.

16 The children of Ather, who were of Ezechias, ninety-eight.

17 The children of Besai, three hundred and twenty-three.

18 The children of Jora, a hundred and twelve.

19 The children of Hasum, two hundred twenty-three.

20 The children of Gebbar, ninety-five.

21 The children of Bethlehem, a hundred twenty-three.

22 The men of Netupha, fifty-six.

23 The men of Anathoth, a hundred twenty-eight.

24 The children of Azmaveth, forty-two

25 The children of Cariathiarim, Cephira, and Beroth, seven hundred forty-three.

26 The children of Rama and Gabaa, six hundred twenty-one.

27 The men of Machmas, a hundred twenty-two.

28 The men of Bethel and Hai, two hundred twenty-three.

29 The children of Nebo, fifty-two.

30 The children of Megbis, a hundred fifty-six.

31 The children of the other Elam, a thousand two hundred fifty-four.

32 The children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.

33 The children of Lod, Hadid and Ono, seven hundred twenty-five.

34 The children of Jericho, three hundred forty-five.

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[f] Alias Zorobabel

[g] 2 Esd. i. 6.

35 The children of Senaa, three thousand six hundred thirty.

36 The priests: the children of Jadaia of the house of Josue, nine hundred seventy-three.

37 The children of Emmer, a thousand fifty-two.

38 The children of Pheshur, a thousand two hundred forty-seven.

39 The children of Harim, a thousand and seventeen.

40 The Levites: the children of Josue and of Cedmihel, the children of Odovia, seventy-four.

41 The singing men: the children of Asaph, a hundred twenty-eight.

42 The children of the porters: the children of Sellum, the children of Ater, the children of Telmon, the children of Accub, the children of Hatita, the children of Sobai: in all a hundred thirty-nine.

43 The Nathinites: the children of Siha, the children of Hasupha, the children of Tabbaoth,

44 The children of Ceros, the children of Sia, the children of Phadon,

45 The children of Lebana, the children of Hegaba, the children of Accub,

46 The children of Hagab, the children of Semlai, the children of Hanan,

47 The children of Gaddel, the children of Gaher, the children of Raaia,

48 The children of Rasin, the children of Necoda, the children of Gazam,

49 The children of Asa, the children of Phasea, the children of Besee,

50 The children of Asena, the children of Munim, the children of Nephusim,

51 The children of Bacbuc, the children of Hacupha, the children of Harhur.

52 The children of Besluth, the children of Mahida, the children of Harsa,

53 The children of Bercos, the children of Sisara, the children of Thema,

54 The children of Nasia, the children of Hatipha,

55 The children of the servants of Solomon, the children of Sotai, the children of Sopheret, the children of Pharuda,

56 The children of Jala, the children of Dercon, the children of Geddel,

57 The children of Saphatia, the children of Hatil, the children of Phochereth, which were of Asebaim, the children of Ami,

58 All the Nathinites, and the children of the servants of Solomon, three hundred ninety-two.

59 And these are they that came up from Thelmela, Thelharsa, Cherub, and Adon, and Emer. And they could not shew the house of their fathers and their seed, whether they were of Israel.

60 The children of Dalaia, the children of Tobia, the children of Necoda, six hundred fifty-two.

61 And of the children of the priests: the children of Hobia, the children of Accos, the children of Berzellai, who took a wife of the daughters of Berzellai, the Galaadite, and was called by their name:

62 These sought the writing of their genealogy, and found it not, and they were cast out of the priesthood.

33 [h] And Athersatha said to them, that they should not eat of the holy of holies, till there arose a priest learned and perfect.

64 All the multitudes as one man, *were* forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty:

65 Besides their menservants, and womenservants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven: and among them singing men, and singing women two hundred.

66 Their horses seven hundred thirty-six, their mules two hundred forty-five,

67 Their camels four hundred thirty-five, their asses six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

68 And some of the chief of the fathers, when they came to the temple of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem, offered freely to the house of the Lord to build it in its place.

69 According to their ability, they gave towards the expenses of the work, sixty-one thousand solids of gold, five thousand pounds of silver, and a hundred garments for the priests.

70 So the priests and the Levites, and some of the people, and the singing men, and the porters, and the Nathinites dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities.

h 2 Esd. 7. 65.

CHAP. 2. Ver. 64. *Forty-two thousand*, &c. Those who are reckoned up above of the tribes of Juda, Benjamin and Levi, fall short of this number. The rest, who must be taken in to make up the whole sum, were of the other tribes.

CHAPTER 3.

An altar is built for sacrifice, the feast of tabernacles is solemnly celebrated, and the foundations of the temple are laid.

AND now the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in their cities: and the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.

2 And Josue the son of Josedec rose up, and his brethren the priests, and Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and his brethren, and they built the altar of the God of Israel that they might offer holocausts upon it, as it is written in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 And they set the altar of God upon its bases, while the people of the lands round about put them in fear, and they offered upon it a holocaust to the Lord morning and evening.

4 And they kept the feast of tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the holocaust every day orderly according to the commandments, the duty of the day in its day.

5 And afterwards the continual holocaust, both of the new moons, and on all the solemnities of the Lord, that were consecrated, and on all in which a free-will offering was made to the Lord.

6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer holocausts to the Lord: but the temple of God was not yet founded.

7 And they gave money to hewers of stones and to masons: and meat and drink, and oil to the Sidonians and Tyrians, to bring cedar trees from Libanus to the sea of Joppe, according to the orders which Cyrus king of the Persians had given them.

8 And in the second year of their coming to the temple of God in Jerusalem, the second month, Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and Josue the son of Josedec, and the rest of their brethren the priests, and the Levites, and all that were come from the captivity to Jerusalem began, and they appointed Levites from twenty years old and upward, to hasten forward the work of the Lord.

9 Then Josue and his sons and his brethren, Cedmihel, and his sons, and the children of Juda, as one man, stood to hasten them that did the work in the temple of God: the sons of Henadad, and their sons, and their brethren the Levites.

10 And when the masons laid the foundations of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their ornaments with trumpets: and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise God by the hands of David king of Israel.

11 And they sung together hymns, and praise to the Lord: because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever towards Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, praising the Lord, because the foundations of the temple of the Lord were laid.

12 But many of the priests and the Levites, and the chiefs of the fathers and the ancients that had seen the former temple; when they had the foundation of this temple before their eyes, wept with a loud voice: and many shouting for joy, lifted up their voice.

13 So that one could not distinguish the voice of the shout of joy, from the noise of the weeping of the people: for one with another the people shouted with a loud shout, and the voice was heard afar off.

CHAPTER 4.

The Samaritans by their letter to the king hinder the building.

NOW the enemies of Juda and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity were building a temple to the Lord the God of Israel.

2 And they came to Zorobabel, and the chief of the fathers, and said to them: Let us build with you, for we seek your God as ye do: behold we have sacrificed to him, since the days of Asor Haddan king of Assyria, who brought us hither.

3 But Zorobabel, and Josue, and the rest of the chiefs of the fathers of Israel said to them: You have nothing to do with us to build a house to our God, but we ourselves alone will build to the Lord our God, as Cyrus king of the Persians hath commanded us.

4 Then the people of the land hindered the hands of the people of Juda, and troubled them in building.

CHAP. 3. Ver. 2. *Josue:* or Jesus (Jeshua) the son of Josedec; he was the high priest at that time.

8 And they hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their design all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of the Persians.

6 And in the reign of Assuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Juda and Jerusalem.

7 And in the days of Artaxerxes, Beselam, Mithridates, and Thabeel, and the rest that were in the council wrote to Artaxerxes king of the Persians: and the letter of accusation was written in Syriac, and was read in the Syrian tongue.

8 Reum Beelteem, and Samsai the scribe wrote a letter from Jerusalem to king Artaxerxes, in this manner:

9 Reum Beelteem, and Samsai the scribe and the rest of their counsellors, the Dinites, and the Apharsathacites, the Therphalites, the Apharsites, the Erchuites, the Babylonians, the Susanechites, the Dievites, and the Elamites,

10 And the rest of the nations, whom the great and glorious Asenaphar brought over: and made to dwell in the cities of Samaria and in the rest of the countries of this side of the river in peace.

11 (This is the copy of the letter, which they sent to him:) To Artaxerxes the king, thy servants, the men that are on this side of the river, send greeting.

12 Be it known to the king, that the Jews, who came up from thee to us, are come to Jerusalem a rebellious and wicked city, which they are building, setting up the ramparts thereof and repairing the walls.

13 And now be it known to the king, that if this city be built up, and the walls thereof repaired, they will not pay tribute nor toll nor yearly revenues, and this loss will fall upon the kings.

14 But we remembering the salt that we have eaten in the palace, and because we count it a crime to see the king wronged, have therefore sent and certified the king,

15 That search may be made in the books of the histories of thy fathers, and thou shalt find written in the records: and shalt know that this city is a rebellious city, and hurtful to the kings and provinces, and that wars were raised therein of old time: for which cause also the city was destroyed.

16 We certify the king, that if this city be built, and the walls thereof repaired, thou shalt have no possession on this side of the river.

17 The king sent word to Reum Beelteem and Samsai the scribe, and to the rest that were in their council, inhabitants of Samaria, and to the rest beyond the river, sending greeting and peace.

18 The accusation, which you have sent to us, hath been plainly read before me,

19 And I commanded: and search hath been made, and it is found, that this city of old time hath rebelled against kings, and seditions and wars have been raised therein.

20 For there have been powerful kings in Jerusalem, who have had dominion over all the country that is beyond the river: and have received tribute, and toll and revenues.

21 Now therefore hear the sentence: Hinder those men, that this city be not built, till further orders be given by me.

22 See that you be not negligent in executing this, lest by little and little the evil grow to the hurt of the kings.

23 Now the copy of the edict of king Artaxerxes was read before Reum Beelteem, and Samsai the scribe, and their counsellors: and they went up in haste to Jerusalem to the Jews, and hindered them with arm and power.

24 Then the work of the house of the Lord in Jerusalem was interrupted, and ceased till the second year of the reign of Darius king of the Persians.

CHAPTER 5.

By the exhortation of Aggeus, and Zacharias, the people proceed in building the temple. Which their enemies strive in vain to hinder.

NOW [l] Aggeus the prophet, and Zacharias the son of Addo, prophesied to the Jews that were in Judea and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel.

2 Then rose up Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and Josue the son of Josedec, and began to build the temple of God in Jerusalem, and with them were the prophets of God helping them.

3 And at the same time came to them Thathanai, who was governor beyond

CHAP. 4. Ver. 6. *Assuerus.* Otherwise called Cambyses the son and successor of Cyrus. He is also in the following verse named Artaxerxes, a name common to almost all the kings of Persia.

l B. C. 520.

the river, and Stharbuzanai, and their counsellors: and said thus to them: Who hath given you counsel to build this house, and to repair the walls thereof?

4 In answer to which we gave them the names of the men who were the promoters of that building.

5 But the eye of their God was upon the ancients of the Jews, and they could not hinder them. And it was agreed that the matter should be referred to Darius, and then they should give satisfaction concerning that accusation.

6 The copy of the letter that Thathanai governor of the country beyond the river, and Stharbuzanai, and his counsellors the Arphasachites, who dwelt beyond the river, sent to Darius the king.

7 The letter which they sent him, was written thus: To Darius the king all peace.

8 Be it known to the king, that we went to the province of Judea, to the house of the great God, which they are building with unpolished stones, and timber is laid in the walls: and this work is carried on diligently, and advanceth in their hands.

9 And we asked those ancients, and said to them thus: Who hath given you authority to build this house, and to repair these walls?

10 We asked also of them their names, that we might give thee notice: and we have written the names of the men that are the chief among them.

11 And they answered us in these words, saying: We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are building a temple that was built these many years ago, and which a great king of Israel built and set up.

12 But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven to wrath, he delivered them into the hands of Nabuchodonosor the king of Babylon the Chaldean: and he destroyed this house, and carried away the people to Babylon.

13 But in the first year of Cyrus the king of Babylon, king Cyrus set forth a decree, that this house of God should be built.

14 And the vessels also of gold and silver of the temple of God, which Nabuchodonosor had taken out of the temple, that was in Jerusalem, and had brought them to the temple of Babylon, king Cyrus brought out of the temple of Babylon, and they were delivered to one Sassabasar, whom also he appointed governor,

15 And said to him: Take these vessels, and go, and put them in the temple that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be built in its place.

16 Then came this same Sassabasar, and laid the foundations of the temple of God in Jerusalem, and from that time until now it is in building, and is not yet finished.

17 Now therefore if it seem good to the king, let him search in the king's library, which is in Babylon, whether it hath been decreed by Cyrus the king, that the house of God in Jerusalem should be built, and let the king send his pleasure to us concerning this matter.

CHAPTER 6.

King Darius favoureth the building and contributeth to it.

THEN king Darius gave orders, and they searched in the library of the books that were laid up in Babylon,

2 And there was found in Ecbatana, which is a castle in the province of Media, a book in which this record was written.

3 In the first year of Cyrus the king Cyrus the king decreed, that the house of God should be built, which is in Jerusalem, in the place where they may offer sacrifices, and that they lay the foundations that may support the height of threescore cubits, and the breadth of threescore cubits,

4 Three rows of unpolished stones, and so rows of new timber: and the charges shall be given out of the king's house.

5 And also let the golden and silver vessels of the temple of God, which Nabuchodonosor took out of the temple of Jerusalem, and brought to Babylon, be restored, and carried back to the temple of Jerusalem to their place, which also were placed in the temple of God.

6 Now therefore Thathanai, governor of the country beyond the river, Stharbuzanai, and your counsellors the Apharsachites, who are beyond the river, depart far from them,

7 And let that temple of God be built

by the governor of the Jews, and by their ancients, that they may build that house of God in its place.

8 I also have commanded what must be done by those ancients of the Jews, that the house of God may be built, to wit, that of the king's chest, that is, of the tribute that is paid out of the country beyond the river, the charges be diligently given to those men, lest the work be hindered.

9 And if it shall be necessary, let calves also, and lambs, and kids, for holocausts to the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the custom of the priests that are in Jerusalem, be given them day by day, that there be no complaint in any thing.

10 And let them offer oblations to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his children.

11 And I have made a decree: That if any whosoever, shall alter this commandment, a beam be taken from his house, and set up, and he be nailed upon it, and his house be confiscated.

12 And may the God, that hath caused his name to dwell there, destroy all kingdoms, and the people that shall put out their hand to resist, and to destroy the house of God, that is in Jerusalem. I Darius have made the decree, which I will have diligently complied with.

13 So then Thathanai, governor of the country beyond the river, and Stharbuzanai, and his counsellors diligently executed what Darius the king had commanded.

14 And the ancients of the Jews built, and prospered according to the prophecy of Aggeus the prophet, and of Zacharias the son of Addo: and they built and finished, by the commandment of the God of Israel, and by the commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes kings of the Persians.

15 And they were finishing this house of God, until the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of king Darius.

16 And the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity kept the dedication of the house of God with joy.

17 And they offered at the dedication of the house of God, a hundred calves, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and for a sin offering for all Israel twelve he goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel.

18 And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses over the works of God in Jerusalem, [n] as it is written in the book of Moses.

19 And the children of Israel of the captivity kept the phase, [o] on the fourteenth day of the first month.

20 For all the priests and the Levites were purified as one man: all were clean to kill the phase for all the children of the captivity, and for their brethren the priests, and themselves.

21 And the children of Israel that were returned from captivity, and all that had separated themselves from the filthiness of the nations of the earth to them, to seek the Lord the God of Israel, did eat.

22 And they kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with joy, for the Lord had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria to them. that he should help their hands in the work of the house of the Lord the God of Israel.

CHAPTER 7

Esdras goeth up to Jerusalem to teach, and assist the people, with a gracious decree of Artaxerxes.

NOW [p] after these things in the reign of Artaxerxes king of the Persians, Esdras the son of Saraias, the son of Azarias, the son of Helcias,

2 The son of Sellum, the son of Sadoc, the son of Achitob,

3 The son of Amarias, the son of Azarias, the son of Maraioth,

4 The son of Zarahias, the son of Ozi, the son of Bocci,

5 The son of Abisue, the son of Phinees, the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest from the beginning.

6 This Esdras went up from Babylon, and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the Lord God had given to Israel: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the Lord his God upon him.

7 And there went up some of the children of Israel, and of the children of the priests, and of the children of the Levites, and of the singing men, and of the por-

n Num. 3. 6, and 8. 9.

o B. C. 515. — *p* B. C. 458.

ters, and of the Nathinites to Jerusalem in the seventh year [q] of Artaxerxes the king.

8 And they came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, in the seventh year of the king.

9 For upon the first day of the first month he began to go up from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he came to Jerusalem according to the good hand of his God upon him.

10 For Esdras had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do and to teach in Israel the commandments and judgment.

11 And this is the copy of the letter of the edict, which king Artaxerxes gave to Esdras the priest, the scribe instructed in the words and commandments of the Lord, and his ceremonies in Israel.

12 Artaxerxes king of kings to Esdras the priest, the most learned scribe of the law of the God of heaven, greeting.

13 It is decreed by me, that all they of the people of Israel, and of the priests and of the Levites in my realm, that are minded to go into Jerusalem, should go with thee.

14 For thou art sent from before the king, and his seven counsellors, to visit Judea and Jerusalem according to the law of thy God, which is in thy hand.

15 And to carry the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel, whose tabernacle is in Jerusalem.

16 And all the silver and gold that thou shalt find in all the province of Babylon, and that the people is willing to offer, and that the priests shall offer of their own accord to the house of their God, which is in Jerusalem,

17 Take freely, and buy diligently with this money, calves, rams, lambs, with the sacrifices and libations of them, and offer them upon the altar of the temple of your God, that is in Jerusalem.

18 And if it seem good to thee, and to thy brethren to do any thing with the rest of the silver and gold, do it according to the will of your God.

19 The vessels also, that are given thee for the sacrifice of the house of thy God, deliver thou in the sight of God in Jerusalem.

20 And whatsoever more there shall be need of for the house of thy God, how much soever thou shalt have occasion to spend, it shall be given out of the treasury, and the king's exchequer, and by me.

21 I Artaxerxes the king have ordered and decreed to all the keepers of the public chest, that are beyond the river, that whatsoever Esdras the priest, the scribe of the law of the God of heaven, shall require of you, you give it without delay,

22 Unto a hundred talents of silver, and unto a hundred cores of wheat, and unto a hundred bates of wine, and unto a hundred bates of oil, and salt without measure.

23 All that belongeth to the rites of the God of heaven, let it be given diligently in the house of the God of heaven: lest his wrath should be enkindled against the realm of the king, and of his sons.

24 We give you also to understand concerning all the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nathinites, and ministers of the house of this God, that you have no authority to impose toll or tribute, or custom upon them.

25 And thou Esdras according to the wisdom of thy God, which is in thy hand, appoint judges and magistrates, that may judge all the people, that is beyond the river that is, for them who know the law of thy God, yea and the ignorant teach ye freely.

26 And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king diligently, judgment shall be executed upon him, either unto death, or unto banishment, or to the confiscation of goods, or at least to prison.

27 Blessed be the Lord the God of our fathers, who hath put this in the king's heart, to glorify the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem,

28 And hath inclined his mercy toward me before the king and his counsellors, and all the mighty princes of the king: and I being strengthened by the hand of the Lord my God, which was upon me, gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me.

[q] B. C. 459-458.

CHAPTER 8.

The companions of Esdras. The fast which he proclaimed. They bring the holy vessels into the temple.

NOW these are the chiefs of families, and the genealogy of them, who came up with me from Babylon in the reign of Artaxerxes the king.

2 Of the sons of Phinees, Gersom. Of the sons of Ithamar, Daniel. Of the sons of David, Hattus.

3 Of the sons of Sechenias, the son of Pharos, Zacharias, and with him were numbered a hundred and fifty men.

4 Of the sons of Phahath Moab, Eleoenai the son of Zareha, and with him two hundred men.

5 Of the sons of Sechenias, the son of Ezechiel, and with him three hundred men.

6 Of the sons of Adan, Abed the son of Jonathan, and with him fifty men.

7 Of the sons of Alam, Isaias the son of Athalias, and with him seventy men.

8 Of the sons of Saphatia: Zebodia the son of Michael, and with him eighty men.

9 Of the sons of Joab, Obedia the son of Jahiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen men.

10 Of the sons of Selomith, the son of Josphia, and with him a hundred and sixty men.

11 Of the sons of Bebai, Zacharias the son of Bebai: and with him eight and twenty men.

12 Of the sons of Azgad, Joanan the son of Eccetan, and with him a hundred and ten men.

13 Of the sons of Adonicam, who were the last: and these are their names: Eliphelet, and Jehiel, and Samaias, and with them sixty men.

14 Of the sons of Begui, Uthai and Zachur, and with them seventy men.

15 And I gathered them together to the river, which runneth down to Ahava, and we stayed there three days: and I sought among the people and among the priests for the sons of Levi, and found none there.

16 So I sent Eliezer, and Ariel, and Semeias, and Elnathan, and Jarib, and another Elnathan, and Nathan, and Zacharias, and Mosollam, chief men: and Joiarib, and Elnathan, wise men.

17 And I sent them to Eddo, who is chief in the place of Chasphia, and I put in their mouth the words that they should speak to Eddo, and his brethren the Nathinites in the place of Chasphia, that they should bring us ministers of the house of our God.

18 And by the good hand of our God upon us, they brought us a most learned man of the sons of Moholi the son of Levi the son of Israel, and Sarabias and his sons, and his brethren eighteen,

19 And Hasabias, and with him Isaias of the sons of Merari, and his brethren, and his sons twenty.

20 And of the Nathinites, whom David, and the princes gave for the service of the Levites, Nathinites two hundred and twenty: all these were called by their names.

21 And I proclaimed there a fast by the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before the Lord our God, and might ask of him a right way for us and for our children, and for all our substance.

22 For I was ashamed to ask the king for aid and for horsemen, to defend us from the enemy in the way: because we had said to the king: The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him in goodness: and his power and strength, and wrath upon all them that forsake him.

23 And we fasted, and besought our God for this: and it fell out prosperously unto us.

24 And I separated twelve of the chief of the priests, Sarabias, and Hasabias, and with them ten of their brethren,

25 And I weighed unto them the silver and gold, and the vessels consecrated for the house of our God, which the king and his counsellors, and his princes, and all Israel, that were found had offered.

26 And I weighed to their hands six hundred and fifty talents of silver, and a hundred vessels of silver, and a hundred talents of gold,

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r B. C. 459-458.

CHAP. 8. Ver. 21. *And I proclaimed a fast.* It is not enough to part from Babylon, that is, figuratively from sin, but we must also do works of penance: and therefore Esdras here proclaimed an extraordinary fast to those that were come from captivity. This shews that fasting was commanded and practised from the earliest times.

27 And twenty cups of gold, of a thousand solids, and two vessels of the best shining brass, beautiful as gold.

28 And I said to them: You are the holy ones of the Lord, and the vessels are holy, and the silver and gold, that is freely offered to the Lord the God of our fathers.

29 Watch ye and keep them, till you deliver them by weight before the chief of the priests, and of the Levites, and the heads of the families of Israel in Jerusalem, into the treasure of the house of the Lord.

30 And the priests and the Levites received the weight of the silver and gold, and the vessels, to carry them to Jerusalem to the house of our God.

31 Then we set forward from the river Ahava on the twelfth day of the first month to go to Jerusalem: and the hand of our God was upon us, and delivered us from the hand of the enemy, and of such as lay in wait by the way.

32 And we came to Jerusalem, and we stayed there three days.

33 And on the fourth day the silver and the gold, and the vessels were weighed in the house of our God by the hand of Meremoth the son of Urias the priest, and with him was Eleazar the son of Phinees, and with them Jozabad the son of Josue, and Noadaia the son of Benoi, Levites.

34 According to the number and weight of every thing: and all the weight was written at that time.

35 Moreover the children of them that had been carried away that were come out of the captivity, offered holocausts to the God of Israel, twelve calves for all the people of Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve he goats for sin: all for a holocaust to the Lord.

36 And they gave the king's edicts to the lords that were from the king's court, and the governors beyond the river, and they furthered the people and the house of God.

CHAPTER 9.

Esdras mourneth for the transgression of the people: his confession and prayer

AND [a] after these things were accomplished, the princes came to me, saying: The people of Israel, and the priests and Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, and from their abominations, namely, of the Chanaanites, and the Hethites, and the Pherezites, and the Jebusites, and the Ammonites, and the Moabites, and the Egyptians, and the Amorrhites.

2 For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, and they have mingled the holy seed with the people of the lands. And the hand of the princes and magistrates hath been first in this transgression.

3 And when I had heard this word, I rent my mantle and my coat, and plucked off the hairs of my head and my beard, and I sat down mourning.

4 And there were assembled to me all that feared the God of Israel, because of the transgression of those that were come from the captivity, and I sat sorrowful, until the evening sacrifice.

5 And at the evening sacrifice I rose up from my affliction, and having rent my mantle and my garment, I fell upon my knees, and spread out my hands to the Lord my God,

6 And said: My God I am confounded and ashamed to lift up my face to thee: for our iniquities are multiplied over our heads, and our sins are grown up even unto heaven,

7 From the days of our fathers: and we ourselves also have sinned grievously unto this day, and for our iniquities we and our kings, and our priests have been delivered into the hands of the kings of the lands, and to the sword, and to captivity, and to spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is at this day.

8 And now as a little, and for a moment has our prayer been made before the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant, and give us a pin in his holy place, and that our God would enlighten our eyes, and would give us a little life in our bondage.

9 For we are bondmen, and in our bondage our God hath not forsaken us, but hath extended mercy upon us before the

[a] B. C. 459-458.

CHAP. 9. Ver. 1 and 2. This shows how sinful it is to intermarry with those that the Church forbids us, on account of the danger of perversion and falling off from the true faith.

Ver. 8. *A pin*, or *nail*, here signifies a small settlement or holding which Esdras begs for, to preserve even a part of the people, who, by their great iniquity had incurred the anger of God.

king of the Persians, to give us life, and to set up the house of our God, and to rebuild the desolations thereof, and to give us a fence in Juda and Jerusalem.

10 And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments,

11 Which thou hast commanded by the hand of thy servants the prophets, saying: The land which you go to possess, is an unclean land, according to the uncleanness of the people, and of other lands, with their abominations, who have filled it from mouth to mouth with their filth.

12 [t] Now therefore give not your daughters to their sons, and take not their daughters for your sons, and seek not their peace, nor their prosperity for ever: that you may be strengthened, and may eat the good things of the land, and may have your children your heirs for ever.

13 And after all that is come upon us, for our most wicked deeds, and our great sin, seeing that thou our God hast saved us from our iniquity, and hast given us a deliverance as at this day,

14 That we should not turn away, nor break thy commandments, nor join in marriage with the people of these abominations. Art thou angry with us unto utter destruction, not to leave us a remnant to be saved?

15 O Lord God of Israel, thou art just: for we remain yet to be saved as at this day. Behold we are before thee in our sin for there can be no standing before thee in this matter.

CHAPTER 10.

Order is given for discharging strange women: the names of the guilty.

NOW [u] when Esdras was thus praying, and beseeching, and weeping, and lying before the temple of God, there was gathered to him of Israel an exceeding great assembly of men and women and children, and the people wept with much lamentation

2 And Sechenias the son of Jehiel of the sons of Elam answered, and said to Esdras: We have sinned against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: and now if there be repentance in Israel concerning this,

3 Let us make a covenant with the Lord our God, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the will of the Lord, and of them that fear the commandment of the Lord our God: let it be done according to the law.

4 Arise, it is thy part to give orders, and we will be with thee: take courage, and do it.

5 So Esdras arose, and made the chiefs of the priests and of the Levites, and all Israel, to swear that they would do according to this word, and they swore.

6 And Esdras rose up from before the house of God, and went to the chamber of Johanan the son of Eliasib, and entered in thither: he ate no bread, and drank no water: for he mourned for the transgression of them that were come out of the captivity.

7 And proclamation was made in Juda and Jerusalem to all the children of the captivity, that they should assemble together into Jerusalem.

8 And that whosoever would not come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the ancients, all his substance should be taken away, and he should be cast out of the company of them that were returned from captivity.

9 Then all the men of Juda, and Benjamin gathered themselves together to Jerusalem within three days, in the ninth month, the twentieth day of the month: and all the people sat in the street of the house of God, trembling because of the sin, and the rain.

10 And Esdras the priest stood up, and said to them: You have transgressed, and taken strange wives, to add to the sins of Israel.

11 And now make confession to the Lord the God of your fathers, and do his pleasure, and separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from your strange wives.

12 And all the multitude answered and said with a loud voice: According to thy word unto us, so be it done.

13 But as the people are many, and it is time of rain, and we are not able to stand without, and it is not a work of one day or two, (for we have exceedingly sinned in this matter,)

14 Let rulers be appointed in all the

[t] Deut. 7. 3.

[u] B. C. 459-458.

multitude: and in all our cities, let them that have taken strange wives come at the times appointed, and with them the ancients and the judges of every city, until the wrath of our God be turned away from us for this sin.

15 Then Jonathan the son of Azahel, and Jaasia the son of Thecua were appointed over this, and Mesollam and Sebethai, Levites, helped them:

16 And the children of the captivity did so. And Esdras the priest, and the men heads of the families in the houses of their fathers, and all by their names, went and sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter.

17 And they made an end with all the men that had taken strange wives by the first day of the first month.

18 And there were found among the sons of the priests that had taken strange wives: Of the sons of Josue the son of Josedec, and his brethren, Maasia, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Godolia.

19 And they gave their hands to put away their wives, and to offer for their offence a ram of the flock.

20 And of the sons of Emmer, Hanani, and Zebedia.

21 And of the sons of Harim, Maasia, and Elia, and Semeia, and Jehiel, and Ozias.

22 And of the sons of Pheshur, Elioenai, Maasia, Ismael, Nathanael, Jozabed, and Elasa.

23 And of the sons of the Levites, Jozabed, and Semei, and Celaia, the same is Calita, Phataia, Juda, and Eliezer.

24 And of the singing men, Elisiab: and of the porters, Sellum, and Telem, and Uri.

25 And of Israel, of the sons of Pharos, Remeia, and Jezia, and Melchia, and Miamin, and Eliezer, and Melchia, and Banea.

26 And of the sons of Elam, Mathania, Zacharias, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jerimoth, and Elia.

27 And of the sons of Zethua, Elioenai, Eliasib, Mathania, Jerimuth, and Zabad, and Aziaza.

28 And of the sons of Babai, Johanan, Hanania, Zabbai, Athalai:

29 And of the sons of Bani, Mosollam, and Melluch, and Adaia, Jasub, and Saal, and Ramoth.

30 And of the sons of Phahath, Moab, Edna, and Chalal, Banaias, and Maasias, Mathanias, Beseleel, Bennui, and Manasse.

31 And of the sons of Herem, Eliezer, Josue, Melchias, Semeias, Simeon,

32 Benjamin, Maloch, Samarias.

33 And of the sons of Hasom, Mathanai, Mathatha. Zabad, Eliphelet, Jermai, Manasse, Semei.

34 Of the sons of Bani, Maaddi, Amram, and Uel,

35 Baneas, and Badaias, Cheliau,

36 Vania, Marimuth, and Eliasib,

37 Mathanias, Mathania, and Jasi,

38 And Bani, and Bennui, Semei,

39 And Salmias, and Nathan, and Adaias,

40 And Mechnedebai, Sisai, Sarai,

41 Ezrel, and Selemiau, Semeria,

42 Sellum, Amaria, Joseph.

43 Of the sons of Nebo, Jehiel, Mathathias, Zabad, Zabina, Jeddu, and Joel, and Banaia.

44 All these had taken strange wives, and there were among them women that had borne children.

THE

BOOK OF NEHEMIAS,

WHICH IS CALLED

THE SECOND OF ESDRAS.

This book takes its name from the writer, who was cupbearer to Artaxerxes (surnamed Longimanus*) king of Persia, and was sent by him with a commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It is also called the second book of* Esdras; *because it is a continuation of the history, begun by Esdras, of the state of the people of God after their return from captivity.*

CHAPTER 1.

Nehemias hearing the miserable state of his countrymen in Judea, lamenteth, fasteth, and prayeth to God for their relief.

THE [a] words of Nehemias the son of Helchias. And it came to pass in the month of Casleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in the castle of Susa,

2 That Hanani one of my brethren came, he and some men of Juda; and I asked them concerning the Jews, that remained and were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.

3 And they said to me: They that have remained, and are left of the captivity there in the province, are in great affliction, and reproach: and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire.

4 And when I had heard these words, I sat down, and wept, and mourned for many days: and I fasted, and prayed before the face of the God of heaven.

5 And I said: [b] I beseech thee, O Lord God of heaven, strong, great, and terrible, who keepest covenant and mercy with those that love thee, and keep thy commandments:

6 Let thy ears be attentive, and thy eyes open, to hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, night and day, for the children of Israel thy servants: and I confess the sins of the children of Israel, by which they have sinned against thee: I and my father's house have sinned.

7 We have been seduced by vanity, and have not kept thy commandments, and ceremonies and judgments, which thou hast commanded thy servant Moses.

8 Remember the word that thou commandedst to Moses thy servant, saying: If you shall transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:

9 But if you return to me, and keep my commandments, and do them, though you should be led away to the uttermost part of the world, I will gather you from thence and bring you back to the place which I have chosen for my name to dwell there.

10 And these are thy servants, and thy people: whom thou hast redeemed by thy great strength, and by thy mighty hand.

11 I beseech thee, O Lord, let thy ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant and to the prayer of thy servants who desire to fear thy name: and direct thy servant this day, and give him mercy before this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.

CHAPTER 2.

Nehemias with commission from king Artaxerxes cometh to Jerusalem: and exhorteth the Jews to rebuild the walls.

AND it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king: that wine was before him, and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king: and I was as one languishing away before his face.

2 And the king said to me: Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou dost not appear to be sick? this is not without cause, but some evil, I know not what, is in thy heart. And I was seized with a exceeding great fear:

3 And I said to the king: O king, live for ever: why should not my countenance be sorrowful, seeing the city of the place of the sepulchres of my fathers

[a] B. C. 445-44. [b] Dan. 9. 4.

desolate, and the gates thereof are burnt with fire?

4 Then the king said to me: For what dost thou make request? And I prayed to the God of heaven,

5 And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, and if thy servant hath found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldst send me into Judea to the city of the sepulchre of my father, and I will build it.

6 And the king said to me, and the queen that sat by him: For how long shall thy journey be, and when wilt thou return? And it pleased the king, and he sent me: and I fixed him a time.

7 And I said to the king: If it seem good to the king, let him give me letters to the governors of the country beyond the river, that they convey me over, till I come into Judea:

8 And a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, to give me timber that I may cover the gates of the tower of the house, and the walls of the city, and the house that I shall enter into. And the king gave me according to the good hand of my God with me.

9 And I came to the governors of the country beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. And the king had sent with me captains of soldiers, and horsemen.

10 And Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the servant, the Ammonite, heard it, and it grieved them exceedingly, that a man was come, who sought the prosperity of the children of Israel.

11 And I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me, and I told not any man what God had put in my heart to do in Jerusalem, and there was no beast with me, but the beast that I rode upon.

13 And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, and before the dragon fountain, and to the dung gate, and I viewed the wall of Jerusalem which was broken down, and the gates thereof which were consumed with fire.

14 And I passed to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's aqueduct, and there was no place for the beast on which I rode to pass.

15 And I went up in the night by the torrent, and viewed the wall, and going back I came to the gate of the valley, and returned.

16 But the magistrates knew not whither I went, or what I did: neither had I as yet told any thing to the Jews, or to the priests, or to the nobles, or to the magistrates, or to the rest that did the work.

17 Then I said to them: You know the affliction wherein we are, because Jerusalem is desolate, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire: come, and let us build up the walls of Jerusalem, and let us be no longer a reproach.

18 And I shewed them how the hand of my God was good with me, and the king's words, which he had spoken to me, and I said: Let us rise up, and build. And their hands were strengthened in good.

19 But Sanaballat the Horonite, and Tobias the servant, the Ammonite, and Gossem the Arabian heard of it, and they scoffed at us, and despised us, and said: What is this thing that you do? are you going to rebel against the king?

20 And I answered them, and said to them: The God of heaven he helpeth us, and we are his servants: let us rise up and build: but you have no part, nor justice, nor remembrance in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 3.

They begin to build the walls: the names and order of the builders.

THEN [y] Eliasib the high priest arose, and his brethren the priests, and they built the flock gate: they sanctified it, and set up the doors thereof, even unto the tower of a hundred cubits they sanctified it unto the tower of Hananeel.

2 And next to him the men of Jericho built: and next to them built Zachur the son of Amri.

3 But the fish gate the sons of Asnaa built: they covered it, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks, and the bars. And next to them built Marimuth the son of Urias the son of Accus.

4 And next to him built Mosollam the son of Barachias, the son of Merezebel, and next to them built Sadoc the son of Baana.

5 And next to them the Thecuites built:

[y] B. C. 446-445.

but their great men did not put their necks to the work of their Lord.

6 And Joiada the son of Phasea, and Mosollam the son of Besodia built the old gate: they covered it and set up the doors thereof, and the locks, and the bars.

7 And next to them built Meltias the Gabaonite, and Jadon the Meronathite, the men of Gabaon and Maspha, for the governor that was in the country beyond the river.

8 And next to him built Eziel the son of Araia the goldsmith: and next to him built Ananias the son of the perfumer: and they left Jerusalem unto the wall of the broad street.

9 And next to him built Raphaia the son of Hur, lord of the street of Jerusalem.

10 And next to him Jedaia the son of Haromaph over against his own house: and next to him built Hattus the son of Hasebonia.

11 Melchias the son of Herem, and Hasub the son of Phahath Moab, built half the street, and the tower of the furnaces.

12 And next to him built Sellum the son of Alohes, lord of half the street of Jerusalem, he and his daughters.

13 And the gate of the valley Hanun built, and the inhabitants of Zanoe: they built it, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks, and the bars, and a thousand cubits in the wall unto the gate of the dunghill.

14 And the gate of the dunghill Melchias the son of Rechab built, lord of the street of Bethacharam: he built it, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks, and the bars.

15 And the gate of the fountain Sellum the son of Cholhoza built, lord of the street of Maspha: he built it, and covered it, and set up the doors thereof, and the locks, and the bars, and the walls of the pool of Siloe unto the king's guard, and unto the steps that go down from the city of David.

16 After him built Nehemias the son of Azboc, lord of half the street of Bethsur, as far as over against the sepulchre of David, and to the pool, that was built with great labour, and to the house of the mighty.

17 After him built the Levites, Rehum the son of Benni. After him built Hasebias, lord of half the street of Ceila in his own street.

18 After him built their brethren Bavai the son of Enadad, lord of half Ceila.

19 And next to him Aser the son of Josue, lord of Maspha, built another measure, over against the going up of the strong corner.

20 After him in the mount Baruch the son of Zachai built another measure, from the corner to the door of the house of Eliasib the high priest.

21 After him Merimuth the son of Urias the son of Haccus, built another measure, from the door of the house of Eliasib, to the end of the house of Eliasib.

22 And after him built the priests, the men of the plains of the Jordan.

23 After him built Benjamin and Hasub, over against their own house: and after him built Azarias the son of Maasias the son of Ananias over against his house.

24 After him built Bennui the son of Hanadad another measure, from the house of Azarias unto the bending, and unto the corner.

25 Phalel, the son of Ozi, over against the bending and the tower, which lieth out from the king's high house, that is, in the court of the prison: after him Phadaia the son of Pharos.

26 And the Nathinites dwelt in Ophel, as far as over against the water gate toward the east, and the tower that stood out.

27 After him the Thecuites built another measure over against, from the great tower that standeth out unto the wall of the temple.

28 And upward from the horse gate the priests built, every man over against his house.

29 After them built Sadoc the son of Emmer over against his house. And after him built Semaia the son of Sechenias, keeper of the east gate.

30 After him built Hanania the son of Selemia, and Hanun the sixth son of Seleph, another measure: after him built Mosollam the son of Barachias over against his treasury. After him Melcias the goldsmith's son built unto the house of the Nathinites, and of the sellers of small wares, over against the judgment gate, and unto the chamber of the corner.

31 And within the chamber of the corner of the flock gate, the goldsmiths and the merchants built.

CHAPTER 4.

building is carried on notwithstanding the opposition of their enemies.

AND [z] it came to pass, that when Sanaballat heard that we were building the wall he was angry: and being moved exceedingly he scoffed at the Jews.

2 And said before his brethren, and the multitude of the Samaritans: What are the silly Jews doing? Will the Gentiles let them alone? will they sacrifice and make an end in a day? are they able to raise stones out of the heaps of the rubbish, which are burnt?

3 Tobias also the Ammonite who was by him said: Let them build: if a fox go up, he will leap over their stone wall.

4 Hear thou our God, for we are despised: turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them to be despised in a land of captivity.

5 Cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thy face, because they have mocked thy builders.

6 So we built the wall, and joined it all together unto the half thereof: and the heart of the people was excited to work.

7 And it came to pass, when Sanaballat, and Tobias, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Azotians heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and the breaches began to be closed, that they were exceedingly angry.

8 And they all assembled themselves together, to come, and to fight against Jerusalem, and to prepare ambushes.

9 And we prayed to our God, and set watchmen upon the wall day and night against them.

10 And Juda said: The strength of the bearer of burdens is decayed, and the rubbish is very much, and we shall not be able to build the wall.

11 And our enemies said: Let them not know, nor understand, till we come in the midst of them, and kill them, and cause the work to cease.

12 And it came to pass, that when the Jews that dwelt by them came and told us ten times, out of all the places from whence they came to us,

13 I set the people in the place behind the wall round about in order, with their swords, and spears, and bows.

14 And I looked and rose up: and I said to the chief men and the magistrates, and to the rest of the common people: be not afraid of them. Remember the Lord who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, and your wives, and your houses.

15 And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that the thing had been told us, that God defeated their counsel. And we returned all of us to the walls, every man to his work.

16 And it came to pass from that day forward, that half of their young men did the work, and half were ready for to fight, with spears, and shields, and bows, and coats of mail, and the rulers were behind them in all the house of Juda.

17 Of them that built on the wall and that carried burdens, and that laded: with one of his hands he did the work, and with the other he held a sword.

18 For every one of the builders was girded with a sword about his reins. And they built, and sounded with a trumpet by me.

19 And I said to the nobles, and to the magistrates, and to the rest of the common people: The work is great and wide. and we are separated on the wall one far from another:

20 In what place soever you shall hear the sound of the trumpet, run all thither unto us: our God will fight for us.

21 And let us do the work: and let one half of us hold our spears from the rising of the morning, till the stars appear.

22 At that time also I said to the people: Let every one with his servant stay in the midst of Jerusalem, and let us take our turns in the night, and by day, to work.

23 Now I and my brethren, and my servants, and the watchmen that followed me. did not put off our clothes: only every man stripped himself when he was to be washed.

CHAPTER 5.

Nehemias blameth the rich, for their oppressing the poor His exhortation, and bounty to his countrymen.

NOW [a] there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives against their brethren the Jews.

z B. C. 446-445.

a B. C. 446-445.

2 And there were some that said: Our sons and our daughters are very many: let us take up corn for the price of them, and let us eat and live.

3 And there were some that said: Let us mortgage our lands, and our vineyards, and our houses, and let us take corn because of the famine.

4 And others said: Let us borrow money for the king's tribute, and let us give up our fields and vineyards:

5 And now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren: and our children as their children. Behold we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters, and some of our daughters are bondwomen already, neither have we wherewith to redeem them, and our fields and our vineyards other men possess.

6 And I was exceedingly angry when I heard their cry according to these words.

7 And my heart thought with myself: and I rebuked the nobles and magistrates, and said to them: Do you every one exact usury of your brethren? And I gathered together a great assembly against them,

8 And I said to them: We, as you know, have redeemed according to our ability our brethren the Jews, that were sold to the Gentiles: and will you then sell your brethren, for us to redeem them? And they held their peace, and found not what to answer.

9 And I said to them: The thing you do is not good: why walk you not in the fear of our God, that we be not exposed to the reproaches of the Gentiles our enemies?

10 Both I and my brethren, and my servants, have lent money and corn to many: let us all agree not to call for it again; let us forgive the debt that is owing to us.

11 Restore ye to them this day their fields, and their vineyards, and their oliveyards, and their houses: and the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, which you were wont to exact of them, give it rather for them.

12 And they said: We will restore, and we will require nothing of them: and we will do as thou sayest. And I called the priests and took an oath of them, to do according to what I had said.

13 Moreover I shook my lap, and said: So may God shake every man that shall not accomplish this word, out of his house, and out of his labours, thus may he be shaken out, and become empty. And all the multitude said: Amen. And they praised God. And the people did according to what was said.

14 And from the day, in which the king commanded me to be governor in the land of Juda, from the twentieth year even to the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes the king, for twelve years, I and my brethren did not eat the yearly allowance that was due to the governors.

15 But the former governors that had been before me, were chargeable to the people, and took of them in bread, and wine, and in money every day forty sicles: and their officers also oppressed the people. But I did not so for the fear of God.

16 Moreover I built in the work of the wall, and I bought no land, and all my servants were gathered together to the work.

17 The Jews also and the magistrates to the number of one hundred and fifty men, were at my table, besides them that came to us from among the nations that were round about us.

18 And there was prepared for me day by day one ox, and six choice rams, besides fowls, and once in ten days I gave store of divers wines, and many other things: yet I did not require my yearly allowance as governor: for the people were very much impoverished.

19 Remember me, O my God, for good according to all that I have done for this people.

CHAPTER 6.

The enemies seek to terrify Nehemias. He proceeded and finisheth the wall.

AND [b] it came to pass, when Sanaballat, and Tobias, and Gossem the Arabian, and the rest of our enemies, heard that I had built the wall, and that there was no breach left in it, (though at that time I had not set up the doors in the gates,)

2 Sanaballat and Gossem sent to me, saying: Come, and let us make a league together in the villages, in the plain of Ono. But they thought to do me mischief.

[b] B. C. 446-445.

3 And I sent messengers to them, saying: I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down, lest it be neglected whilst I come, and go down to you.

4 And they sent to me according to this word, four times: and I answered them after the same manner.

5 And Sanaballat sent his servant to me the fifth time according to the former word, and he had a letter in his hand written in this manner:

6 It is reported amongst the Gentiles, and Gossem hath said it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel, and therefore thou buildest the wall, and hast a mind to set thyself king over them: for which end

7 Thou hast also set up prophets, to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying: There is a king in Judea. The king will hear of these things: therefore come now, that we may take counsel together.

8 And I sent to them, saying: There is no such thing done as thou sayest: but thou feignest these things out of thy own heart.

9 For all these men thought to frighten us, thinking that our hands would cease from the work, and that we would leave off. Wherefore I strengthened my hands the more:

10 And I went into the house of Samaia the son of Delaia, the son of Metabeel privately. And he said: Let us consult together in the house of God in the midst of the temple: and let us shut the doors of the temple, for they will come to kill thee, and in the night they will come to slay thee.

11 And I said: Should such a man as I flee? and who is there that being as I am, would go into the temple, to save his life? I will not go in.

12 And I understood that God had not sent him, but that he had spoken to me as if he had been prophesying, and Tobias, and Sanaballat had hired him.

13 For he had taken money, that I being afraid should do this thing, and sin, and they might have some evil to upbraid me withal.

14 Remember me, O Lord, for Tobias and Sanaballat, according to their works of this kind: and Noadias the prophet, and the rest of the prophets that would have put me in fear.

15 But the wall was finished the five and twentieth day of the month of Elul, in two and fifty days.

16 And it came to pass when all our enemies heard of it, that all nations which were round about us, were afraid, and were cast down within themselves, for they perceived that this work was the work of God.

17 Moreover in those days many letters were sent by the principal men of the Jews to Tobias, and from Tobias there came letters to them.

18 For there were many in Judea sworn to him, because he was the son in law of Sechenias the son of Area, and Johanan his son had taken to wife the daughter of Mosollam the son of Barachias.

19 And they praised him also before me, and they related my words to him. And Tobias sent letters to put me in fear.

CHAPTER 7.

Nehemias appointeth watchmen in Jerusalem. The list of those who came first from Babylon.

NOW [c] after the wall was built, and I had set up the doors, and numbered the porters and singing men, and Levites:

2 I commanded Hanani my brother, and Hananias ruler of the house of Jerusalem, (for he seemed as a sincere man, and one that feared God above the rest,)

3 And I said to them: Let not the gates of Jerusalem be opened till the sun be hot. And while they were yet standing by, the gates were shut, and barred: and I set watchmen of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, every one by their courses, and every man over against his house.

4 And the city was very wide and great, and the people few in the midst thereof and the houses were not built.

5 But God had put in my heart, and I assembled the princes and magistrates, and common people, to number them: and I found a book of the number of them who came up at first, and therein it was found written:

6 [d] These are the children of the province, who came up from the captivity of them that had been carried away, whom Nabuchodonosor the king of Babylon had carried away, and who returned into Judea, every one into his own city.

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c B. C. 446-445; Eccli. 49. 15.

d 1 Esd. 2. 1.

1 Who came with Zorobabel, Josue, Nehemias, Azarias, Raamias, Nahamani, Mardochai, Belsam, Mespharath, Begoia, Naïum, Baana. The number of the men of the people of Israel:

8 The children of Pharos, two thousand one hundred seventy-two.

9 The children of Sephatia, three hundred seventy-two.

10 The children of Area, six hundred fifty-two.

11 The children of Phahath Moab of the children of Josue and Joab, two thousand eight hundred eighteen.

12 The children of Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four.

13 The children of Zethua, eight hundred forty-five.

14 The children of Zachai, seven hundred sixty.

15 The children of Bannui, six hundred forty-eight.

16 The children of Bebai, six hundred twenty-eight.

17 The children of Azgad, two thousand three hundred twenty-two.

18 The children of Adonicam, six hundred sixty-seven.

19 The children of Beguai, two thousand sixty-seven.

20 The children of Adin, six hundred fifty-five.

21 The children of Ater, children of Hezechias, ninety-eight.

22 The children of Hasem, three hundred twenty-eight.

23 The children of Besai, three hundred twenty-four.

24 The children of Hareph, a hundred and twelve.

25 The children of Gabaon, ninety-five.

26 The children of Bethlehem, and Netupha, a hundred eighty-eight.

27 The men of Anathoth, a hundred twenty-eight.

28 The men of Bethazmoth, forty-two.

29 The men of Cariathiarim, Cephira, and Beroth, seven hundred forty-three.

30 The men of Rama and Geba, six hundred twenty-one.

31 The men of Machmas, a hundred twenty-two.

32 The men of Bethel and Hai, a hundred twenty-three.

33 The men of the other Nebo, fifty-two.

34 The men of the other Elam, one thousand two hundred fifty-four.

35 The children of Harem, three hundred and twenty.

36 The children of Jericho, three hundred forty-five.

37 The children of Lod, of Hadid and Ono, seven hundred twenty-one.

38 The children of Senaa, three thousand nine hundred thirty.

39 The priests: the children of Idaia in the house of Josue, nine hundred and seventy-three.

40 The children of Emmer, one thousand fifty-two.

41 The children of Phashur, one thousand two hundred forty-seven.

42 The children of Arem, one thousand and seventeen. The Levites:

43 The children of Josue and Cedmihel, the sons

44 Of Oduia, seventy-four. The singing men:

45 The children of Asaph, a hundred forty-eight.

46 The porters: the children of Sellum, the children of Ater, the children of Telmon, the children of Accub, the children of Hatita, the children of Sobai: a hundred thirty-eight.

47 The Nathinites: the children of Soha, the children of Hasupha, the children of Tebbaoth,

48 The children of Ceros, the children of Siaa, the children of Phadon, the children of Lebana, the children of Hagaba, the children of Selmai,

49 The children of Hanan, the children of Geddel, the children of Gaher,

50 The children of Raaia, the children of Rasin, the children of Necoda,

51 The children of Gezem, the children of Asa, the children of Phasea,

52 The children of Besai, the children of Munim, the children of Nephussim,

53 The children of Bacbuc, the children of Hacupha, the children of Harhur,

54 The children of Besloth, the children of Mahida, the children of Harsa,

55 The children of Bercos, the children of Sisara, the children of Thema,

56 The children of Nasia, the children of Hatipha,

57 The children of the servants of Solomon, the children of Sothai, the children of Sophereth, the children of Pharida,

58 The children of Jahala, the children of Darcon, the children of Jeddel,

59 The children of Saphatia, the chil-

dren of Hatil, the children of Phochereth, who was born of Sabaim, the son of Amon.

60 All the Nathinites, and the children of the servants of Solomon, three hundred ninety-two.

61 And these are they that came up from Telmela, Thelharsa, Cherub, Addon, and Emmer: and could not shew the house of their fathers, nor their seed, whether they were of Israel.

62 The children of Dalaia, the children of Tobia, the children of Necoda, six hundred forty-two.

63 And of the priests, the children of Habia, the children of Accos, the children of Berzellai, who took a wife of the daughters of Berzellai the Galaadite, and he was called by their name.

64 These sought their writing in the record, and found it not: and they were cast out of the priesthood.

65 And Athersatha said to them, that they should not eat of the holies of holies, until there stood up a priest learned and skilful.

66 All the multitude as it were one man, forty-two thousand three hundred sixty,

67 Beside their menservants and womenservants, who were seven thousand three hundred thirty-seven: and among them singing men, and singing women, two hundred forty-five.

68 Their horses, seven hundred thirty-six. their mules two hundred forty-five:

69 Their camels, four hundred thirty-five, their asses, six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

Hitherto is related what was written in the record. From this place forward goeth on the history of Nehemias.

70 And some of the heads of the families gave unto the work. Athersatha gave into the treasure a thousand drams of gold, fifty bowls, and five hundred and thirty garments for priests.

71 And some of the heads of families gave to the treasure of the work, twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand two hundred pounds of silver.

72 And that which the rest of the people gave, was twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand pounds of silver, and sixty-seven garments for priests.

73 And the priests, and the Levites, and the porters, and the singing men, and the rest of the common people, and the Nathinites, and all Israel dwelt in their cities.

CHAPTER 8.

Esdras readeth the law before the people. Nehemias comforteth them. They celebrate the feast of tabernacles.

AND [e] the seventh month came: and the children of Israel were in their cities. And all the people were gathered together as one man to the street which is before the water gate, and they spoke to Esdras the scribe, to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.

2 Then Esdras the priest brought the law before the multitude of men and women, and all those that could understand, in the first day of the seventh month.

3 And he read it plainly in the street that was before the water gate, from the morning until midday, before the men, and the women, and all those that could understand: and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book.

4 And Esdras the scribe stood upon a step of wood, which he had made to speak upon, and there stood by him Mathathias, and Semeia, and Ania, and Uria, and Helcia, and Maasia, on his right hand: and on the left, Phadaia, Misael, and Melchia, and Hasum, and Hasbadana, Zacharia and Mosollam.

5 And Esdras opened the book before all the people: for he was above all the people: and when he had opened it, all the people stood.

6 And Esdras blessed the Lord the great God: and all the people answered, Amen, amen: lifting up their hands: and they bowed down, and adored God with their faces to the ground.

7 Now Josue, and Bani, and Serebia, Jamin, Accub, Sephtai, Odia, Maasia, Celtia, Azarias, Jozabed, Hanan, Phalaia, the Levites, made silence among the people to hear the law: and the people stood in their place.

CHAP. 7 Ver 70 *Athersatha* That is Nehemias, as appears from chap 12. Either that he was so called at the court of the king of Persia, where he was cupbearer or that, as some think this name signifies *governor* and he was at that time governor of Judea.

[e] B. C. 446-445.

8 And they read in the book of the law of God distinctly and plainly to be understood: and they understood when it was read.

9 And Nehemias (he is Athersatha) and Esdras the priest and scribe, and the Levites who interpreted to all the people, said: This is a holy day to the Lord our God: do not mourn, nor weep: for all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

10 And he said to them: Go, eat fat meats, and drink sweet wine, and send portions to them that have not prepared for themselves: because it is the holy day of the Lord, and be not sad: for the joy of the Lord is our strength.

11 And the Levites stilled all the people, saying: Hold your peace, for the day is holy, and be not sorrowful.

12 So all the people went to eat and drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth: because they understood the words that he had taught them.

13 And on the second day the chiefs of the families of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered together to Esdras the scribe, that he should interpret to them the words of the law.

14 And they found written in the law, that the Lord had commanded by the hand of Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in tabernacles, on the feast, in the seventh month:

15 And that they should proclaim and publish the word in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying: Go forth to the mount, and fetch branches of olive, and branches of beautiful wood, branches of myrtle, and branches of palm, and branches of thick trees, to make tabernacles, as it is written.

16 And the people went forth, and brought. And they made themselves tabernacles every man on the top of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.

17 And all the assembly of them that were returned from the captivity,[f] made tabernacles, and dwelt in tabernacles: for since the days of Josue the son of Nun the children of Israel had not done so, until that day: and there was exceeding great joy.

18 And he read in the book of the law of God day by day, from the first day till the last, and they kept the solemnity seven days, and in the eighth day a solemn assembly according to the manner.

CHAPTER 9.

The people repent with fasting and sackcloth. The Levites confess God's benefits, and the people's ingratitude: they pray for them, and make a covenant with God.

AND [g] in the four and twentieth day of the month the children of Israel came together with fasting and with sackcloth, and earth upon them.

2 And the seed of the children of Israel separated themselves from every stranger: and they stood, and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

3 And they rose up to stand: and they read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, four times in the day, and four times they confessed, and adored the Lord their God.

4 And there stood up upon the step of the Levites, Josue, and Bani, and Cedmihel, Sabania, Bonni, Sarebias, Bani, and Chanani: and they cried with a loud voice to the Lord their God.

5 And the Levites Josue and Cedmihel, Bonni, Hasebnia, Serebia, Oduia, Sebnia and Phathahia, said: Arise, bless the Lord your God from eternity to eternity: and blessed be the high name of thy glory with all blessing and praise.

6 Thou thyself, O Lord alone, thou hast made heaven, and the heaven of heavens, and all the host thereof: the earth and all things that are in it: the seas and all that are therein: and thou givest life to all these things, and the host of heaven adoreth thee.

7 Thou, O Lord God, art he who chosest Abram, [h] and broughtest him forth out of the fire of the Chaldeans, and gavest him the name of Abraham.

8 And thou didst find his heart faithful

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f Lev. 23. 39.

g B. C. 446-445.—*h* Gen. 11. 31.

CHAP. 9. Ver. 7. *The fire of the Chaldeans.* The city of *Ur* in Chaldea, the name of which signifies *fire*. Or out of the fire of the tribulations and temptations, to which he was there exposed.—The ancient Rabbins understood this literally, affirming that Abram was cast into the fire by the idolaters, and brought out by a miracle without any hurt.

before thee: and thou madest a covenant with him, to give him the land of the Chanaanite, of the Hethite, and of the Amorrhite, and of the Pherezite, and of the Jebusite, and of the Gergezite, to give it to his seed: and thou hast fulfilled thy words, because thou art just.

9 And thou sawest the affliction of our fathers in Egypt: and thou didst hear their cry by the Red Sea.

10 And thou shewedst signs and wonders upon Pharao, and upon all his servants, and upon the people of his land: for thou knewest that they dealt proudly against them: and thou madest thyself a name, as it is at this day.

11 And thou didst divide the sea before them, and they passed through the midst of the sea on dry land: but their persecutors thou threwest into the depth, as a stone into mighty waters.

12 And in a pillar of a cloud thou wast their leader by day, and in a pillar of fire by night, that they might see the way by which they went.

13 Thou camest down also to mount Sinai, and didst speak with them from heaven, and thou gavest them right judgments, and the law of truth, ceremonies, and good precepts.

14 Thou madest known to them thy holy sabbath, and didst prescribe to them commandments, and ceremonies, and the law by the hand of Moses thy servant.

15 And thou gavest them bread from heaven in their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock in their thirst, and thou saidst to them that they should go in, and possess the land, upon which thou hadst lifted up thy hand to give it them.

16 But they and our fathers dealt proudly, and hardened their necks and hearkened not to thy commandments.

17 And they would not hear, and they remembered not thy wonders which thou hadst done for them. And they hardened their necks, and gave the head to return to their bondage, as it were by contention. But thou, a forgiving God, gracious, and merciful, longsuffering, and full of compassion, didst not forsake them.

18 Yea when they had made also to themselves a molten calf, and had said: This is thy God, that brought thee out of Egypt: and had committed great blasphemies:

19 Yet thou, in thy many mercies, didst not leave them in the desert: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day to lead them in the way, and the pillar of fire by night to shew them the way by which they should go.

20 And thou gavest them thy good Spirit to teach them, and thy manna thou didst not withhold from their mouth, and thou gavest them water for their thirst.

21 Forty years didst thou feed them in the desert, and nothing was wanting to them: their garments did not grow old, and their feet were not worn.

22 And thou gavest them kingdoms, and nations, and didst divide lots for them: and they possessed the land of Sehon, and the land of the king of Hesebon, and the land of Og king of Basan.

23 And thou didst multiply their children as the stars of heaven, and broughtest them to the land concerning which thou hadst said to their fathers, that they should go in and possess it.

24 And the children came and possessed the land, and thou didst humble before them the inhabitants of the land, the Chanaanites, and gavest them into their hands, with their kings, and the people of the land, that they might do with them as it pleased them.

25 And they took strong cities and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods: cisterns made by others, vineyards, and oliveyards, and fruit trees in abundance: and they ate, and were filled, and became fat, and abounded with delight in thy great goodness.

26 But they provoked thee to wrath, and departed from thee, and threw thy law behind their backs: and they killed thy prophets, who admonished them earnestly to return to thee: and they were guilty of great blasphemies.

27 And thou gavest them into the hands of their enemies, and they afflicted them. And in the time of their tribulation they cried to thee, and thou heardest from heaven, and according to the multitude of thy tender mercies thou gavest them saviours, to save them from the hands of their enemies.

28 But after they had rest, they returned

Ver. 17. *And gave the head.* That is, they *set* their *head* or were bent to return to Egypt

to evil in thy sight: and thou leftest them in the hand of their enemies, and they had dominion over them. Then they returned, and cried to thee: and thou heardest from heaven, and deliveredst them many times in thy mercies.

29 And thou didst admonish them to return to thy law. But they dealt proudly, and hearkened not to thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, which if a man do, he shall live in them: and they withdrew the shoulder, and hardened their neck, and would not hear.

30 And thou didst forbear with them for many years, and didst testify against them by thy spirit by the hand of thy prophets: and they heard not, and thou didst deliver them into the hand of the people of the lands.

31 Yet in thy very many mercies thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them: because thou art a merciful and gracious God.

32 Now therefore our God, great, strong and terrible, who keepest covenant and mercy, turn not away from thy face all the labour which hath come upon us, upon our kings, and our princes, and our priests, and our prophets, and our fathers, and all the people from the days of the king of Assur, until this day.

33 And thou art just in all things that have come upon us: because thou hast done truth, but we have done wickedly.

34 Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept thy law, and have not minded thy commandments, and thy testimonies which thou hast testified among them.

35 And they have not served thee in their kingdoms, and in thy manifold goodness, which thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land, which thou deliveredst before them, nor did they return from their most wicked devices.

36 Behold we ourselves this day are bondmen: and the land, which thou gavest our fathers, to eat the bread thereof, and the good things thereof, and we ourselves are servants in it.

37 And the fruits thereof grow up for the kings, whom thou hast set over us for our sins, and they have dominion over our bodies, and over our beasts, according to their will, and we are in great tribulation.

38 And because of all this we ourselves make a covenant, and write it, and our princes, our Levites, and our priests sign it.

CHAPTER 10.

The names of the subscribers to the covenant, and the contents of it.

AND [1] the subscribers were Nehemias, Athersatha the son of Hachelai, and Sedecias,

2 Saraias, Azarias, Jeremias,
3 Pheshur, Amarias, Melchias,
4 Hattus, Sebenia, Melluch,
5 Harem, Merimuth, Obdias,
6 Daniel, Genthon, Baruch,
7 Mosollam, Abia, Miamin,
8 Maazia, Belgia, Semeia: these were priests.

9 And the Levites, Josue the son of Azanias, Bennui of the sons of Henadad, Cedmihel,

10 And their brethren, Sebenia, Oduia, Celita, Phalaia, Hanan,
11 Micha, Rohob, Hasebia,
12 Zachur, Serebia, Sabania,
13 Odaia, Bani, Baninu.

14 The heads of the people, Pharos, Phahath Moab, Elam, Zethu, Bani,
15 Bonni, Azgad, Bebai,
16 Adonia, Begoai, Adin,
17 Ater, Hezecia, Azur,
18 Odaia, Hasum, Besai,
19 Hareph, Anathoth, Nebai,
20 Megphias, Mosollam, Hazir,
21 Mesizabel, Sadoc, Jeddua,
22 Pheltia, Hanan, Anaia,
23 Osee, Hanania, Hasub,
24 Alohes, Phalea, Sobec,
25 Rehum, Hasebna, Maasia,
26 Echaia, Hanan, Anan,
27 Melluch, Haran, Baana:

28 And the rest of the people, priests, Levites, porters, and singing men, Nathinites, and all that had separated themselves from the people of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, and their daughters.

29 All that could understand promising for their brethren, with their chief men, and they came to promise, and swear that they would walk in the law of God, which he gave in the hand of Moses the servant of God, that they would do and

[1] B. C. 446-445.

keep all the commandments of the Lord our God, and his judgments and his ceremonies.

30 And that we would not give our daughters to the people of the land, nor take their daughters for our sons.

31 And if the people of the land bring in things to sell, or any things for use, to sell them on the sabbath day, that we would not buy them of them on the sabbath, or on the holy day. And that we would leave the seventh year, and the exaction of every hand.

32 And we made ordinances for ourselves, to give the third part of a sicle every year for the work of the house of our God,

33 For the loaves of proposition, and for the continual sacrifice, and for a continual holocaust on the sabbaths, on the new moons, on the set feasts, and for the holy things, and for the sin offering: that atonement might be made for Israel, and for every use of the house of our God.

34 And we cast lots among the priests, and the Levites, and the people for the offering of wood, that it might be brought into the house of our God by the houses of our fathers at set times, from year to year: to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the law of Moses:

35 And that we would bring the firstfruits of our land, and the firstfruits of all fruit of every tree, from year to year, in the house of our Lord.

36 And the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our oxen, and of our sheep, to be offered in the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God.

37 And that we would bring the firstfruits of our meats, and of our libations, and the fruit of every tree, of the vintage also and of oil to the priests, to the storehouse of our God, and the tithes of our ground to the Levites. The Levites also shall receive the tithes of our works out of all the cities.

38 And the priest the son of Aaron shall be with the Levites in the tithes of the Levites, and the Levites shall offer the tithe of their tithes in the house of our God. to the storeroom into the treasure house

39 For the children of Israel and the children of Levi shall carry to the treasury the firstfruits of corn, of wine, and of oil: and the sanctified vessels shall be there, and the priests, and the singing men, and the porters, and ministers, and we will not forsake the house of our God.

CHAPTER 11.

Who were the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the other cities.

AND the princes of the people dwelt at Jerusalem: but the rest of the people cast lots, to take one part in ten to dwell in Jerusalem the holy city, and nine parts in the *other* cities.

2 And the people blessed all the men that willingly offered themselves to dwell in Jerusalem.

3 These therefore are the chief men of the province, who dwelt in Jerusalem, and in the cities of Juda. And every one dwelt in his possession, in their cities: Israel, the priests, the Levites, the Nathinites, and the children of the servants of Solomon.

4 And in Jerusalem there dwelt some of the children of Juda, and some of the children of Benjamin: of the children of Juda, Athaias the son of Aziam, the son of Zacharias, the son of Amarias, the son of Saphatias, the son of Malaleel: of the sons of Phares,

5 Maasia the son of Baruch, the son of Cholhoza, the son of Hazia, the son of Adaia, the son of Joiarib, the son of Zacharias, the son of the Silonite:

6 All these the sons of Phares, who dwelt in Jerusalem, *were* four hundred sixty-eight valiant men.

7 And these are the children of Benjamin: Sellum the son of Mosollam, the son of Joed, the son of Phadaia, the son of Colaia, the son of Masia, the son of Etheel, the son of Isaia.

8 And after him Gebbai, Sellai, nine hundred twenty-eight.

9 And Joel the son of Zechri their ruler, and Judas the son of Senua was second over the city.

10 And of the priests Idaia the son of Joarib, Jachin,

11 Saraia the son of Helcias, the son of Mosollam, the son of Sadoc, the son of Meraioth, the son of Achitob the prince of the house of God,

12 And their brethren that do the works of the temple: eight hundred twenty

two. And Adaia the son of Jeroham, the son of Phaleha, the son of Amsi, the son of Zacharias, the son of Phashur, the son of Melchias.

13 And his brethren the chiefs of the fathers: two hundred forty-two. And Amassai the son of Azreel, the son of Ahasi, the son of Mesollamoth, the son of Emmer,

14 And their brethren who were very mighty, a hundred twenty-eight: and their ruler Zabdiel son of the mighty.

15 And of the Levites Semeia the son of Hasub, the son of Azaricam, the son of Hasabia, the son of Boni,

16 And Sabathai and Jozabed, who were over all the outward business of the house of God, of the princes of the Levites,

17 And Mathania the son of Micha, the son of Zebedei, the son of Asaph, was the principal man to praise, and to give glory in prayer, and Becbecia the second, one of his brethren, and Abda the son of Samua, the son of Galal, the son of Idithun.

18 All the Levites in the holy city were two hundred eighty-four.

19 And the porters, Accub, Telmon, and their brethren, who kept the doors: a hundred seventy-two.

20 And the rest of Israel, the priests and the Levites were in all the cities of Juda, every man in his possession.

21 And the Nathinites, that dwelt in Ophel, and Siaha, and Gaspha of the Nathinites.

22 And the overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem, was Azzi the son of Bani, the son of Hasabia, the son of Mathania, the son of Micha. Of the sons of Asaph, were the singing men in the ministry of the house of God.

23 For the king's commandment was concerning them, and an order among the singing men day by day.

24 And Phathahia the son of Mesezebel of the children of Zara the son of Juda was at the hand of the king, in all matters concerning the people,

25 And in the houses through all their countries. Of the children of Juda some dwelt at Cariath-Arbe, and in the villages thereof: and at Dibon, and in the villages thereof: and at Cabseel, and in the villages thereof.

26 And at Jesue, and at Molada, and at Bethphaleth,

27 And at Hasersual, and at Bersabee, and in the villages thereof,

28 And at Siceleg, and at Mochona, and in the villages thereof,

29 And at Remmon, and at Saraa, and at Jerimuth,

30 Zanoa, Odollam, and in their villages, at Lachis and its dependencies, and at Azeca and the villages thereof. And they dwelt from Bersabee unto the valley of Ennom.

31 And the children of Benjamin, from Geba, at Mechmas, and at Hai, and at Bethel, and in the villages thereof,

32 At Anathoth, Nob, Anania,

33 Asor, Rama, Gethaim,

34 Hadid, Seboim, and Neballat, Lod,

35 And Ono the valley of craftsmen.

36 And of the Levites were portions of Juda and Benjamin.

CHAPTER 12.

The priests, and Levites that came up with Zorobabel. The succession of high priests: the solemnity of the dedication of the wall.

NOW these are the priests and the Levites, that went up with Zorobabel the son of Salathiel, and Josue: Saraia, Jeremias, Esdras,

2 Amaria, Melluch, Hattus,

3 Sebenias, Rheum, Merimuth,

4 Addo, Genthon, Abia,

5 Miamin, Madia, Belga,

6 Semeia, and Joiarib, Idaia, Sellum, Amoc, Helcias,

7 Idaia. These were the chief of the priests, and of their brethren in the days of Josue.

8 And the Levites, Jesua, Bennui, Cedmihel, Sarebia, Juda, Mathanias, they and their brethren were over the hymns:

9 And Becbecia, and Hanni, and their brethren every one in his office.

10 And Josue begot Joacim, and Joacim begot Eliasib, and Eliasib begot Joiada,

11 And Joiada begot Jonathan, and Jonathan begot Jeddoa.

12 And in the days of Joacim the priests and heads of the families were: Of Saraia Maraia: of Jeremias, Hanania.

13 Of Esdras, Mosollam: and of Amaria Johanan:

14 Of Milicho, Jonathan: of Sebenia Joseph:

15 Of Haram, Edna: of Maraioth, Helci:

16 Of Adaia, Zacharia: of Genthon, Mosollam:

17 Of Abia, Zechri: of Miamin and Moadia, Phelti:
18 Of Belga, Sammua of Semaia, Jonathan:
19 Of Joiarib, Mathanai: of Jodaia, Azzi:
20 Of Sellai, Celai: of Amoc, Heber:
21 Of Helcias, Hasebia: of Idaia, Nathanael.
22 The Levites the chiefs of the families in the days of Eliasib, and Joiada, and Johanan, and Jeddoa, were recorded, and the priests in the reign of Darius the Persian.
23 The sons of Levi, heads of the families were written in the book of Chronicles, even unto the days of Jonathan the son of Eliasib.
24 Now the chief of the Levites were Hasebia, Serebia, and Josue the son of Cedmihel: and their brethren by their courses, to praise and to give thanks according to the commandment of David the man of God, and to wait equally in order.
25 Mathania, and Becbecia, Obedia, and Mosollam, Telmon, Accub, were keepers of the gates and of the entrances before the gates.
26 These were in the days of Joacim the son of Josue, the son of Josedec, and in the days of Nehemias the governor, and of Esdras the priest and scribe.
27 And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites out of all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem, and to keep the dedication, and to rejoice with thanksgiving, and with singing, and with cymbals, and psalteries and harps.
28 And the sons of the singing men were gathered together out of the plain country about Jerusalem, and out of the villages of Nethuphati,
29 And from the house of Galgal, and from the countries of Geba and Azmaveth: for the singing men had built themselves villages round about Jerusalem.
30 And the priests and the Levites were purified, and they purified the people, and the gates, and the wall.
31 And I made the princes of Juda go up upon the wall, and I appointed two great choirs to give praise And they went on the right hand upon the wall toward the dunghill gate.
32 And after them went Osaias, and half of the princes of Juda,
33 And Azarias, Esdras, and Mosollam, Judas, and Benjamin, and Semeia, and Jeremias.
34 And of the sons of the priests with trumpets, Zacharias the son of Jonathan, the son of Semeia, the son of Mathania, the son of Michaia, the son of Zechur, the son of Asaph,
35 And his brethren Semeia, and Azareel, Malalai, Galalai, Maai, Nathanael, and Judas, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God: and Esdras the scribe before them at the fountain gate.
36 And they went up over against them by the stairs of the city of David, at the going up of the wall of the house of David, and to the water gate eastward:
37 And the second choir of them that gave thanks went on the opposite side, and I after them, and the half of the people upon the wall, and upon the tower of the furnaces, even to the broad wall,
38 And above the gate of Ephraim, and above the old gate, and above the fish gate and the tower of Hananeel, and the tower of Emath, and even to the flock gate: and they stood still in the watch gate.
39 And the two choirs of them that gave praise stood still at the house of God, and I and the half of the magistrates with me.
40 And the priests, Eliachim, Maasia, Miamin, Michea, Elioenai, Zacharia, Hania with trumpets,
41 And Maasia, and Semeia, and Eleazar, and Azzi, and Johanan, and Melchia, and Elam, and Ezer. And the singers sung loud, and Jezraia was their overseer:
42 And they sacrificed on that day great sacrifices, and they rejoiced: for God had made them joyful with great joy: their wives also and their children rejoiced, and the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off.
43 They appointed also in that day men over the storehouses of the treasure, for the libations, and for the firstfruits, and for the tithes, that the rulers of the city might bring them in by them in honour of thanksgiving, for the priests and Levites: for Juda was joyful in the priests and Levites that assisted.

44 And they kept the watch of their God, and the observance of expiation, and the singing men, and the porters, according to the commandment of David, and of Solomon his son.

45 For in the days of David and Asaph from the beginning there were chief singers appointed, to praise with canticles, and give thanks to God.

46 And all Israel, in the days of Zorobabel, and in the days of Nehemias gave portions to the singing men, and to the porters, day by day, and they sanctified the Levites, and the Levites sanctified the sons of Aaron.

CHAPTER 13.

Divers abuses are reformed.

AND on that day they read in the book of Moses in the hearing of the people: and therein was found written, that the Ammonites and the Moabites should not come in to the church of God for ever:

2 Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and water: and they hired against them Balaam, to curse them, and our God turned the curse into blessing.

3 And it came to pass, when they had heard the law, that they separated every stranger from Israel.

4 And over this thing was Eliasib the priest, who was set over the treasury of the house of our God, and was near akin to Tobias.

5 And he made him a great storeroom, where before him they laid up gifts, and frankincense, and vessels, and the tithes of the corn, of the wine, and of the oil, the portions of the Levites, and of the singing men, and of the porters, and the firstfruits of the priests.

6 But in all this time I was not in Jerusalem, because in the two and thirtieth year of Artaxerxes king of Babylon, I went to the king, and after certain days I asked the king:

7 And I came to Jerusalem,[k] and I understood the evil that Eliasib had done for Tobias, to make him a storehouse in the courts of the house of God.

8 And it seemed to me exceeding evil. And I cast forth the vessels of the house of Tobias out of the storehouse.

9 And I commanded and they cleansed the storehouses: and I brought thither again the vessels of the house of God, the sacrifice, and the frankincense.

10 And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: and that the Levites, and the singing men, and they that ministered were fled away every man to his own country:

11 And I pleaded the matter against the magistrates, and said: Why have we forsaken the house of God? And I gathered them together, and I made them to stand in their places.

12 And all Juda brought the tithe of the corn, and the wine, and the oil into the storehouses.

13 And we set over the storehouses Selemias the priest, and Sadoc the scribe, and of the Levites Phadaia, and next to them Hanan the son of Zachur, the son of Mathania: for they were approved as faithful, and to them were committed the portions of their brethren.

14 Remember me, O my God, for this thing, and wipe not out my kindnesses, which I have done relating to the house of my God and his ceremonies.

15 In those days I saw in Juda some treading the presses on the sabbath, and carrying sheaves, and lading asses with wine, and grapes, and figs, and all manner of burthens, and bringing them into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. And I charged them that they should sell on a day on which it was lawful to sell.

16 Some Tyrians also dwelt there, who brought fish, and all manner of wares: and they sold them on the sabbaths to the children of Juda in Jerusalem.

17 And I rebuked the chief men of Juda, and said to them: What is this evil thing that you are doing, profaning the sabbath day?

18 Did not our fathers do these things, and our God brought all this evil upon us, and upon this city? And you bring more wrath upon Israel by violating the sabbath.

19 And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem were at rest on the

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j Deut. 23. 3.

k B. C. 434.

CHAP. 12. Ver. 46. *Sanctified.* That is, they gave them that which by the law was set aside and sanctified for their use.

CHAP. 13. Ver. 4. *Over this thing,* &c. Or he was faulty in this thing, or in this kind.

sabbath day, I spoke: and they shut the gates, and I commanded that they should not open them till after the sabbath: and I set some of my servants at the gates, that none should bring in burthens on the sabbath day.

20 So the merchants, and they that sold all kinds of wares, stayed without Jerusalem once or twice.

21 And I charged them, and I said to them: Why stay you before the wall? if you do so another time, I will lay hands on you. And from that time they came no more on the sabbath.

22 I spoke also to the Levites that they should be purified, and should come to keep the gates, and to sanctify the sabbath day: for this also remember me, O my God, and spare me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

23 In those days also I saw Jews that married wives, women of Azotus, and of Ammon, and of Moab.

24 And their children spoke half in the speech of Azotus, and could not speak the Jews' language, but they spoke according to the language of this and that people.

25 And I chid them, and laid my curse upon them. And I beat some of them, and shaved off their hair, and made them swear by God that they would not give their daughters to their sons, nor take their daughters for their sons, nor for themselves, saying:

26 [l] Did not Solomon king of Israel sin in this kind of thing? and surely among many nations, there was not a king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel: [m] and yet women of other countries brought even him to sin.

27 And shall we also be disobedient and do all this great evil to transgress against our God, and marry strange women?

28 And one of the sons of Joiada the son of Eliasib the high priest, was son in law to Sanaballat the Horonite, and I drove him from me.

29 Remember them, O Lord my God, that defile the priesthood, and the law of priests and Levites.

30 So I separated from them all strangers, and I appointed the courses of the priests and the Levites, every man in his ministry:

31 And for the offering of wood at times appointed, and for the firstfruits: remember me, O my God, unto good. Amen.

THE

BOOK OF TOBIAS.

This Book takes its name from the holy man Tobias, whose wonderful virtues are herein recorded. It contains most excellent documents of great piety, extraordinary patience, and of a perfect resignation to the will of God. His humble prayer was heard, and the angel Raphael was sent to relieve him: he is thankful and praises the Lord, calling on the children of Israel to do the same. Having lived to the age of one hundred and two years, he exhorts his son and grandsons to piety, foretells the destruction of Ninive and the rebuilding of Jerusalem: he dies happily.

CHAPTER 1.

Tobias's early piety: his works of mercy, particularly in burying the dead.

TOBIAS of the tribe and city of Nephtali, (which is in the upper parts of Galilee above Naasson, beyond the way that leadeth to the west, having on the right hand the city of Sephet,)

2 [n] When he was made captive in the days of Salmanasar king of the Assyrians, even in his captivity, forsook not the way of truth,

3 But every day gave all he could get to his brethren his fellow captives, that were of his kindred.

4 And when he was younger than any

l 3 Kings 3. 1, and 11. 1. — *m* 3 Kings 11. 4.

n 4 Kings 17. 3, and 18. 9.

of the tribe of Nephtali, yet did he no childish thing in his work.

5 Moreover when all went to the golden calves [o] which Jeroboam king of Israel had made, he alone fled the company of all,

6 And went to Jerusalem to the temple of the Lord, and there adored the Lord God of Israel, offering faithfully all his firstfruits, and his tithes,

7 So that in the third year he gave all his tithes to the proselytes, and strangers.

8 These and such like things did he observe when but a boy according to the law of God.

9 But when he was a man, he took to wife Anna of his own tribe, and had a son by her, whom he called after his own name,

10 And from his infancy he taught him to fear God, and to abstain from all sin.

11 And when by the captivity he with his wife and his son and all his tribe was come to the city of Ninive,

12 (When all ate of the meats of the Gentiles) he kept his soul and never was defiled with their meats.

13 And because he was mindful of the Lord with all his heart, God gave him favour in the sight of Salmanasar the king.

14 And he gave him leave to go whithersoever he would, with liberty to do whatever he had a mind.

15 He therefore went to all that were in captivity, and gave them wholesome admonitions.

16 And when he was come to Rages a city of the Medes, and had ten talents of silver of that with which he had been honoured by the king:

17 And when amongst a great multitude of his kindred, he saw Gabelus in want, who was one of his tribe, taking a note of his hand he gave him the aforesaid sum of money.

18 But after a long time, Salmanasar the king being dead, [p] when Sennacherib his son, who reigned in his place, had a hatred for the children of Israel:

19 Tobias daily went among all his kindred, and comforted them, and distributed to every one as he was able, out of his goods:

20 He fed the hungry, and gave clothes to the naked, and was careful to bury the dead, and they that were slain.

21 [q] And when [r] king Sennacherib was come back, fleeing from Judea by reason of the slaughter that God had made about him for his blasphemy, and being angry slew many of the children of Israel, Tobias buried their bodies.

22 But when it was told the king, he commanded him to be slain, and took away all his substance.

23 But Tobias fleeing naked away with his son and with his wife, lay concealed, for many loved him.

24 [s] But after forty-five days, the king was killed by his own sons.

25 And Tobias returned to his house, and all his substance was restored to him.

CHAPTER 2.

Tobias leaveth his dinner to bury the dead: he loseth his sight by God's permission, for manifestation of his patience.

BUT after this, when there was a festival of the Lord, and a good dinner was prepared in Tobias's house,

2 He said to his son: Go, and bring some of our tribe that fear God, to feast with us.

3 And when he had gone, returning he told him, that one of the children of Israel lay slain in the street. And he forthwith leaped up from his place at the table, and left his dinner, and came fasting to the body:

4 And taking it up carried it privately to his house, that after the sun was down, he might bury him cautiously.

5 And when he had hid the body, he ate bread with mourning and fear,

6 Remembering the word which the Lord spoke by [t] Amos the prophet: Your festival days shall be turned into lamentation and mourning.

7 So when the sun was down, he went and buried him.

8 Now all his neighbours blamed him, saying: Once already commandment was given for thee to be slain because of this matter, and thou didst scarce escape the sentence of death, and dost thou again bury the dead?

9 [u] But Tobias fearing God more than the king, carried off the bodies of them that

o 3 Kings 12. 28. — p B. C. 705-681.
q 4 Kings 19. 35; Eccli. 48. 24; 2 Mac. 8. 19.
r B. C. 7[illegible].

s 4 Kings 19. 37; 2 Par. 32. 21; Isa. 37. 38.
t Amos 8. 10; 1 Mac. 1. 41.
u Supra 1. 21.

were slain, and hid them in his house, and at midnight buried them.

10 Now it happened one day, that being wearied with burying, he came to his house, and cast himself down by the wall and slept,

11 And as he was sleeping, hot dung out of a swallow's nest fell upon his eyes, and he was made blind.

12 Now this trial the Lord therefore permitted to happen to him, that an example might be given to posterity of his patience, as also of holy Job.

13 For whereas he had always feared God from his infancy, and kept his commandments, he repined not against God because the evil of blindness had befallen him,

14 But continued immoveable in the fear of God, giving thanks to God all the days of his life.

15 For as the kings insulted over holy Job: so his relations and kinsmen mocked at his life, saying:

16 Where is thy hope, for which thou gavest alms, and buriedst the dead?

17 But Tobias rebuked them, saying: Speak not so:

18 For we are the children of saints, and look for that life which God will give to those that never change their faith from him.

19 Now Anna his wife went daily to weaving work, and she brought home what she could get for their living by the labour of her hands.

20 Whereby it came to pass, that she received a young kid, and brought it home

21 And when her husband heard it bleating, he said: [w] Take heed, lest perhaps it be stolen: restore ye it to its owners, for it is not lawful for us either to eat or to touch any thing that cometh by theft.

22 [x] At these words his wife being angry answered: It is evident thy hope is come to nothing, and thy alms now appear.

23 And with these, and other such like words she upbraided him.

CHAPTER 3.

The prayer of Tobias, and of Sara, in their several afflictions, are heard by God, and the angel Raphael is sent to relieve them.

THEN Tobias sighed, and began to pray with tears,

2 Saying: Thou art just, O Lord, and all thy judgments are just, and all thy ways mercy, and truth, and judgment:

3 And now, O Lord, think of me, and take not revenge of my sins, neither remember my offences, nor those of my parents.

4 [y] For we have not obeyed thy commandments, therefore are we delivered to spoil and to captivity, and death, and are made a fable, and a reproach to all nations, amongst which thou hast scattered us.

5 And now, O Lord, great are thy judgments, because we have not done according to thy precepts, and have not walked sincerely before thee:

6 And now, O Lord, do with me according to thy will, and command my spirit to be received in peace: for it is better for me to die, than to live.

7 Now it happened on the same day, that Sara daughter of Raguel, in Rages a city of the Medes, received a reproach from one of her father's servant maids,

8 Because she had been given to seven husbands, and a devil named Asmodeus had killed them, at their first going in unto her.

9 So when she reproved the maid for her fault, she answered her, saying: May we never see son, or daughter of thee upon the earth, thou murderer of thy husbands.

10 Wilt thou kill me also, as thou hast already killed seven husbands? At these words she went into an upper chamber of her house: and for three days and three nights did neither eat nor drink:

11 But continuing in prayer with tears besought God, that he would deliver her from this reproach.

12 And it came to pass on the third day, when she was making an end of her prayer, blessing the Lord,

13 She said: Blessed is thy name, O God of our fathers: who when thou hast been angry, wilt shew mercy, and in the time of tribulation forgivest the sins of them that call upon thee.

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w Deut. 22. 1.

x Job 22. 9. — *y* Deut. 28 15.

CHAP. 2. Ver. 15. *Kings.* So Job's three friends are here called, because they were princes in their respective territories.

CHAP. 3. Ver. 7. *Rages* In the Greek it is *Ecbatana*, which was also called Rages. For there were two cities in Media of the name of Rages. Raguel dwelt in one of them, and Gabelus in the other

14 To thee, O Lord, I turn my face, to thee I direct my eyes.
15 I beg, O Lord, that thou loose me from the bond of this reproach, or else take me away from the earth.
16 Thou knowest, O Lord, that I never coveted a husband, and have kept my soul clean from all lust.
17 Never have I joined myself with them that play: neither have I made myself partaker with them that walk in lightness.
18 But a husband I consented to take, with thy fear, not with my lust.
19 And either I was unworthy of them, or they perhaps were not worthy of me: because perhaps thou hast kept me for another man.
20 For thy counsel is not in man's power.
21 But this every one is sure of that worshippeth thee, that his life, if it be under trial, shall be crowned: and if it be under tribulation, it shall be delivered: and if it be under correction, it shall be allowed to come to thy mercy.
22 For thou art not delighted in our being lost: because after a storm thou makest a calm, and after tears and weeping thou pourest in joyfulness.
23 Be thy name, O God of Israel, blessed for ever.
24 At that time the prayers of them both were heard in the sight of the glory of the most high God:
25 And the holy angel of the Lord, Raphael was sent to heal them both, whose prayers at one time were rehearsed in the sight of the Lord.

CHAPTER 4.

Tobias thinking, he shall die, giveth his son godly admonitions: and telleth him of money he had lent to a friend.

THEREFORE when Tobias thought that his prayer was heard that he might die, he called to him Tobias his son,
2 And said to him: Hear, my son, the words of my mouth, and lay them as a foundation in thy heart.
3 When God shall take my soul, thou shalt bury my body: [a] and thou shalt honour thy mother all the days of her life:
4 For thou must be mindful what and how great perils she suffered for thee in her womb.
5 And when she also shall have ended the time of her life, bury her by me.
6 And all the days of thy life have God in thy mind: and take heed thou never consent to sin, nor transgress the commandments of the Lord our God.
7 [b] Give alms out of thy substance, and turn not away thy face from any poor person: for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from thee.
8 [c] According to thy ability be merciful.
9 If thou have much give abundantly: if thou have little, take care even so to bestow willingly a little.
10 For thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity.
11 [d] For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness.
12 Alms shall be a great confidence before the most high God, to all them that give it.
13 [e] Take heed to keep thyself, my son, from all fornication, and beside thy wife never endure to know a crime.
14 Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind, or in thy words: [f] for from it all perdition took its beginning.
15 [g] If any man hath done any work for thee, immediately pay him his hire, and let not the wages of thy hired servant stay with thee at all.
16 [h] See thou never do to another what thou wouldst hate to have done to thee by another.
17 [i] Eat thy bread with the hungry and the needy, and with thy garments cover the naked.
18 Lay out thy bread, and thy wine upon the burial of a just man, and do not eat and drink thereof with the wicked.
19 Seek counsel always of a wise man.
20 Bless God at all times: and desire of him to direct thy ways, and that all thy counsels may abide in him.
21 I tell thee also, my son, that I lent ten talents of silver, while thou wast yet a child, to Gabelus, in Rages a city of the Medes, and I have a note of his hand with me:
22 Now therefore inquire how thou mayst

a Ex. 20. 12; Eccli. 7. 29.
b Prov. 3. 9; Eccli. 4. 1, and 14. 13; Luke 14. 13.
c Eccli. 35. 22. — *d* Eccli. 29. 15. — *e* 1 Thess. 4. 3.
f Gen. 3. 5. — *g* Lev. 19. 13; Deut. 24. 14.
h Matt. 7. 12; Luke 6. 31.
i Luke 14. 13.

go to him, and receive of him the foresaid sum of money, and restore to him the note of his hand.

23 Fear not, my son: we lead indeed a poor life, [j] but we shall have many good things if we fear God, and depart from all sin, and do that which is good.

CHAPTER 5.

Young Tobias seeking a guide for his journey, the angel Raphael, in shape of a man, undertaketh this office.

THEN Tobias answered his father, and said: I will do all things, father, which thou hast commanded me.

2 But how I shall get this money, I cannot tell; he knoweth not me, and I know not him: what token shall I give him? nor did I ever know the way which leadeth thither.

3 Then his father answered him, and said: I have a note of his hand with me, which when thou shalt shew him, he will presently pay it.

4 But go now, and seek thee out some faithful man, to go with thee for his hire: that thou mayst receive it, while I yet live.

5 Then Tobias going forth, found a beautiful young man, standing girded, and as it were ready to walk.

6 And not knowing that he was an angel of God, he saluted him, and said: From whence art thou, good young man?

7 But he answered: Of the children of Israel. And Tobias said to him: Knowest thou the way that leadeth to the country of the Medes?

8 And he answered: I know it: and I have often walked through all the ways thereof, and I have abode with Gabelus our brother, who dwelleth at Rages a city of the Medes, which is situate in the mount of Ecbatana.

9 And Tobias said to him: Stay for me, I beseech thee, till I tell these same things to my father.

10 Then Tobias going in told all these things to his father. Upon which his father being in admiration, desired that he would come in unto him.

11 So going in he saluted him, and said: Joy be to thee always.

12 And Tobias said: What manner of joy shall be to me, who sit in darkness, and see not the light of heaven?

13 And the young man said to him: Be of good courage, thy cure from God is at hand.

14 And Tobias said to him: Canst thou conduct my son to Gabelus at Rages, a city of the Medes? and when thou shalt return, I will pay thee thy hire.

15 And the angel said to him: I will conduct him thither, and bring him back to thee.

16 And Tobias said to him: I pray thee, tell me, of what family, or what tribe art thou?

17 And Raphael the angel answered: Dost thou seek the family of him thou hirest, or the hired servant himself to go with thy son?

18 But lest I should make thee uneasy, I am Azarias the son of the great Ananias.

19 And Tobias answered: Thou art of a great family. But I pray thee be not angry that I desired to know thy family.

20 And the angel said to him: I will lead thy son safe, and bring him to thee again safe.

21 And Tobias answering, said: May you have a good journey, and God be with you in your way, and his angel accompany you.

22 Then all things being ready, that were to be carried in their journey, Tobias bade his father and his mother farewell, and they set out both together.

23 [k] And when they were departed, his mother began to weep, and to say: Thou hast taken the staff of our old age, and sent him away from us.

24 I wish the money for which thou hast sent him, had never been.

25 For our poverty was sufficient for us, that we might account it as riches, that we saw our son.

26 And Tobias said to her: Weep not, our son will arrive thither safe, and will return safe to us, and thy eyes shall see him.

27 For I believe that the good angel of God doth accompany him, and doth order all things well that are done about him, so that he shall return to us with joy.

28 At these words his mother ceased weeping, and held her peace.

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j Rom. 8. 17.

k Infra 10. 4.

CHAP. 5. Ver. 18. *Azarias.* The angel took the form of Azarias: and therefore might call himself by the name of the man whom he personated. *Azarias*, in Hebrew, signifies *the help of God*, and Ananias *the grace of God.*

CHAPTER 6.

By the angel's advice young Tobias taketh hold on a fish that assaulteth him. He draweth the heart, the gall, and the liver for medicines. They lodge at the house of Raguel, whose daughter Sara, Tobias is to marry: she had before been married to seven husbands, whom they say all slain by a devil.

AND Tobias went forward, and the dog followed him, and he lodged the first night by the river of Tigris.

2 And he went out to wash his feet, and behold a monstrous fish came up to devour him.

3 And Tobias being afraid of him, cried out with a loud voice, saying: Sir, he cometh upon me.

4 And the angel said to him: Take him by the gill, and draw him to thee. And when he had done so, he drew him out upon the land, and he began to pant before his feet.

5 Then the angel said to him: Take out the entrails of this fish, and lay up his heart, and his gall, and his liver for thee: for these are necessary for useful medicines.

6 And when he had done so, he roasted the flesh thereof, and they took it with them in the way: the rest they salted as much as might serve them, till they came to Rages the city of the Medes.

7 Then Tobias asked the angel, and said to him: I beseech thee, brother Azarias, tell me what remedies are these things good for, which thou hast bid me keep of the fish?

8 And the angel, answering, said to him: If thou put a little piece of its heart upon coals, the smoke thereof driveth away all kind of devils, either from man or from woman, so that they come no more to them.

9 And the gall is good for anointing the eyes, in which there is a white speck, and they shall be cured.

10 And Tobias said to him: Where wilt thou that we lodge?

11 And the angel answering, said: Here is one whose name is Raguel, a near kinsman of thy tribe, and he hath a daughter named Sara, but he hath no son nor any other daughter beside her.

12 [m] All his substance is due to thee, and thou must take her to wife.

13 Ask her therefore of her father, and he will give her thee to wife.

14 Then Tobias answered, and said: I hear that she hath been given to seven husbands, and they all died: moreover I have heard, that a devil killed them.

15 Now I am afraid, lest the same thing should happen to me also: and whereas I am the only child of my parents, I should bring down their old age with sorrow to hell.

16 Then the angel Raphael said to him: Hear me, and I will shew thee who they are, over whom the devil can prevail.

17 For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.

18 But thou when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and for three days keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her.

19 And on that night lay the liver of the fish on the fire, and the devil shall be driven away.

20 But the second night thou shalt be admitted into the society of the holy Patriarchs.

21 And the third night thou shalt obtain a blessing that sound children may be born of you.

22 And when the third night is past, thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children.

CHAPTER 7.

They are kindly entertained by Raguel. Tobias demandeth Sara to wife.

AND they went in to Raguel, and Raguel received them with joy.

2 And Raguel looking upon Tobias, said to Anna his wife: How like is this young man to my cousin?

3 And when he had spoken these words,

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m Num. 27. 8, and 36. 8.

CHAP. 6. Ver. 8. *Its heart, &c. The liver* (ver. 19). God was pleased to give to these things a virtue against those proud spirits, to make them, who affected to be like the Most High, subject to such mean corporeal creatures as instruments of his power.

Ver. 15. *To hell.* That is, to the place where the souls of the good were kept before the coming of Christ.

he said: Whence are ye young men our brethren?

4 But they said: We are of the tribe of Nephtali, of the captivity of Ninive.

5 And Raguel said to them: Do you know Tobias my brother? And they said: We know him.

6 And when he was speaking many good things of him, the angel said to Raguel: Tobias concerning whom thou inquirest is this young man's father.

7 And Raguel went to him, and kissed him with tears and weeping upon his neck, said: A blessing be upon thee, my son, because thou art the son of a good and most virtuous man.

8 And Anna his wife, and Sara their daughter wept.

9 And after they had spoken, Raguel commanded a sheep to be killed, and a feast to be prepared. And when he desired them to sit down to dinner,

10 Tobias said: I will not eat nor drink here this day, unless thou first grant me my petition, and promise to give me Sara thy daughter.

11 Now when Raguel heard this he was afraid, knowing what had happened to those seven husbands, that went in unto her: and he began to fear lest it might happen to him also in like manner: and as he was in suspense, and gave no answer to his petition,

12 The angel said to him: Be not afraid to give her to this man, for to him who feareth God is thy daughter due to be his wife: therefore another could not have her.

13 Then Raguel said: I doubt not but God hath regarded my prayers and tears in his sight.

14 And I believe he hath therefore made you come to me, that this maid might be married to one of her own kindred, [o] according to the law of Moses: and now doubt not but I will give her to thee.

15 And taking the right hand of his daughter, he gave it into the right hand of Tobias, saying: The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and may he join you together, and fulfil his blessing in you.

16 And taking paper they made a writing of the marriage.

17 And afterwards they made merry, blessing God.

18 And Raguel called to him Anna his wife, and bade her prepare another chamber.

19 And she brought Sara her daughter in thither, and she wept.

20 And she said to her: Be of good cheer, my daughter: the Lord of heaven give thee joy for the trouble thou hast undergone.

CHAPTER 8.

Tobias burneth part of the fish's liver, and Raphael bindeth the devil. Tobias and Sara pray.

AND after they had supped, they brought in the young man to her.

2 And Tobias remembering the angel's word, took out of his bag part of the liver, and laid it upon burning coals.

3 Then the angel Raphael took the devil, and bound him in the desert of upper Egypt.

4 Then Tobias exhorted the virgin, and said to her: Sara, arise, and let us pray to God to day, and to morrow, and the next day: because for these three nights we are joined to God: and when the third night is over, we will be in our own wedlock.

5 For we are the children of saints, and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God.

6 So they both arose, and prayed earnestly both together that health might be given them,

7 And Tobias said: Lord God of our fathers, may the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the fountains, and the rivers, and all thy creatures that are in them, bless thee.

8 [q] Thou madest Adam of the slime of the earth, and gavest him Eve for a helper.

9 And now, Lord, thou knowest, that not for fleshly lust do I take my sister to wife, but only for the love of posterity, in which thy name may be blessed for ever and ever.

10 Sara also said: Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us, and let us grow old both together in health.

11 And it came to pass about the cock-crowing, Raguel ordered his servants to be called for, and they went with him together to dig a grave.

o Num. 36. 6.

q Gen. 2. 7

12 For he said: Lest perhaps it may have happened to him, in like manner as it did to the other seven husbands, that went in unto her.

13 And when they had prepared the pit, Raguel went back to his wife, and said to her:

14 Send one of thy maids, and let her see if he be dead, that I may bury him before it be day.

15 So she sent one of her maidservants, who went into the chamber, and found them safe and sound, sleeping both together.

16 And returning she brought the good news: and Raguel and Anna his wife blessed the Lord,

17 And said: We bless thee, O Lord God of Israel, because it hath not happened as we suspected.

18 For thou hast shewn thy mercy to us, and hast shut out from us the enemy that persecuted us.

19 And thou hast taken pity upon two only children. Make them, O Lord, bless thee more fully: and to offer up to thee a sacrifice of thy praise, and of their health, that all nations may know, that thou alone art God in all the earth.

20 And immediately Raguel commanded his servants, to fill up the pit they had made, before it was day.

21 And he spoke to his wife to make ready a feast, and prepare all kind of provisions that are necessary for such as go a journey.

22 He caused also two fat kine, and four wethers to be killed, and a banquet to be prepared for all his neighbours, and all his friends.

23 And Raguel adjured Tobias, to abide with him two weeks.

24 And of all things which Raguel possessed, he gave one half to Tobias, and made a writing, that the half that remained should after their decease come also to Tobias.

CHAPTER 9.

The angel Raphael goeth to Gabelus, receiveth the money and bringeth him to the marriage.

THEN Tobias called the angel to him, whom he took to be a man, and said to him: Brother Azarias, I pray thee hearken to my words:

2 If I should give myself to be thy servant I should not make a worthy return for thy care.

3 However, I beseech thee, to take with thee beasts and servants, and to go to Gabelus to Rages the city of the Medes: and to restore to him his note of hand, and receive of him the money, and desire him to come to my wedding.

4 For thou knowest that my father numbereth the days: and if I stay one day more, his soul will be afflicted.

5 And indeed thou seest how Raguel hath adjured me, whose adjuring I cannot despise.

6 Then Raphael took four of Raguel's servants, and two camels, and went to Rages the city of the Medes: and finding Gabelus, gave him his note of hand, and received of him all the money.

7 And he told him concerning Tobias the son of Tobias, all that had been done: and made him come with him to the wedding.

8 And when he was come into Raguel's house he found Tobias sitting at the table: and he leaped up, and they kissed each other: and Gabelus wept, and blessed God,

9 And said: The God of Israel bless thee, because thou art the son of a very good and just man, and that feareth God, and doth almsdeeds:

10 And may a blessing come upon thy wife and upon your parents.

11 And may you see your children, and your children's children, unto the third and fourth generation: and may your seed be blessed by the God of Israel, who reigneth for ever and ever.

12 And when all had said, Amen, they went to the feast: but the marriage feast they celebrated also with the fear of the Lord.

CHAPTER 10.

The parents lament the long absence of their son Tobias. He sets out to return.

BUT as Tobias made longer stay upon occasion of the marriage, Tobias his father was solicitous, saying: Why thinkest thou doth my son tarry, or why is he detained there?

2 Is Gabelus dead, thinkest thou, and no man will pay him the money?

3 And he began to be exceeding sad, both he and Anna his wife with him: and

they began both to weep together: because their son did not return to them on the day appointed.

4 [t] But his mother wept and was quite disconsolate, and said: Woe, woe is me, my son; why did we send thee to go to a strange country, the light of our eyes, the staff of our old age, the comfort of our life, the hope of our posterity?

5 We having all things together in thee alone, ought not to have let thee go from us.

6 And Tobias said to her: Hold thy peace, and be not troubled, our son is safe: that man with whom we sent him is very trusty.

7 But she could by no means be comforted, but daily running out looked round about, and went into all the ways by which there seemed any hope he might return, that she might if possible see him coming afar off.

8 But Raguel said to his son in law: Stay here, and I will send a messenger to Tobias thy father, that thou art in health.

9 And Tobias said to him: I know that my father and mother now count the days, and their spirit is grievously afflicted within them.

10 And when Raguel had pressed Tobias with many words, and he by no means would hearken to him, he delivered Sara unto him, and half of all his substance in menservants, and womenservants, in cattle, in camels, and in kine, and in much money, and sent him away safe and joyful from him,

11 Saying: The holy angel of the Lord be with you in your journey, and bring you through safe, and that you may find all things well about your parents, and my eyes may see your children before I die.

12 And the parents taking their daughter kissed her, and let her go:

13 Admonishing her to honour her father and mother in law, to love her husband, to take care of the family, to govern the house, and to behave herself irreprehensibly.

CHAPTER 11.

Tobias anointeth his father's eyes with the fish's gall. and he recovereth his sight.

[t] Supra 5. 23.

AND as they were returning they came to Charan, which is in the midway to Ninive, the eleventh day.

2 And the angel said: Brother Tobias, thou knowest how thou didst leave thy father.

3 If it please thee therefore, let us go before, and let the family follow softly after us, together with thy wife, and with the beasts.

4 And as this their going pleased him, Raphael said to Tobias: Take with thee of the gall of the fish, for it will be necessary. So Tobias took some of that gall and departed.

5 But Anna sat beside the way daily, on the top of a hill, from whence she might see afar off.

6 And while she watched his coming from that place, she saw him afar off, and presently perceived it was her son coming: and returning she told her husband, saying: Behold thy son cometh.

7 And Raphael said to Tobias: As soon as thou shalt come into thy house, forthwith adore the Lord thy God: and giving thanks to him, go to thy father, and kiss him.

8 And immediately anoint his eyes with this gall of the fish, which thou carriest with thee. For be assured that his eyes shall be presently opened, and thy father shall see the light of heaven, and shall rejoice in the sight of thee.

9 Then the dog, which had been with them in the way, ran before, and coming as if he had brought the news, shewed his joy by his fawning and wagging his tail.

10 And his father that was blind, rising up, began to run stumbling with his feet: and giving a servant his hand, went to meet his son.

11 And receiving him kissed him, as did also his wife, and they began to weep for joy.

12 And when they had adored God, and given him thanks, they sat down together.

13 Then Tobias taking of the gall of the fish, anointed his father's eyes.

14 And he stayed about half an hour: and a white skin began to come out of his eyes, like the skin of an egg.

15 And Tobias took hold of it, and drew

CHAP. 11. Ver. 9. *The dog* &c. This may seem very minute circumstance to be recorded in sacred story: but as we learn from our Saviour, St. Matt. 5. 18, there are *iotas* and *tittles* in the word of God that is to say, things that appear minute, but which have indeed a deep and mysterious meaning in them.

it from his eyes, and immediately he recovered his sight.

16 And they glorified God, both he and his wife and all that knew him.

17 And Tobias said: I bless thee, O Lord God of Israel, because thou hast chastised me, and thou hast saved me: and behold I see Tobias my son.

18 And after seven days Sara his son's wife, and all the family arrived safe, and the cattle, and the camels, and an abundance of money of his wife's: and that money also which he had received of Gabelus:

19 And he told his parents all the benefits of God, which he had done to him by the man that conducted him.

20 And Achior and Nabath the kinsmen of Tobias came, rejoicing for Tobias, and congratulating with him for all the good things that God had done for him.

21 And for seven days they feasted and rejoiced all with great joy.

CHAPTER 12.

Raphael maketh himself known.

THEN Tobias called to him his son, and said to him: What can we give to this holy man, that is come with thee?

2 Tobias answering, said to his father: Father, what wages shall we give him? or what can be worthy of his benefits?

3 He conducted me and brought me safe again, he received the money of Gabelus, he caused me to have my wife, and he chased from her the evil spirit, he gave joy to her parents, myself he delivered from being devoured by the fish, thee also he hath made to see the light of heaven, and we are filled with all good things through him. What can we give him sufficient for these things?

4 But I beseech thee, my father, to desire him, that he would vouchsafe to accept of one half of all things that have been brought.

5 So the father and the son calling him, took him aside: and began to desire him that he would vouchsafe to accept of half of all things that they had brought.

6 Then he said to them secretly: Bless ye the God of heaven, give glory to him in the sight of all that live, because he hath shewn his mercy to you.

7 For it is good to hide the secret of a king: but honourable to reveal and confess the works of God.

8 Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold.

9 For alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting.

10 But they that commit sin and iniquity, are enemies to their own soul.

11 I discover then the truth unto you, and I will not hide the secret from you.

12 When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayer to the Lord.

13 And because thou wast acceptable to God, it was necessary that temptation should prove thee.

14 And now the Lord hath sent me to heal thee, and to deliver Sara thy son's wife from the devil.

15 For I am the angel Raphael, one of the seven, who stand before the Lord.

16 And when they had heard these things, they were troubled, and being seized with fear they fell upon the ground on their face.

17 And the angel said to them: Peace be to you, fear not.

18 For when I was with you, I was there by the will of God: bless ye him, and sing praises to him.

19 I seemed indeed to eat and to drink with you: but I use an invisible meat and drink, which cannot be seen by men.

20 It is time therefore that I return to him that sent me: but bless ye God, and publish all his wonderful works.

21 And when he had said these things, he was taken from their sight, and they could see him no more.

22 Then they lying prostrate for three hours upon their face, blessed God: and rising up, they told all his wonderful works.

CHAPTER 13.

Tobias the father praiseth God, exhorting all Israel to do the same. Prophesieth the restoration and better state of Jerusalem.

AND Tobias the elder opening his mouth, blessed the Lord, and said Thou art great, O Lord, for ever, and thy kingdom is unto all ages

2 [x] For thou scourgest, and thou savest: thou leadest down to hell, and bringest up again: and there is none that can escape thy hand.

3 Give glory to the Lord, ye children of Israel, and praise him in the sight of the Gentiles:

4 Because he hath therefore scattered you among the Gentiles, who know not him, that you may declare his wonderful works, and make them know that there is no other almighty God besides him.

5 He hath chastised us for our iniquities: and he will save us for his own mercy.

6 See then what he hath done with us, and with fear and trembling give ye glory to him: and extol the eternal King of worlds in your works.

7 As for me, I will praise him in the land of my captivity: because he hath shewn his majesty toward a sinful nation.

8 Be converted therefore, ye sinners, and do justice before God, believing that he will shew his mercy to you.

9 And I and my soul will rejoice in him.

10 Bless ye the Lord, all his elect, keep days of joy, and give glory to him.

11 Jerusalem, city of God, the Lord hath chastised thee for the works of thy hands.

12 Give glory to the Lord for thy good things, and bless the God eternal, that he may rebuild his tabernacle in thee, and may call back all the captives to thee, and thou mayst rejoice for ever and ever.

13 Thou shalt shine with a glorious light: and all the ends of the earth shall worship thee.

14 [y] Nations from afar shall come to thee: and shall bring gifts, and shall adore the Lord in thee, and shall esteem thy land as holy.

15 For they shall call upon the great name in thee.

16 They shall be cursed that shall despise thee: and they shall be condemned that shall blaspheme thee: and blessed shall they be that shall build thee up.

17 But thou shalt rejoice in thy children, because they shall all be blessed, and shall be gathered together to the Lord

18 Blessed are all they that love thee. and that rejoice in thy peace.

19 My soul, bless thou the Lord, because the Lord our God hath delivered Jerusalem his city from all her troubles.

20 Happy shall I be if there shall remain of my seed, to see the glory of Jerusalem.

21 [z] The gates of Jerusalem shall be built of sapphire, and of emerald, and all the walls thereof round about of precious stones.

22 All its streets shall be paved with white and clean stones: and Alleluia shall be sung in its streets

23 Blessed be the Lord, who hath exalted it, and may he reign over it for ever and ever, Amen.

CHAPTER 14.

Old Tobias dieth at the age of a hundred and two years, after exhorting his son and grandsons to piety, foreshewing that Ninive shall be destroyed and Jerusalem rebuilt. The younger Tobias returneth with his family to Raguel, and dieth happily as he had lived.

AND the words of Tobias were ended. And after Tobias was restored to his sight, he lived two and forty years, and saw the children of his grandchildren.

2 And after he had lived a hundred and two years, he was buried honourably in Ninive.

3 For he was six and fifty years old when he lost the sight of his eyes, and sixty when he recovered it again.

4 And the rest of his life was in joy, and with great increase of the fear of God he departed in peace.

5 And at the hour of his death he called unto him his son Tobias and his children, seven young men, his grandsons. and said to them:

6 The destruction of Ninive is at hand: for the word of the Lord must be fulfilled: [b] and our brethren, that are scattered abroad from the land of Israel, shall return to it.

7 And all the land thereof that is desert shall be filled with people, and the house of God which is burnt in it, shall again be rebuilt: and all that fear God shall return thither.

8 And the Gentiles shall leave their

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x Deut. 32. 39, 1 Kings 2. 6, Wisd. 16. 13.
y Isa. 60 5. — *z* Apoc. 21. 19.

b 1 Esd. 3. 8

CHAP. 13. Ver. 11. *Jerusalem* What is prophetically delivered here, and in the following chapter. with relation to Jerusalem is partly to be understood of the rebuilding the city after the captivity and partly of the spiritual Jerusalem, which is the church of Christ, and the eternal Jerusalem in heaven.

idols, and shall come into Jerusalem, and shall dwell in it.

9 And all the kings of the earth shall rejoice in it, adoring the King of Israel.

10 Hearken therefore, my children, to your father: serve the Lord in truth, and seek to do the things that please him:

11 And command your children that they do justice and almsdeeds, and that they be mindful of God, and bless him at all times in truth, and with all their power.

12 And now, children, hear me, and do not stay here: but as soon as you shall bury your mother by me in one sepulchre, without delay direct your steps to depart hence:

13 For I see that its iniquity will bring it to destruction.

14 And it came to pass that after the death of his mother, Tobias departed out of Ninive with his wife, and children, and children's children, and returned to his father and mother in law.

15 And he found them in health in a good old age: and he took care of them, and he closed their eyes: and all the inheritance of Raguel's house came to him: and he saw his children's children to the fifth generation.

16 And after he had lived ninety-nine years in the fear of the Lord, with joy they buried him.

17 And all his kindred, and all his generation continued in good life, and in holy conversation, so that they were acceptable both to God, and to men, and to all that dwelt in the land.

THE

BOOK OF JUDITH.

The sacred writer of this Book wrote in a Semitic language. He was a Jew, a clever writer, familiar with the earlier sacred writings; an ardent patriot, faithfully attached to the Law. It takes its name from that illustrious woman, by whose virtue, fortitude, and prayer, the children of Israel were preserved from the destruction threatened them by Holofernes and his great army. It finishes with her canticle of thanksgiving to God.

CHAPTER 1.

Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians overcometh Arphaxad king of the Medes.

NOW Arphaxad king of the Medes had brought many nations under his dominions, and he built a very strong city, which he called Ecbatana,

2 Of stones squared and hewed: he made the walls thereof seventy cubits broad, and thirty cubits high, and the towers thereof he made a hundred cubits high. But on the square of them, each side was extended the space of twenty feet.

3 And he made the gates thereof according to the height of the towers:

4 And he gloried as a mighty one in the force of his army and in the glory of his chariots.

5 Now in the twelfth year of his reign, Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, who reigned in Ninive the great city, fought against Arphaxad and overcame him,

6 In the great plain which is called Ragua, about the Euphrates, and the Tigris, and the Jadason, in the plain of Erioch the king of the Elicians.

7 Then was the kingdom of Nabuchodonosor exalted, and his heart was elevated: and he sent to all that dwelt in Cilicia and Damascus, and Libanus,

8 And to the nations that are in Carmelus, and Cedar, and to the inhabitants of Galilee in the great plain of Asdrelon,

9 And to all that were in Samaria, and beyond the river Jordan even to Jerusa-

CHAP. 1. Ver. 1. *Arphaxad* He was probably the same as is called *Dejoces* by Herodotus; to whom he attributes the building of Ecbatana, the capital city of Media.

Ver. 5. *Nabuchodonosor* Not the king of Babylon, who took and destroyed Jerusalem, but another of the same name, who reigned in Ninive: and is called by profane historians *Saosduchin*. He succeeded Asarhaddon in the kingdom of the Assyrians and was contemporary with Manasses king of Juda

lem, and all the land of Jesse till you come to the borders of Ethiopia.

10 To all these Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, sent messengers:

11 But they all with one mind refused, and sent them back empty, and rejected them without honour.

12 Then king Nabuchodonosor being angry against all that land, swore by his throne and kingdom that he would revenge himself of all those countries.

CHAPTER 2.

Nabuchodonosor sendeth Holofernes to waste the countries of the west.

IN the thirteenth year of the reign of Nabuchodonosor, the two and twentieth day of the first month, the word was given out in the house of Nabuchodonosor king of the Assyrians, that he would revenge himself.

2 And he called all the ancients, and all the governors, and his officers of war, and communicated to them the secret of his counsel:

3 And he said that his thoughts were to bring all the earth under his empire.

4 And when this saying pleased them all, Nabuchodonosor, the king, called Holofernes the general of his armies,

5 And said to him: Go out against all the kingdoms of the west, and against them especially that despised my commandment.

6 Thy eye shall not spare any kingdom, and all the strong cities thou shalt bring under my yoke.

7 Then Holofernes called the captains, and officers of the power of the Assyrians: and he mustered men for the expedition, as the king commanded him, a hundred and twenty thousand fighting men on foot, and twelve thousand archers, horsemen.

8 And he made all his warlike preparations to go before with a multitude of innumerable camels, with all provisions sufficient for the armies in abundance, and herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, without number.

9 He appointed corn to be prepared out of all Syria in his passage.

10 But gold and silver he took out of the king's house in great abundance.

11 And he went forth he and all the army, with the chariots, and horsemen, and archers, who covered the face of the earth, like locusts.

12 And when he had passed through the borders of the Assyrians, he came to the great mountains of Ange, which are on the left of Cilicia: and he went up to all their castles, and took all the strong places.

13 And he took by assault the renowned city of Melothus, and pillaged all the children of Tharsis, and the children of Ismahel, who were over against the face of the desert, and on the south of the land of Cellon.

14 And he passed over the Euphrates, and came into Mesopotamia: and he forced all the stately cities that were there, from the torrent of Mambre, till one comes to the sea:

15 And he took the borders thereof, from Cilicia to the coasts of Japheth, which are towards the south.

16 And he carried away all the children of Madian, and stripped them of all their riches, and all that resisted him he slew with the edge of the sword.

17 And after these things he went down into the plains of Damascus in the days of the harvest, and he set all the corn on fire, and he caused all the trees and vineyards to be cut down.

18 And the fear of them fell upon all the inhabitants of the land.

CHAPTER 3.

Many submit themselves to Holofernes. He destroyeth their cities, and their gods, that Nabuchodonosor only might be called God.

THEN the kings and the princes of all the cities and provinces, of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Syria Sobal, and Libya, and Cilicia sent their ambassadors, who coming to Holofernes, said:

2 Let thy indignation towards us cease: for it is better for us to live and serve Nabuchodonosor the great king, and be subject to thee, than to die and to perish, or suffer the miseries of slavery.

3 All our cities and our possessions, all mountains and hills, and fields, and herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep, and goats, and horses, and camels, and all our goods, and families are in thy sight:

4 Let all we have be subject to thy law.

5 Both we and our children are thy servants.

6 Come to us a peaceable lord, and use our service as it shall please thee.

7 Then he came down from the mountains with horsemen, in great power, and made himself master of every city, and all the inhabitants of the land.

8 And from all the cities he took auxiliaries valiant men, and chosen for war.

9 And so great a fear lay upon all those provinces, that the inhabitants of all the cities, both princes and nobles, as well as the people, went out to meet him at his coming.

10 And received him with garlands, and lights, and dances, and timbrels, and flutes.

11 And though they did these things, they could not for all that mitigate the fierceness of his heart:

12 For he both destroyed their cities, and cut down their groves.

13 For Nabuchodonosor the king had commanded him to destroy all the gods of the earth, that he only might be called God by those nations which could be brought under him by the power of Holofernes.

14 And when he had passed through all Syria Sobal, and all Apamea, and all Mesopotamia, he came to the Idumeans into the land of Gabaa,

15 And he took possession of their cities, and stayed there for thirty days, in which days he commanded all the troops of his army to be united.

CHAPTER 4.

The children of Israel prepare themselves to resist Holofernes. They cry to the Lord for help.

THEN the children of Israel, who dwelt in the land of Juda, hearing these things, were exceedingly afraid of him.

2 Dread and horror seized upon their minds, lest he should do the same to Jerusalem and to the temple of the Lord, that he had done to other cities and their temples.

3 And they sent into all Samaria round about, as far as Jericho, and seized upon all the tops of the mountains:

4 And they compassed their towns with walls, and gathered together corn for provision for war.

5 And Eliachim the priest wrote to all that were over against Esdrelon, which faceth the great plain near Dothain, and to all by whom there might be a passage of way, that they should take possession of the ascents of the mountains, by which there might be any way to Jerusalem, and should keep watch where the way was narrow between the mountains.

6 And the children of Israel did as the priest of the Lord Eliachim had appointed them.

7 And all the people cried to the Lord with great earnestness, and they humbled their souls in fastings, and prayers, both they and their wives.

8 And the priests put on haircloths, and they caused the little children to lie prostrate before the temple of the Lord, and the altar of the Lord they covered with haircloth.

9 And they cried to the Lord the God of Israel with one accord, that their children might not be made a prey, and their wives carried off, and their cities destroyed, and their holy things profaned, and that they might not be made a reproach to the Gentiles.

10 Then Eliachim the high priest of the Lord went about all Israel and spoke to them,

11 Saying: Know ye that the Lord will hear your prayers, if you continue with perseverance in fastings and prayers in the sight of the Lord.

12 Remember Moses the servant of the Lord, who overcame Amalec that trusted in his own strength, and in his power, and in his army, and in his shields, and in his chariots, and in his horsemen, not by fighting with the sword, but by holy prayers:

13 [e] So shall all the enemies of Israel be, if you persevere in this work which you have begun.

14 So they being moved by this exhortation of his, prayed to the Lord, and continued in the sight of the Lord.

15 So that even they who offered the holocausts to the Lord, offered the sacrifices to the Lord girded with haircloths, and with ashes upon their head.

16 And they all begged of God with all their heart, that he would visit his people Israel.

e Ex. 17. 12.

CHAPTER 5.

Achior gives Holofernes an account of the people of Israel.

AND it was told Holofernes the general of the army of the Assyrians, that the children of Israel prepared themselves to resist, and had shut up the ways of the mountains.

2 And he was transported with exceeding great fury and indignation, and he called all the princes of Moab and the leaders of Ammon.

3 And he said to them: Tell me what is this people that besetteth the mountains: or what are their cities, and of what sort, and how great: also what is their power, or what is their multitude: or who is the king over their warfare:

4 And why they above all that dwell in the east, have despised us, and have not come out to meet us, that they might receive us with peace?

5 Then Achior captain of all the children of Ammon answering, said: If thou vouchsafe, my lord, to hear, I will tell the truth in thy sight concerning this people, that dwelleth in the mountains, and there shall not a false word come out of my mouth.

6 This people is of the offspring of the Chaldeans.

7 [f] They dwelt first in Mesopotamia, because they would not follow the gods of their fathers, who were in the land of the Chaldeans.

8 Wherefore forsaking the ceremonies of their fathers, which consisted in the worship of many gods,

9 They worshipped one God of heaven, [g] who also commanded them to depart from thence, and to dwell in Charan. And when there was a famine over all the land, [h] they went down into Egypt, and there for four hundred years were so multiplied, that the army of them could not be numbered.

10 And when the king of Egypt oppressed them, and made slaves of them to labour in clay and brick, in the building of his cities, they cried to their Lord, and he struck the whole land of Egypt with divers plagues.

11 [i] And when the Egyptians had cast them out from them, and the plague had ceased from them, and they had a mind to take them again, and bring them back to their service,

12 [j] The God of heaven opened the sea to them in their flight, so that the waters were made to stand firm as a wall on either side, and they walked through the bottom of the sea and passed it dry foot.

13 And when an innumerable army of the Egyptians pursued after them in that place, they were so overwhelmed with the waters, that there was not one left, to tell what had happened to posterity.

14 And after they came out of the Red Sea, they abode in the deserts of mount Sina, in which never man could dwell, or son of man rested.

15 There bitter fountains were made sweet for them to drink, and for forty years they received food from heaven.

16 Wheresoever they went in without bow and arrow, and without shield and sword, their God fought for them and overcame.

17 And there was no one that triumphed over this people, but when they departed from the worship of the Lord their God.

18 But as often as beside their own God, they worshipped any other, they were given to spoil, and to the sword, and to reproach.

19 And as often as they were penitent for having revolted from the worship of their God, the God of heaven gave them power to resist.

20 So they overthrew the king of the Chanaanites, and of the Jebusites, and of the Pherezites, and of the Hethites, and of the Hevites, and of the Amorrhites, and all the mighty ones in Hesebon, and they possessed their lands, and their cities:

21 And as long as they sinned not in the sight of their God, it was well with them: for their God hateth iniquity.

22 And even some years ago when they had revolted from the way which God had given them to walk therein, they were destroyed in battles by many nations, and very many of them were led away captive into a strange land.

23 But of late returning to the Lord their God, from the different places

f Gen. 11. 31. — *g* Gen. 12. 1. — *h* Gen. 46. 6.

i Ex. 12. 33. — *j* Ex. 14. 29.

wherein they were scattered, they are come together and are gone up into all these mountains, and possess Jerusalem again, where their holies are.

24 Now therefore, my lord, search if there be any iniquity of theirs in the sight of their God: let us go up to them, because their God will surely deliver them to thee, and they shall be brought under the yoke of thy power:

25 But if there be no offence of this people in the sight of their God, we cannot resist them, because their God will defend them: and we shall be a reproach to the whole earth.

26 And it came to pass, when Achior had ceased to speak these words, all the great men of Holofernes were angry, and they had a mind to kill him, saying to each other:

27 Who is this, that saith the children of Israel can resist king Nabuchodonosor, and his armies, men unarmed, and without force, and without skill in the art of war?

28 That Achior therefore may know that he deceiveth us, let us go up into the mountains: and when the bravest of them shall be taken, then shall he with them be stabbed with the sword:

29 That every nation may know that Nabuchodonosor is god of the earth, and besides him there is no other.

CHAPTER 6.

Holofernes in great rage sendeth Achior to Bethulia, there to be slain with the Israelites.

AND it came to pass when they had left off speaking, that Holofernes being in a violent passion, said to Achior:

2 Because thou hast prophesied unto us, saying: That the nation of Israel is defended by their God, to shew thee that there is no God, but Nabuchodonosor:

3 When we shall slay them all as one man, then thou also shalt die with them by the sword of the Assyrians, and all Israel shall perish with thee:

4 And thou shalt find that Nabuchodonosor is lord of the whole earth: and then the sword of my soldiers shall pass through thy sides, and thou shalt be stabbed and fall among the wounded of Israel, and thou shalt breathe no more till thou be destroyed with them.

5 But if thou think thy prophecy true, let not thy countenance sink, and let the paleness that is in thy face, depart from thee, if thou imaginest these my words cannot be accomplished.

6 And that thou mayst know that thou shalt experience these things together with them, behold from this hour thou shalt be associated to their people, that when they shall receive the punishment they deserve from my sword, thou mayst fall under the same vengeance.

7 Then Holofernes commanded his servants to take Achior, and to lead him to Bethulia, and to deliver him into the hands of the children of Israel.

8 And the servants of Holofernes taking him, went through the plains: but when they came near the mountains, the slingers came out against them.

9 Then turning out of the way by the side of the mountain, they tied Achior to a tree hand and foot, and so left him bound with ropes, and returned to their master.

10 And the children of Israel coming down from Bethulia, came to him, and loosing him they brought him to Bethulia, and setting him in the midst of the people, asked him what was the matter, that the Assyrians had left him bound.

11 In those days the rulers there, were Ozias the son of Micha of the tribe of Simeon, and Charmi, called also Gothoniel.

12 And Achior related in the midst of the ancients, and in the presence of all the people, all that he had said being asked by Holofernes: and how the people of Holofernes would have killed him for this word,

13 And how Holofernes himself being angry had commanded him to be delivered for this cause to the Israelites: that when he should overcome the children of Israel, then he might command Achior also himself to be put to death by diverse torments, for having said: The God of heaven is their defender.

14 [k] And when Achior had declared all these things, all the people fell upon their faces, adoring the Lord, and all of them together mourning and weeping poured out their prayers with one accord to the Lord,

[k] Supra 5. 26.

15 Saying: O Lord God of heaven and earth, behold their pride, and look on our low condition, and have regard to the face of thy saints, and shew that thou forsakest not them that trust on thee, and that thou humblest them that presume of themselves, and glory in their own strength.

16 So when their weeping was ended, and the people's prayer, in which they continued all the day, was concluded, they comforted Achior,

17 Saying: The God of our fathers, whose power thou hast set forth, will make this return to thee, that thou rather shalt see their destruction.

18 And when the Lord our God shall give this liberty to his servants, let God be with thee also in the midst of us: that as it shall please thee, so thou with all thine mayst converse with us.

19 Then Ozias, after the assembly was broken up, received him into his house, and made him a great supper.

20 And all the ancients were invited, and they refreshed themselves together after their fast was over.

21 And afterwards all the people were called together, and they prayed all the night long within the church, desiring help of the God of Israel.

CHAPTER 7.

Holofernes besiegeth Bethulia. The distress of the besieged.

BUT Holofernes on the next day gave orders to his army, to go up against Bethulia.

2 Now there were in his troops a hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and two and twenty thousand horsemen, besides the preparations of those men who had been taken, and who had been brought away out of the provinces and cities of all the youth.

3 All these prepared themselves together to fight against the children of Israel, and they came by the hillside to the top, which looketh toward Dothain, from the place which is called Belma, unto Chelmon, which is over against Esdrelon.

4 But the children of Israel, when they saw the multitude of them, prostrated themselves upon the ground, putting ashes upon their heads, praying with one accord, that the God of Israel would shew his mercy upon his people.

5 And taking their arms of war, they posted themselves at the places, which by a narrow pathway lead directly between the mountains, and they guarded them all day and night.

6 Now Holofernes, in going round about, found that the fountain which supplied them with water, ran through an aqueduct without the city on the south side: and he commanded their aqueduct to be cut off.

7 Nevertheless there were springs not far from the walls, out of which they were seen secretly to draw water, to refresh themselves a little rather than to drink their fill.

8 But the children of Ammon and Moab came to Holofernes, saying: The children of Israel trust not in their spears, nor in their arrows, but the mountains are their defence, and the steep hills and precipices guard them.

9 Wherefore that thou mayst overcome them without joining battle, set guards at the springs that they may not draw water out of them, and thou shalt destroy them without sword, or at least being wearied out they will yield up their city, which they suppose, because it is situate in the mountains, to be impregnable.

10 And these words pleased Holofernes, and his officers, and he placed all round about a hundred men at every spring.

11 And when they had kept this watch for full twenty days, the cisterns, and the reserve of waters failed among all the inhabitants of Bethulia, so that there was not within the city, enough to satisfy them, no not for one day, for water was daily given out to the people by measure.

12 Then all the men and women, young men, and children, gathering themselves together to Ozias, all together with one voice,

13 Said: [l] God be judge between us and thee, for thou hast done evil against us, in that thou wouldst not speak peaceably with the Assyrians, and for this cause God hath sold us into their hands.

14 And therefore there is no one to help

[l] Ex. 5. 21.

CHAP. 6 Ver. 21. *The church.* That is, the synagogue or place where they met for prayer.

us, while we are cast down before their eyes in thirst, and sad destruction.

15 And now assemble ye all that are in the city, that we may of our own accord yield ourselves all up to the people of Holofernes.

16 For it is better, that being captives we should live and bless the Lord, than that we should die, and be a reproach to all flesh, after we have seen our wives and our infants die before our eyes.

17 We call to witness this day heaven and earth, and the God of our fathers, who taketh vengeance upon us according to our sins, conjuring you to deliver now the city into the hand of the army of Holofernes, that our end may be short by the edge of the sword, which is made longer by the drought of thirst.

18 And when they had said these things, there was great weeping and lamentation of all in the assembly, and for many hours with one voice they cried to God, saying:

19 [m] We have sinned with our fathers, we have done unjustly, we have committed iniquity:

20 Have thou mercy on us, because thou art good, or punish our iniquities by chastising us thyself, and deliver not them that trust in thee to a people that knoweth not thee,

21 That they may not say among the Gentiles: Where is their God?

22 And when being wearied with these cries, and tired with these weepings, they held their peace,

23 Ozias rising up all in tears, said: Be of good courage, my brethren, and let us wait these five days for mercy from the Lord.

24 For perhaps he will put a stop to his indignation, and will give glory to his ow name.

25 But if after five days be past there come no aid, we will do the things which you have spoken.

CHAPTER 8.

The character of Judith: her discourse to the ancients.

NOW it came to pass, when Judith a widow had heard these words, who was the daughter of Merari, the son of Idox, the son of Joseph, the son of Ozias, the son of Elai, the son of Jamnor, the son of Gedeon, the son of Raphaim, the son of Achitob, the son of Melchias, the son of Enan, the son of Nathanias, the son of Salathiel, the son of Simeon, the son of Ruben:

2 And her husband was Manasses, who died in the time of the barley harvest:

3 For he was standing over them that bound sheaves in the field; and the heat came upon his head, and he died in Bethulia his own city, and was buried there with his fathers.

4 And Judith his relict was a widow now three years and six months.

5 And she made herself a private chamber in the upper part of her house, in which she abode shut up with her maids.

6 And she wore haircloth upon her loins, and fasted all the days of her life, except the sabbaths, and new moons, and the feasts of the house of Israel.

7 And she was exceedingly beautiful, and her husband left her great riches, and very many servants, and large possessions of herds of oxen, and flocks of sheep.

8 And she was greatly renowned among all, because she feared the Lord very much, neither was there any one that spoke an ill word of her.

9 When therefore she had heard that Ozias had promised that he would deliver up the city after the fifth day, she sent to the ancients Chabri and Charmi.

10 And they came to her, and she said to them: What is this word, by which Ozias hath consented to give up the city to the Assyrians, if within five days there come no aid to us?

11 And who are you that tempt the Lord?

12 This is not a word that may draw down mercy, but rather that may stir up wrath, and enkindle indignation.

13 You have set a time for the mercy of the Lord, and you have appointed him a day, according to your pleasure.

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m Ps. 10. 6.

CHAP. 8. Ver. 1. *Simeon the son of Ruben.* In the Greek, it is *the son of Israel.* For Simeon the patriarch, from whom Judith descended, was not the son, but the brother of Ruben. It seems more probable that the Simeon and the Ruben here mentioned are not the patriarchs: but two of the descendants of the patriarch Simeon: and that the genealogy of Judith, recorded in this place, is not carried up so high as the patriarchs. No more than that of Elcana the father of Samuel, 1 Kings 1. 1, and that of king Saul, 1 Kings 9. 1.

14 But forasmuch as the Lord is patient, let us be penitent for this same thing, and with many tears let us beg his pardon:

15 For God will not threaten like man, nor be inflamed to anger like the son of man.

16 And therefore let us humble our souls before him, and continuing in an humble spirit, in his service:

17 Let us ask the Lord with tears, that according to his will so he would shew his mercy to us: that as our heart is troubled by their pride, so also we may glorify in our humility.

18 For we have not followed the sins of our fathers, who forsook their God, and worshipped strange gods.

19 For which crime they were given up to their enemies, to the sword, and to pillage, and to confusion: but we know no other God but him.

20 Let us humbly wait for his consolation, and the Lord our God will require our blood of the afflictions of our enemies, and he will humble all the nations that shall rise up against us, and bring them to disgrace.

21 And now, brethren, as you are the ancients among the people of God, and their very soul resteth upon you: comfort their hearts by your speech, that they may be mindful how our fathers were tempted that they might be proved, whether they worshipped their God truly.

22 [n] They must remember how our father Abraham was tempted, and being proved by many tribulations, was made the friend of God.

23 So Isaac, so Jacob, so Moses, and all that have pleased God, passed through many tribulations, remaining faithful.

24 But they that did not receive the trials with the fear of the Lord, but uttered their impatience and the reproach of their murmuring against the Lord,

25 [o] Were destroyed by the destroyer, and perished by serpents.

26 As for us therefore let us not revenge ourselves for these things which we suffer.

27 But esteeming these very punishments to be less than our sins deserve, let us believe that these scourges of the Lord, with which like servants we are chastised, have happened for our amendment, and not for our destruction.

28 And Ozias and the ancients said to her: All things which thou hast spoken are true, and there is nothing to be reprehended in thy words.

29 Now therefore pray for us, for thou art a holy woman, and one fearing God.

30 And Judith said to them: As you know that what I have been able to say is of God:

31 So that which I intend to do prove ye if it be of God, and pray that God may strengthen my design.

32 You shall stand at the gate this night, and I will go out with my maidservant: and pray ye, that as you have said, in five days the Lord may look down upon his people Israel.

33 But I desire that you search not into what I am doing, and till I bring you word let nothing else be done but to pray for me to the Lord our God.

34 And Ozias the prince of Juda said to her: Go in peace, and the Lord be with thee to take revenge of our enemies. So returning they departed.

CHAPTER 9.

Judith's prayer, to beg of God to fortify her in her undertaking.

AND when they were gone, Judith went into her oratory: and putting on haircloth, laid ashes on her head: and falling down prostrate before the Lord, she cried to the Lord, saying:

2 O Lord God of my father Simeon, [p] who gavest him a sword to execute vengeance against strangers, who had defiled by their uncleanness, and uncovered the virgin unto confusion:

3 And who gavest their wives to be made a prey, and their daughters into captivity: and all their spoils to be divided to thy servants, who were zealous with thy zeal: assist, I beseech thee, O Lord God, me a widow.

4 For thou hast done the things of old, and hast devised one thing after another:

n Gen. 22. 1. — *o* 1 Cor. 10. 9.

p Gen. 34. 26.

CHAP. 9. Ver. 2. *Gavest him a sword*, &c. The justice of God is here praised, in punishing by the sword of Simeon the crime of the Sichemites: and not the act of Simeon, which was justly condemned by his father, Gen. 49. 5. Though even with regard to this act, we may distinguish between his zeal against the crime committed by the ravishers of his sister, which zeal may be considered just: and the manner of his punishing that crime, which was irregular and excessive.

and what thou hast designed hath been done.

5 For all thy ways are prepared, and in thy providence thou hast placed thy judgments.

6 [q] Look upon the camp of the Assyrians now, as thou wast pleased to look upon the camp of the Egyptians, when they pursued armed after thy servants, trusting in their chariots, and in their horsemen, and in a multitude of warriors.

7 But thou lookedst over their camp, and darkness wearied them.

8 The deep held their feet, and the waters overwhelmed them.

9 So may it be with these also, O Lord, who trust in their multitude, and in their chariots, and in their pikes, and in their shields, and in their arrows, and glory in their spears,

10 And know not that thou art our God, who destroyest wars from the beginning, and the Lord is thy name.

11 Lift up thy arm as from the beginning, and crush their power with thy power: let their power fall in their wrath, who promise themselves to violate thy sanctuary, and defile the dwelling place of thy name, and to beat down with their sword the horn of thy altar.

12 Bring to pass, O Lord, that his pride may be cut off with his own sword.

13 Let him be caught in the net of his own eyes in my regard, and do thou strike him by the graces of the words of my lips.

14 Give me constancy in my mind, that I may despise him: and fortitude that I may overthrow him.

15 [r] For this will be a glorious monument for thy name, when he shall fall by the hand of a woman.

16 For thy power, O Lord, is not in a multitude, nor is thy pleasure in the strength of horses, nor from the beginning have the proud been acceptable to thee: but the prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased thee.

17 O God of the heavens, creator of the waters, and Lord of the whole creation, hear me a poor wretch, making supplication to thee, and presuming of thy mercy.

18 Remember, O Lord, thy covenant, and put thou words in my mouth, and strengthen the resolution in my heart, that thy house may continue in thy holiness:

19 And all nations may acknowledge that thou art God, and there is no other besides thee.

CHAPTER 10.

Judith goeth out towards the camp, and is taken, and brought to Holofernes.

AND it came to pass, when she had ceased to cry to the Lord, that she rose from the place wherein she lay prostrate before the Lord.

2 And she called her maid, and going down into her house she took off her haircloth, and put away the garments of her widowhood,

3 And she washed her body, and anointed herself with the best ointment, and plaited the hair of her head, and put a bonnet upon her head, and clothed herself with the garments of her gladness, and put sandals on her feet, and took her bracelets, and lilies, and earlets, and rings, and adorned herself with all her ornaments.

4 And the Lord also gave her more beauty: because all this dressing up did not proceed from sensuality, but from virtue: and therefore the Lord increased this her beauty, so that she appeared to all men's eyes incomparably lovely.

5 And she gave to her maid a bottle of wine to carry, and a vessel of oil, and parched corn, and dry figs, and bread and cheese, and went out.

6 And when they came to the gate of the city, they found Ozias, and the ancients of the city waiting.

7 And when they saw her they were astonished, and admired her beauty exceedingly.

8 But they asked her no question, only they let her pass, saying: The God of our fathers give thee grace, and may he strengthen all the counsel of thy heart with his power, that Jerusalem may glory in thee, and thy name may be in the number of the holy and just.

9 And they that were there said, all with one voice: So be it, so be it.

10 But Judith praying to the Lord, passed through the gates, she and her maid.

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q Ex. 14. 9.

r Judges 4. 21, and 5. 26.

11 And it came to pass, when she went down the hill, about break of day, that the watchmen of the Assyrians met her, and stopped her, saying: Whence comest thou? or whither goest thou?

12 And she answered: I am a daughter of the Hebrews, and I am fled from them, because I knew they would be made a prey to you, because they despised you, and would not of their own accord yield themselves, that they might find mercy in your sight.

13 For this reason I thought with myself, saying: I will go to the presence of the prince Holofernes, that I may tell him their secrets, and shew him by what way he may take them, without the loss of one man of his army.

14 And when the men had heard her words, they beheld her face, and their eyes were amazed, for they wondered exceedingly at her beauty.

15 And they said to her: Thou hast saved thy life by taking this resolution, to come down to our lord.

16 And be assured of this, that when thou shalt stand before him, he will treat thee well, and thou wilt be most acceptable to his heart. And they brought her to the tent of Holofernes, telling him of her.

17 And when she was come into his presence, forthwith Holofernes was caught by his eyes.

18 And his officers said to him: Who can despise the people of the Hebrews, who have such beautiful women, that we should not think it worth our while for their sakes to fight against them?

19 And Judith seeing Holofernes sitting under a canopy, which was woven of purple and gold, with emeralds and precious stones:

20 After she had looked on his face, bowed down to him, prostrating herself to the ground. And the servants of Holofernes lifted her up, by the command of their master.

CHAPTER 11.

Judith's speech to Holofernes.

THEN Holofernes said to her: Be of good comfort, and fear not in thy heart: for I have never hurt a man that was willing to serve Nabuchodonosor the king.

2 And if thy people had not despised me, I would never have lifted up my spear against them.

3 But now tell me, for what cause hast thou left them, and why it hath pleased thee to come to us?

4 And Judith said to him: Receive the words of thy handmaid, for if thou wilt follow the words of thy handmaid, the Lord will do with thee a perfect thing.

5 For as Nabuchodonosor the king of the earth liveth, and his power liveth which is in thee for chastising of all straying souls: not only men serve him through thee, but also the beasts of the field obey him.

6 For the industry of thy mind is spoken of among all nations, and it is told through the whole world, that thou only art excellent, and mighty in all his kingdom, and thy discipline is cried up in all provinces.

7 [s] It is known also what Achior said, nor are we ignorant of what thou hast commanded to be done to him.

8 For it is certain that our God is so offended with sins, that he hath sent word by his prophets to the people, that he will deliver them up for their sins.

9 And because the children of Israel know they have offended their God, thy dread is upon them.

10 Moreover also a famine hath come upon them, and for drought of water they are already to be counted among the dead.

11 And they have a design even to kill their cattle, and to drink the blood of them.

12 And the consecrated things of the Lord their God which God forbade them to touch, in corn, wine, and oil, these have they purposed to make use of, and they design to consume the things which they ought not to touch with their hands: therefore because they do these things, it is certain they will be given up to destruction.

13 And I thy handmaid knowing this,

CHAP. 10. Ver. 12. *Because I knew*, &c. In this and the following chapter, some things are related to have been said by Judith, which seem hard to reconcile with truth. But all that is related in scripture of the servants of God is not approved by the scripture; and even the saints in their good enterprises may sometimes slip into venial sins.

[s] Supra 5. 5.

am fled from them, and the Lord hath sent me to tell thee these very things.

14 For I thy handmaid worship God even now that I am with thee, and thy handmaid will go out, and I will pray to God,

15 And he will tell me when he will repay them for their sins, and I will come and tell thee, so that I may bring thee through the midst of Jerusalem, and thou shalt have all the people of Israel, as sheep that have no shepherd, and there shall not so much as one dog bark against thee:

16 Because these things are told me by the providence of God.

17 And because God is angry with them, I am sent to tell these very things to thee.

18 And all these words pleased Holofernes, and his servants, and they admired her wisdom, and they said one to another:

19 There is not such another woman upon earth in look, in beauty, and in sense of words.

20 And Holofernes said to her: God hath done well who sent thee before the people, that thou mightest give them into our hands:

21 And because thy promise is good, if thy God shall do this for me, he shall also be my God, and thou shalt be great in the house of Nabuchodonosor, and thy name shall be renowned through all the earth.

CHAPTER 12.

Judith goeth out in the night to pray: she is invited to a banquet with Holofernes.

THEN he ordered that she should go in where his treasures were laid up, and bade her tarry there, and he appointed what should be given her from his own table.

2 And Judith answered him and said: Now I cannot eat of these things which thou commandest to be given me, lest sin come upon me: but I will eat of the things which I have brought.

3 And Holofernes said to her: If these things which thou hast brought with thee fail thee, what shall we do for thee?

4 And Judith said: As thy soul liveth, my lord, thy handmaid shall not spend all these things till God do by my hand that which I have purposed. And his servants brought her into the tent which he had commanded.

5 And when she was going in, she desired that she might have liberty to go out at night and before day to prayer, and to beseech the Lord.

6 And he commanded his chamberlains, that she might go out and in, to adore her God as she pleased, for three days.

7 And she went out in the nights into the valley of Bethulia, and washed herself in a fountain of water.

8 And as she came up, she prayed to the Lord the God of Israel, that he would direct her way to the deliverance of his people.

9 And going in, she remained pure in the tent, until she took her own meat in the evening.

10 And it came to pass on the fourth day, that Holofernes made a supper for his servants, and said to Vagao his eunuch: Go, and persuade that Hebrew woman, to consent of her own accord to dwell with me.

11 For it is looked upon as shameful among the Assyrians, if a woman mock a man, by doing so as to pass free from him.

12 Then Vagao went in to Judith, and said: Let not my good maid be afraid to go in to my lord, that she may be honoured before his face, that she may eat with him and drink wine and be merry.

13 And Judith answered him: Who am I, that I should gainsay my lord?

14 All that shall be good and best before his eyes, I will do. And whatsoever shall please him, that shall be best to me all the days of my life.

15 And she arose and dressed herself out with her garments, and going in she stood before his face.

16 And the heart of Holofernes was smitten, for he was burning with the desire of her.

17 And Holofernes said to her: Drink now, and sit down and be merry; for thou hast found favour before me.

18 And Judith said: I will drink my lord, because my life is magnified this day above all my days.

19 And she took and ate and drank before him what her maid had prepared for her.

20 And Holofernes was made merry on her occasion, and drank exceeding much wine, so much as he had never drunk in his life.

CHAPTER 13.

Judith cutteth off the head of Holofernes, and returneth to Bethulia.

AND when it was grown late, his servants made haste to their lodgings, and Vagao shut the chamber doors, and went his way.

2 And they were all overcharged with wine.

3 And Judith was alone in the chamber.

4 But Holofernes lay on his bed, fast asleep, being exceedingly drunk.

5 And Judith spoke to her maid to stand without before the chamber, and to watch:

6 And Judith stood before the bed praying with tears, and the motion of her lips in silence,

7 Saying: Strengthen me, O Lord God of Israel, and in this hour look on the works of my hands, that as thou hast promised, thou mayst raise up Jerusalem thy city: and that I may bring to pass that which I have purposed, having a belief that it might be done by thee.

8 And when she had said this, she went to the pillar that was at his bed's head, and loosed his sword that hung tied upon it.

9 And when she had drawn it out, she took him by the hair of his head, and said: Strengthen me, O Lord God, at this hour.

10 And she struck twice upon his neck, and cut off his head, and took off his canopy from the pillars, and rolled away his headless body.

11 And after a while she went out, and delivered the head of Holofernes to her maid, and bade her put it into her wallet.

12 And they two went out according to their custom, as it were to prayer, and they passed the camp, and having compassed the valley, they came to the gate of the city.

13 And Judith from afar off cried to the watchmen upon the walls: Open the gates for God is with us, who hath shewn his power in Israel.

14 And it came to pass, when the men had heard her voice, that they called the ancients of the city.

15 And all ran to meet her from the least to the greatest: for they now had no hopes that she would come.

16 And lighting up lights they all gathered round about her: and she went up to a higher place, and commanded silence to be made. And when all had held their peace,

17 Judith said: Praise ye the Lord our God, who hath not forsaken them that hope in him.

18 And by me his handmaid he hath fulfilled his mercy, which he promised to the house of Israel: and he hath killed the enemy of his people by my hand this night.

19 Then she brought forth the head of Holofernes out of the wallet, and shewed it them, saying: Behold the head of Holofernes the general of the army of the Assyrians, and behold his canopy, wherein he lay in his drunkenness, where the Lord our God slew him by the hand of a woman.

20 But as the same Lord liveth, his angel hath been my keeper both going hence, and abiding there, and returning from thence hither: and the Lord hath not suffered me his handmaid to be defiled, but hath brought me back to you without pollution of sin, rejoicing for his victory, for my escape, and for your deliverance.

21 [t] Give all of you glory to him, because he is good, because his mercy endureth for ever.

22 And they all adored the Lord, and said to her: The Lord hath blessed thee by his power, because by thee he hath brought our enemies to nought.

23 And Ozias the prince of the people of Israel, said to her: Blessed art thou, O daughter, by the Lord the most high God, above all women upon the earth.

24 Blessed be the Lord who made heaven and earth, who hath directed thee to the cutting off the head of the prince of our enemies.

25 Because he hath so magnified thy name this day, that thy praise shall not depart out of the mouth of men who shall be mindful of the power of the Lord for ever, for that thou hast not spared thy life, by reason of the distress and tribulation of thy people, but hast prevented our ruin in the presence of our God.

26 And all the people said: So be it, so be it.

27 And Achior being called for came,

[t] Ps. 105. 1, and 106. 1.

and Judith said to him: The God of Israel, to whom thou gavest testimony, that he revengeth himself of his enemies, he hath cut off the head of all the unbelievers this night by my hand.

28 And that thou mayst find that it is so, behold the head of Holofernes, who in the contempt of his pride despised the God of Israel: and threatened them with death, saying: When the people of Israel shall be taken, I will command thy sides to be pierced with a sword.

29 Then Achior seeing the head of Holofernes, being seized with a great fear he fell on his face upon the earth, and his soul swooned away.

30 But after he had recovered his spirits he fell down at her feet, and reverenced her, and said:

31 Blessed art thou by thy God in every tabernacle of Jacob, for in every nation which shall hear thy name, the God of Israel shall be magnified on occasion of thee.

CHAPTER 14.

The Israelites assault the Assyrians, who finding their general slain, are seized with a panic fear.

AND Judith said to all the people: Hear me, my brethren, hang ye up this head upon our walls.

2 And as soon as the sun shall rise, let every man take his arms, and rush ye out, not as going down beneath, but as making an assault.

3 Then the watchmen must needs run to awake their prince for the battle.

4 And when the captains of them shall run to the tent of Holofernes, and shall find him without his head wallowing in his blood, fear shall fall upon them.

5 And when you shall know that they are fleeing, go after them securely, for the Lord will destroy them under your feet.

6 Then Achior seeing the power that the God of Israel had wrought, leaving the religion of the Gentiles, he believed God, and circumcised the flesh of his foreskin, and was joined to the people of Israel, with all the succession of his kindred until this present day.

7 And immediately at break of day, they hung up the head of Holofernes upon the walls, and every man took his arms, and they went out with a great noise and shouting.

8 And the watchmen seeing this, ran to the tent of Holofernes.

9 And they that were in the tent came and made a noise before the door of the chamber to awake him, endeavouring by art to break his rest, that Holofernes might awake, not by their calling him, but by their noise.

10 For no man durst knock, or open and go into the chamber of the general of the Assyrians.

11 But when his captains and tribunes were come, and all the chiefs of the army of the king of the Assyrians, they said to the chamberlains:

12 Go in, and awake him, for the mice, coming out of their holes, have presumed to challenge us to fight.

13 Then Vagao going into his chamber, stood before the curtain, and made a clapping with his hands: for he thought that he was sleeping with Judith.

14 But when with hearkening, he perceived no motion of one lying, he came near to the curtain, and lifting it up, and seeing the body of Holofernes, lying upon the ground, without the head, weltering in his blood, he cried out with a loud voice, with weeping, and rent his garments.

15 And he went into the tent of Judith, and not finding her, he ran out to the people,

16 And said: One Hebrew woman hath made confusion in the house of king Nabuchodonosor: for behold Holofernes lieth upon the ground, and his head is not upon him.

17 Now when the chiefs of the army of the Assyrians had heard this, they all rent their garments, and an intolerable fear and dread fell upon them, and their minds were troubled exceedingly.

18 And there was a very great cry in the midst of their camp.

CHAPTER 15.

The Assyrians flee: the Hebrews pursue after them, and are enriched by their spoils.

AND when all the army heard that Holofernes was beheaded, courage and counsel fled from them, and being seized with trembling and fear they thought only to save themselves by flight:

2 So that no one spoke to his neighbour, but hanging down the head, leaving all things behind, they made haste to escape from the Hebrews, who, as they heard.

were coming armed upon them, and fled by the ways of the fields, and the paths of the hills.

3 So the children of Israel seeing them fleeing, followed after them. And they went down sounding with trumpets and shouting after them.

4 And because the Assyrians were not united together, they went without order in their flight; but the children of Israel pursuing in one body, defeated all that they could find.

5 And Ozias sent messengers through all the cities and countries of Israel.

6 And every country, and every city, sent their chosen young men armed after them, and they pursued them with the edge of the sword until they came to the extremities of their confines.

7 And the rest that were in Bethulia went into the camp of the Assyrians, and took away the spoils which the Assyrians in their flight had left behind them, and they were laden exceedingly.

8 But they that returned conquerors to Bethulia, brought with them all things that were theirs, so that there was no numbering of their cattle, and beasts, and all their moveables, insomuch that from the least to the greatest all were made rich by their spoils.

9 And Joachim the high priest came from Jerusalem to Bethulia with all his ancients to see Judith.

10 And when she was come out to him, they all blessed her with one voice, saying: Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people:

11 For thou hast done manfully, and thy heart has been strengthened, because thou hast loved chastity, and after thy husband hast not known any other: therefore also the hand of the Lord hath strengthened thee, and therefore thou shalt be blessed for ever.

12 And all the people said: So be it, so be it.

13 And thirty days were scarce sufficient for the people of Israel to gather up the spoils of the Assyrians.

14 But all those things that were proved to be the peculiar goods of Holofernes, they gave to Judith in gold, and silver, and garments and precious stones, and all household stuff, and they all were delivered to her by the people.

15 And all the people rejoiced, with the women, and virgins, and young men, playing on instruments and harps.

CHAPTER 16.

The canticle of Judith: her virtuous life and death.

THEN Judith sung this canticle to the Lord, saying:

2 Begin ye to the Lord with timbrels, sing ye to the Lord with cymbals, tune unto him a new psalm, extol and call upon his name.

3 The Lord putteth an end to wars, the Lord is his name.

4 He hath set his camp in the midst of his people, to deliver us from the hand of all our enemies.

5 The Assyrian came out of the mountains from the north in the multitude of his strength: his multitude stopped up the torrents, and their horses covered the valleys.

6 He bragged that he would set my borders on fire, and kill my young men with the sword, to make my infants a prey, and my virgins captives.

7 But the almighty Lord hath struck him, and hath delivered him into the hands of a woman, and hath slain him.

8 For their mighty one did not fall by young men, neither did the sons of Titan strike him, nor tall giants oppose themselves to him, but Judith the daughter of Merari weakened him with the beauty of her face.

9 For she put off her the garments of widowhood, and put on her the garments of joy, to give joy to the children of Israel.

10 She anointed her face with ointment, and bound up her locks with a crown, she took a new robe to deceive him.

11 Her sandals ravished his eyes, her beauty made his soul her captive, with a sword she cut off his head.

12 The Persians quaked at her constancy, and the Medes at her boldness.

13 Then the camp of the Assyrians howled, when my lowly ones appeared, parched with thirst.

14 The sons of the damsels have pierced them through, and they have killed them like children fleeing away: they perished in battle before the face of the Lord my God.

15 Let us sing a hymn to the Lord, let us sing a new hymn to our God.

16 O Adonai, Lord, great art thou, and glorious in thy power, and no one can overcome thee.

17 [u] Let all thy creatures serve thee: because thou hast spoken, and they were made: thou didst send forth thy spirit, and they were created, and there is no one that can resist thy voice.

18 The mountains shall be moved from the foundations with the waters: the rocks shall melt as wax before thy face.

19 But they that fear thee, shall be great with thee in all things.

20 Woe be to the nation that riseth up against my people: for the Lord almighty will take revenge on them, in the day of judgment he will visit them.

21 For he will give fire, and worms into their flesh, that they may burn, and may feel for ever.

22 And it came to pass after these things, that all the people, after the victory, came to Jerusalem to adore the Lord: and as soon as they were purified, they all offered holocausts, and vows, and their promises.

23 And Judith offered for an anathema of oblivion all the arms of Holofernes, which the people gave her, and the canopy that she had taken away out of his chamber.

24 And the people were joyful in the sight of the sanctuary, and for three months the joy of this victory was celebrated with Judith.

25 And after those days every man returned to his house, and Judith was made great in Bethulia, and she was most renowned in all the land of Israel.

26 And chastity was joined to her virtue, so that she knew no man all the days of her life, after the death of Manasses her husband.

27 And on festival days she came forth with great glory.

28 And she abode in her husband's house a hundred and five years, and made her handmaid free, and she died, and was buried with her husband in Bethulia.

29 And all the people mourned for seven days.

30 And all the time of her life there was none that troubled Israel, nor many years after her death.

31 But the day of the festivity of this victory is received by the Hebrews in the number of holy days, and is religiously observed by the Jews from that time until this day.

THE

BOOK OF ESTHER.

This Book takes its name from queen Esther, whose history is here recorded. The first part 1. 1-10. 3 *was written in Hebrew; the rest has been preserved only in Greek, whatever be its original language. Some of the sources probably go back to Persia, perhaps to Mardochai as may be gathered from chap.* 9. *ver.* 20.

CHAPTER 1.

King Assuerus maketh a great feast. Queen Vasthi being sent for refuseth to come: for which disobedience she is deposed.

IN the days of Assuerus, who reigned from India to Ethiopia over a hundred and twenty-seven provinces:

2 When he sat on the throne of his kingdom, the city Susan was the capital of his kingdom.

3 Now in the third year [v] of his reign he made a great feast for all the princes, and for his servants, for the most mighty of the Persians, and the nobles of the Medes, and the governors of the provinces in his sight,

4 That he might shew the riches of the glory of his kingdom, and the greatness, and boasting of his power, for a long time, to wit, for a hundred and fourscore days.

5 And when the days of the feast were

[u] Ps. 32. 9.

[v] B. C. 483.

CHAP. 16. Ver. 23. *An anathema of oblivion.* That is, a gift or offering made to God, by way of an everlasting monument, to prevent the oblivion of forgetting so great a benefit.

CHAP. 1. Ver. 1. *Assuerus,* from the Persian name rendered usually Xerses. It is question of Xerses I son of Darius I.

expired, he invited all the people that were found in Susan, from the greatest to the least: and commanded a feast to be made seven days in the court of the garden, and of the wood, which was planted by the care and the hand of the king.

6 And there were hung up on every side sky coloured, and green, and violet hangings, fastened with cords of silk, and of purple, which were put into rings of ivory, and were held up with marble pillars. The beds also were of gold and silver, placed in order upon a floor paved with porphyry and white marble: which was embellished with painting of wonderful variety.

7 And they that were invited, drank in golden cups, and the meats were brought in divers vessels one after another. Wine also in abundance and of the best was presented, as was worthy of a king's magnificence.

8 Neither was there any one to compel them to drink that were not willing, but as the king had appointed, who set over every table one of his nobles, that every man might take what he would.

9 Also Vasthi the queen made a feast for the women in the palace, where king Assuerus was used to dwell.

10 Now on the seventh day, when the king was merry, and after very much drinking was well warmed with wine, he commanded Mauman, and Bazatha, and Harbona, and Bagatha, and Abgatha, and Zethar, and Charcas, the seven eunuchs that served in his presence,

11 To bring in queen Vasthi before the king, with the crown set upon her head, to shew her beauty to all the people and the princes: for she was exceeding beautiful.

12 But she refused, and would not come at the king's commandment, which he had signified to her by the eunuchs. Whereupon the king, being angry, and inflamed with a very great fury,

13 Asked the wise men, who according to the custom of the kings, were always near his person, and all he did was by their counsel, who knew the laws, and judgments of their forefathers:

14 (Now the chief and nearest him were, Charsena, and Sethar, and Admatha, and Tharsis, and Mares, and Marsana, and Mamuchan, seven princes of the Persians, and of the Medes, who saw the face of the king, and were used to sit first after him:)

15 What sentence ought to pass upon Vasthi the queen, who had refused to obey the commandment of king Assuerus, which he had sent to her by the eunuchs?

16 And Mamuchan answered, in the hearing of the king and the princes: Queen Vasthi hath not only injured the king, but also all the people and princes that are in all the provinces of king Assuerus.

17 For this deed of the queen will go abroad to all women, so that they will despise their husbands, and will say: King Assuerus commanded that queen Vasthi should come in to him, and she would not.

18 And by this example all the wives of the princes of the Persians and the Medes will slight the commandments of their husbands: wherefore the king's indignation is just.

19 If it please thee, le an edict go out from thy presence, and let it be written according to the law of the Persians and of the Medes, which must not be altered, that Vasthi come in no more to the king, but another, that is better than her, be made queen in her place.

20 And let this be published through all the provinces of thy empire, (which is very wide,) and let all wives, as well of the greater as of the lesser, give honour to their husbands.

21 His counsel pleased the king, and the princes: and the king did according to the counsel of Mamuchan.

22 And he sent letters to all the provinces of his kingdom, as every nation could hear and read, in divers languages and characters, that the husbands should be rulers and masters in their houses: and that this should be published to every people.

CHAPTER 2.

Esther is advanced to be queen. Mardochai detecteth a plot against the king.

AFTER this, when the wrath of king Assuerus was appeased, he remembered Vasthi, and what she had done and what she had suffered:

2 And the king's servants and his officers said: Let young women be sought for the king, virgins and beautiful.

3 And let some persons be sent through

all the provinces to look for beautiful maidens and virgins, and let them bring them to the city of Susan, and put them into the house of the women under the hand of Egeus the eunuch, who is the overseer and keeper of the king's women: and let them receive women's ornaments, and other things necessary for their use.

4 And whosoever among them all shall please the king's eyes, let her be queen instead of Vasthi. The word pleased the king: and he commanded it should be done as they had suggested.

5 There was a man in the city of Susan, a Jew, named Mardochai, [w] the son of Jair, the son of Semei, the son of Cis, of the race of Jemini,

6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem at the time that Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon carried away [x] Jechonias king of Juda,

7 And he had brought up his brother's daughter Edissa, who by another name was called Esther: now she had lost both her parents: and was exceeding fair and beautiful. And her father and mother being dead, Mardochai adopted her for his daughter.

8 And when the king's ordinance was noised abroad, and according to his commandment many beautiful virgins were brought to Susan, and were delivered to Egeus the eunuch: Esther also among the rest of the maidens was delivered to him to be kept in the number of the women.

9 And she pleased him, and found favour in his sight. And he commanded the eunuch to hasten the women's ornaments, and to deliver to her her part, and seven of the most beautiful maidens of the king's house, and to adorn and deck out both her and her waiting maids.

10 And she would not tell him her people nor her country. For Mardochai had charged her to say nothing at all of that:

11 And he walked every day before the court of the house, in which the chosen virgins were kept, having a care for Esther's welfare, and desiring to know what would befall her.

12 Now when every virgin's turn came to go in to the king, after all had been done for setting them off to advantage, it was the twelfth month: so that for six months they were anointed with oil of myrrh, and for other six months they used certain perfumes and sweet spices.

13 And when they were going in to the king, whatsoever they asked to adorn themselves they received: and being decked out, as it pleased them, they passed from the chamber of the women to the king's chamber.

14 And she that went in at evening, came out in the morning, and from thence she was conducted to the second house, that was under the hand of Susagaz the eunuch, who had the charge over the king's concubines: neither could she return any more to the king, unless the king desired it, and had ordered her by name to come.

15 And as the time came orderly about, the day was at hand, when Esther, the daughter of Abihail the brother of Mardochai, whom he had adopted for his daughter, was to go in to the king. But she sought not women's ornaments, but whatsoever Egeus the eunuch the keeper of the virgins had a mind, he gave her to adorn her. For she was exceeding fair, and her incredible beauty made her appear agreeable and amiable in the eyes of all.

16 So she was brought to the chamber of king Assuerus the tenth month, which is called Tebeth, in the seventh year [y] of his reign.

17 And the king loved her more than all the women, and she had favour and kindness before him above all the women, and he set the royal crown on her head, and made her queen instead of Vasthi.

18 And he commanded a magnificent feast to be prepared for all the princes, and for his servants, for the marriage and wedding of Esther. And he gave rest to all the provinces, and bestowed gifts according to princely magnificence.

19 And when the virgins were sought the second time, and gathered together, Mardochai stayed at the king's gate,

20 Neither had Esther as yet declared her country and people, according to his commandment. For whatsoever he commanded, Esther observed: and she did all things in the same manner as she was wont at that time when he brought her up a little one.

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w Infra 11. 2. — *x* 4 Kings 24. 15: Infra 11. 4.

21 At that time, therefore, when Mardochai abode at the king's gate, Bagathan and Thares, two of the king's eunuchs, who were porters, and presided in the first entry of the palace, were angry: and they designed to rise up against the king, and to kill him.

22 And Mardochai had notice of it, and immediately he told it to queen Esther: and she to the king in Mardochai's name, who had reported the thing unto her.

23 It was inquired into, and found out: and they were both hanged on a gibbet. And it was put in the histories, and recorded in the chronicles before the king.

CHAPTER 3.

Aman, advanced by the king, is offended at Mardochai, and therefore procureth the king's decree to destroy the whole nation of the Jews.

AFTER these things, king Assuerus advanced Aman, the son of Amadathi, who was of the race of Agag: and he set his throne above all the princes that were with him.

2 And all the king's servants, that were at the doors of the palace, bent their knees, and worshipped Aman; for so the emperor had commanded them, only Mardochai did not bend his knee, nor worship him.

3 And the king's servants that were chief at the doors of the palace, said to him: Why dost thou alone not observe the king's commandment?

4 And when they were saying this often, and he would not hearken to them, they told Aman, desirous to know whether he would continue in his resolution: for he had told them that he was a Jew.

5 Now when Aman had heard this, and had proved by experience that Mardochai did not bend his knee to him, nor worship him, he was exceeding angry.

6 And he counted it nothing to lay his hands upon Mardochai alone: for he had heard that he was of the nation of the Jews, and he chose rather to destroy all the nation of the Jews that were in the kingdom of Assuerus.

7 In the first month (which is called Nisan) in the twelfth year of the reign of Assuerus, the lot was cast into an urn, which in Hebrew is called Phur, before Aman, on what day and what month the nation of the Jews should be destroyed: and there came out the twelfth month, which is called Adar.

8 And Aman said to king Assuerus: There is a people scattered through all the provinces of thy kingdom, and separated one from another, that use new laws and ceremonies, and moreover despise the king's ordinances: and thou knowest very well that it is not expedient for thy kingdom that they should grow insolent by impunity.

9 If it please thee, decree that they may be destroyed, and I will pay ten thousand talents to thy treasurers.

10 And the king took the ring that he used, from his own hand, and gave it to Aman, the son of Amadathi of the race of Agag, the enemy of the Jews,

11 And he said to him: As to the money which thou promisest, keep it for thyself: and as to the people, do with them as seemeth good to thee.

12 And the king's scribes were called in the first month Nisan, on the thirteenth day of the same month: and they wrote, as Aman had commanded, to all the king's lieutenants, and to the judges of the provinces, and of divers nations, as every nation could read, and hear according to their different languages, in the name of king Assuerus: and the letters, sealed with his ring,

13 Were sent by the king's messengers to all provinces, to kill and destroy all the Jews, both young and old, little children, and women, in one day, that is, on the thirteenth of the twelfth month, which is called Adar, and to make a spoil of their goods.

14 And the contents of the letters were to this effect, that all provinces might know and be ready against that day.

15 The couriers that were sent made haste to fulfil the king's commandment. And immediately the edict was hung up in Susan, the king and Aman feasting together, and all the Jews that were in the city weeping.

CHAPTER 4.

Mardochai desireth Esther to petition the king for the Jews. They join in fasting and prayer.

NOW when Mardochai had heard these things, he rent his garments, and put on sackcloth, strewing ashes on his

head: and he cried with a loud voice in the street in the midst of the city, shewing the anguish of his mind.

2 And he came lamenting in this manner even to the gate of the palace: for no one clothed with sackcloth might enter the king's court.

3 And in all provinces, towns, and places, to which the king's cruel edict was come, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, wailing, and weeping, many using sackcloth and ashes for their bed.

4 Then Esther's maids and her eunuchs went in, and told her. And when she heard it she was in a consternation: and she sent a garment, to clothe him, and to take away the sackcloth: but he would not receive it.

5 And she called for Athach the eunuch, whom the king had appointed to attend upon her, and she commanded him to go to Mardochai, and learn of him why he did this.

6 And Athach going out went to Mardochai, who was standing in the street of the city, before the palace gate:

7 And Mardochai told him all that had happened, how Aman had promised to pay money into the king's treasures, to have the Jews destroyed.

8 He gave him also a copy of the edict which was hanging up in Susan, that he should shew it to the queen, and admonish her to go in to the king, and to entreat him for her people.

9 And Athach went back and told Esther all that Mardochai had said.

10 She answered him, and bade him say to Mardochai:

11 All the king's servants, and all the provinces that are under his dominion, know, that whosoever, whether man or woman, cometh into the king's inner court, who is not called for, is immediately to be put to death without any delay: except the king shall hold out the golden sceptre to him, in token of clemency, that so he may live. How then can I go in to the king, who for these thirty days now have not been called unto him?

12 And when Mardochai had heard this,

13 He sent word to Esther again, saying: Think not that thou mayst save thy life only, because thou art in the king's house, more than all the Jews:

14 For if thou wilt now hold thy peace, the Jews shall be delivered by some other occasion: and thou, and thy father's house shall perish. And who knoweth whether thou art not therefore come to the kingdom, that thou mightest be ready in such a time as this?

15 And again Esther sent to Mardochai in these words:

16 Go, and gather together all the Jews whom thou shalt find in Susan, and pray ye for me. Neither eat nor drink for three days and three nights: and I with my handmaids will fast in like manner, and then I will go in to the king, against the law, not being called, and expose myself to death and to danger.

17 So Mardochai went, and did all that Esther had commanded him.

CHAPTER 5.

Esther is graciously received: she inviteth the king and Aman to dinner. Aman prepareth a gibbet for Mardochai.

AND on the third day Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's hall: now he sat upon his throne in the hall of the palace, over against the door of the house.

2 And when he saw Esther the queen standing, she pleased his eyes, and he held out toward her the golden sceptre, which he held in his hand: and she drew near, and kissed the top of his sceptre.

3 And the king said to her: What wilt thou, queen Esther? what is thy request? if thou shouldst even ask one half of the kingdom, it shall be given to thee.

4 But she answered: If it please the king, I beseech thee to come to me this day, and Aman with thee to the banquet which I have prepared.

5 And the king said forthwith: Call ye Aman quickly, that he may obey Esther's will. So the king and Aman came to the banquet which the queen had prepared for them.

6 And the king said to her, after he had drunk wine plentifully: What dost thou desire should be given thee? and for what thing askest thou? although thou shouldst ask the half of my kingdom, thou shalt have it.

7 And Esther answered: My petition and request is this:

8 If I have found favour in the king's sight, and if it please the king to give me what I ask, and to fulfil my petition: let the king and Aman come to the banquet which I have prepared them, and to morrow I will open my mind to the king.

9 So Aman went out that day joyful and merry. And when he saw Mardochai sitting before the gate of the palace, and that he not only did not rise up to honour him, but did not so much as move from the place where he sat, he was exceedingly angry:

10 But dissembling his anger, and returning into his house, he called together to him his friends, and Zares his wife:

11 And he declared to them the greatness of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and with how great glory the king had advanced him above all his princes and servants.

12 And after this he said: Queen Esther also hath invited no other to the banquet with the king, but me: and with her I am also to dine to morrow with the king:

13 And whereas I have all these things, I think I have nothing, so long as I see Mardochai the Jew sitting before the king's gate.

14 Then Zares his wife, and the rest of his friends answered him: Order a great beam to be prepared, fifty cubits high, and in the morning speak to the king, that Mardochai may be hanged upon it, and so thou shalt go full of joy with the king to the banquet. The counsel pleased him, and he commanded a high gibbet to be prepared.

CHAPTER 6.

The king hearing of the good service done him by Mardochai, commandeth Aman to honour him next to the king, which he performeth.

THAT night the king passed without sleep, and he commanded the histories and chronicles of former times to be brought him. And when they were reading them before him,

2 They came to that place where it was written, how Mardochai had discovered the treason of Bagathan and Thares the eunuchs, who sought to kill king Assuerus.

3 And when the king heard this, he said: What honour and reward hath Mardochai received for this fidelity? His servants and ministers said to him: He hath received no reward at all.

4 And the king said immediately: Who is in the court? for Aman was coming in to the inner court of the king's house, to speak to the king, that he might order Mardochai to be hanged upon the gibbet which was prepared for him.

5 The servants answered: Aman standeth in the court, and the king said: Let him come in.

6 And when he was come in, he said to him: What ought to be done to the man whom the king is desirous to honour? But Aman thinking in his heart, and supposing that the king would honour no other but himself,

7 Answered: The man whom the king desireth to honour,

8 Ought to be clothed with the king's apparel, and to be set upon the horse that the king rideth upon, and to have the royal crown upon his head,

9 And let the first of the king's princes and nobles hold his horse, and going through the street of the city, proclaim before him and say: Thus shall he be honoured, whom the king hath a mind to honour.

10 And the king said to him: Make haste and take the robe and the horse, and do as thou hast spoken to Mardochai the Jew, who sitteth before the gates of the palace. Beware thou pass over any of those things which thou hast spoken.

11 So Aman took the robe and the horse, and arraying Mardochai in the street of the city, and setting him on the horse, went before him, and proclaimed: This honour is he worthy of, whom the king hath a mind to honour.

12 But Mardochai returned to the palace gate: and Aman made haste to go to his house, mourning and having his head covered:

13 And he told Zares his wife, and his friends, all that had befallen him. And the wise men whom he had in counsel, and his wife answered him: If Mardochai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou canst

CHAP. 6. VER. 3. *No reward at all.* He received some presents from the king, chap. 12. 5; but these were so inconsiderable in the opinion of the courtiers, that they esteemed them as nothing at all.

not resist him, but thou shalt fall in his sight.

14 As they were yet speaking, the king's eunuchs came, and compelled him to go quickly to the banquet which the queen had prepared.

CHAPTER 7.

Esther's petition for herself and her people: Aman is hanged upon the gibbet he had prepared for Mardochai.

SO the king and Aman went in, to drink with the queen.

2 And the king said to her again the second day, after he was warm with wine: What is thy petition, Esther, that it may be granted thee? and what wilt thou have done: although thou ask the half of my kingdom, thou shalt have it.

3 Then she answered: If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please thee, give me my life for which I ask, and my people for which I request.

4 For we are given up, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. And would God we were sold for bondmen and bondwomen: the evil might be borne with, and I would have mourned in silence: but now we have an enemy, whose cruelty redoundeth upon the king.

5 And king Assuerus answered and said: Who is this, and of what power, that he should do these things?

6 And Esther said: It is this Aman that is our adversary and most wicked enemy. Aman hearing this was forthwith astonished, not being able to bear the countenance of the king and of the queen.

7 But the king being angry rose up, and went from the place of the banquet into the garden set with trees. Aman also rose up to entreat Esther the queen for his life, for he understood that evil was prepared for him by the king.

8 And when the king came back out of the garden set with trees, and entered into the place of the banquet, he found Aman was fallen upon the bed on which Esther lay, and he said: He will force the queen also in my presence, in my own house. The word was not yet gone out of the king's mouth, and immediately they covered his face.

9 And Harbona, one of the eunuchs that stood waiting on the king, said: Behold the gibbet which he hath prepared for Mardochai, who spoke for the king, standeth in Aman's house, being fifty cubits high. And the king said to him: Hang him upon it.

10 So Aman was hanged on the gibbet, which he had prepared for Mardochai: and the king's wrath ceased.

CHAPTER 8.

Mardochai is advanced: Aman's letters are reversed.

ON that day king Assuerus gave the house of Aman, the Jews' enemy, to queen Esther, and Mardochai came in before the king. For Esther had confessed to him that he was her uncle.

2 And the king took the ring which he had commanded to be taken again from Aman, and gave it to Mardochai. And Esther set Mardochai over her house.

3 And not content with these things, she fell down at the king's feet and wept, and speaking to him besought him, that he would give orders that the malice of Aman the Agagite, and his most wicked devices which he had invented against the Jews, should be of no effect.

4 But he, as the manner was, held out the golden sceptre with his hand, which was the sign of clemency: and she arose up and stood before him,

5 And said: If it please the king, and if I have found favour in his sight, and my request be not disagreeable to him, I beseech thee, that the former letters of Aman the traitor and enemy of the Jews, by which he commanded that they should be destroyed in all the king's provinces, may be reversed by new letters.

6 For how can I endure the murdering and slaughter of my people?

7 And king Assuerus answered Esther the queen, and Mardochai the Jew: I have given Aman's house to Esther, and I have commanded him to be hanged on a gibbet, because he durst lay hands on the Jews.

8 Write ye therefore to the Jews, as it pleaseth you, in the king's name, and seal the letters with my ring. For this was the custom, that no man durst gainsay the letters which were sent in the king's name, and were sealed with his ring.

9 Then the king's scribes and secretaries were called for (now it was the time of the third month which is called Siban) the three and twentieth day of the month, and letters were written, as Mardochai had a mind, to the Jews, and to the governors, and to the deputies, and to the judges, who were rulers over the hundred and twenty-seven provinces, from India even to Ethiopia: to province and province, to people and people, according to their languages and characters, and to the Jews, according as they could read and hear.

10 And these letters which were sent in the king's name, were sealed with his ring, and sent by posts: who were to run through all the provinces, to prevent the former letters with new messages.

11 And the king gave orders to them, to speak to the Jews in every city, and to command them to gather themselves together, and to stand for their lives, and to kill and destroy all their enemies with their wives and children and all their houses, and to take their spoil.

12 And one day of revenge was appointed through all the provinces, to wit, the thirteenth of the twelfth month Adar.

13 And this was the content of the letter, that it should be notified in all lands and peoples that were subject to the empire of king Assuerus, that the Jews were ready to be revenged of their enemies.

14 So the swift posts went out carrying the messages, and the king's edict was hung up in Susan.

15 And Mardochai going forth out of the palace, and from the king's presence, shone in royal apparel, to wit, of violet and sky colour, wearing a golden crown on his head, and clothed with a cloak of silk and purple. And all the city rejoiced and was glad.

16 But to the Jews a new light seemed to rise, joy, honour, and dancing.

17 And in all peoples, cities, and provinces, whithersoever the king's commandments came, there was wonderful rejoicing, feasts and banquets, and keeping holy day: insomuch that many of other nations and religion, joined themselves to their worship and ceremonies. For a great dread of the name of the Jews had fallen upon all.

CHAPTER 9.

The Jews kill their enemies that would have killed them. The days of Phurim are appointed to be kept holy.

SO on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which as we have said above is called Adar, when all the Jews were designed to be massacred, and their enemies were greedy after their blood, the case being altered, the Jews began to have the upper hand, and to revenge themselves of their adversaries.

2 And they gathered themselves together in every city, and town, and place, to lay their hands on their enemies, and their persecutors. And no one durst withstand them, for the fear of their power had gone through every people.

3 And the judges of the provinces, and the governors, and lieutenants, and every one in dignity, that presided over every place and work, extolled the Jews for fear of Mardochai:

4 For they knew him to be prince of the palace, and to have great power: and the fame of his name increased daily, and was spread abroad through all men's mouths.

5 So the Jews made a great slaughter of their enemies, and killed them, repaying according to what they had prepared to do to them:

6 Insomuch that even in Susan they killed five hundred men, besides the ten sons of Aman the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews: whose names are these:

7 Pharsandatha, and Delphon, and Esphatha,

8 And Phoratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,

9 And Phermesta, and Arisai, and Aridai, and Jezatha.

10 And when they had slain them, they would not touch the spoils of their goods.

11 And presently the number of them that were killed in Susan was brought to the king.

12 And he said to the queen: The Jews have killed five hundred men in the city

CHAP 9. Ver. 1. *To revenge*, &c. The Jews on this occasion, by authority from the king, were made executioners of the public justice, for punishing by death a crime worthy of death, viz., a malicious conspiracy for extirpating their whole nation.

of Susan, besides the ten sons of Aman: now many dost thou think they have slain in all the provinces? What askest thou more, and what wilt thou have me to command to be done?

13 And she answered: If it please the king, let it be granted to the Jews, to do to morrow in Susan as they have done to day, and that the ten sons of Aman may be hanged upon gibbets.

14 And the king commanded that it should be so done. And forthwith the edict was hung up in Susan, and the ten sons of Aman were hanged.

15 And on the fourteenth day of the month Adar the Jews gathered themselves together, and they killed in Susan three hundred men: but they took not their substance.

16 Moreover through all the provinces which were subject to the king's dominion the Jews stood for their lives, and slew their enemies and persecutors: insomuch that the number of them that were killed amounted to seventy-five thousand, and no man took any of their goods.

17 Now the thirteenth day of the month Adar was the first day with them all of the slaughter, and on the fourteenth day they left off. Which they ordained to be kept holy day, so that all times hereafter they should celebrate it with feasting, joy, and banquets.

18 But they that were killing in the city of Susan, were employed in the slaughter on the thirteenth and fourteenth day of the same month: and on the fifteenth day they rested. And therefore they appointed that day to be a holy day of feasting and gladness.

19 But those Jews that dwelt in towns not walled and in villages, appointed the fourteenth day of the month Adar for banquets and gladness, so as to rejoice on that day, and send one another portions of their banquets and meats.

20 And Mardochai wrote all these things, and sent them comprised in letters to the Jews that abode in all the king's provinces, both those that lay near and those afar off,

21 That they should receive the fourteenth and fifteenth day of the month Adar for holy days, and always at the return of the year should celebrate them with solemn honour:

22 Because on those days the Jews revenged themselves of their enemies, and their mourning and sorrow were turned into mirth and joy, and that these should be days of feasting and gladness, in which they should send one to another portions of meats, and should give gifts to the poor.

23 And the Jews undertook to observe with solemnity all they had begun to do at that time, which Mardochai by letters had commanded to be done.

24 For Aman, the son of Amadathi of the race of Agag, the enemy and adversary of the Jews, had devised evil against them, to kill them and destroy them: and had cast Phur, that is, the lot.

25 And afterwards Esther went in to the king, beseeching him that his endeavours might be made void by the king's letters: and the evil that he had intended against the Jews, might return upon his own head. And so both he and his sons were hanged upon gibbets.

26 And since that time these days are called Phurim, that is, of lots: because Phur, that is, the lot, was cast into the urn. And all things that were done, are contained in the volume of this epistle, that is, of this book:

27 And the things that they suffered, and that were afterwards changed, the Jews took upon themselves and their seed, and upon all that had a mind to be joined to their religion, so that it should be lawful for none to pass these days without solemnity: which the writing testifieth, and certain times require, as the years continually succeed one another.

28 These are the days which shall never be forgot: and which all provinces in the whole world shall celebrate throughout all generations: neither is there any city wherein the days of Phurim, that is, of lots, must not be observed by the Jews, and by their posterity, which is bound to these ceremonies.

29 And Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mardochai the Jew, wrote also a second epistle, that with all diligence this day should be established a festival for the time to come.

30 And they sent to all the Jews that were in the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of king Assuerus, that they should have peace, and receive truth,

31 And observe the days of lots, and celebrate them with joy in their proper time: as Mardochai and Esther had appointed, and they undertook them to be observed by themselves and by their seed, fasts, and cries, and the days of lots,

32 And all things which are contained in the history of this book, which is called Esther.

CHAPTER 10.

Assuerus's greatness. Mardochai's dignity.

AND king Assuerus made all the land, and all the islands of the sea tributary.

2 And his strength and his empire, and the dignity and greatness wherewith he exalted Mardochai, are written in the books of the Medes, and of the Persians:

3 And how Mardochai of the race of the Jews, was next after king Assuerus: and great among the Jews, and acceptable to the people of his brethren, seeking the good of his people, and speaking those things which were for the welfare of his seed.

4 Then Mardochai said: God hath done these things.

5 I remember a dream that I saw, which signified these same things: and nothing thereof hath failed.

6 The little fountain which grew into a river, and was turned into a light, and into the sun, and abounded into many waters, is Esther, whom the king married, and made queen.

7 But the two dragons are I and Aman.

8 The nations that were assembled are they that endeavoured to destroy the name of the Jews.

9 And my nation is Israel, who cried to the Lord, and the Lord saved his people: and he delivered us from all evils, and hath wrought great signs and wonders among the nations:

10 And he commanded that there should be two lots, one of the people of God, and the other of all the nations.

11 And both lots came to the day appointed already from that time before God to all nations:

12 And the Lord remembered his people, and had mercy on his inheritance.

13 And these days shall be observed in the month of Adar on the fourteenth, and fifteenth day of the same month, with all diligence, and joy of the people gathered into one assembly, throughout all the generations hereafter of the people of Israel.

CHAPTER 11.

The dream of Mardochai, which in the ancient Greek and Latin Bibles was in the beginning of the book, but was detached by St. Jerome, and put in this place.

IN the fourth year of the reign of Ptolemy and Cleopatra, Dositheus, who said he was a priest, and of the Levitical race, and Ptolemy his son brought this epistle of Phurim, which they said Lysimachus the son of Ptolemy had interpreted in Jerusalem.

2 In the second year of the reign of Artaxerxes the great, in the first day of the month Nisan, Mardochai the son of Jair, the son of Semei, the son of Cis, of the tribe of Benjamin:

3 A Jew who dwelt in the city of Susan, a great man and among the first of the king's court, had a dream.

4 [j] Now he was of the number of the captives, whom Nabuchodonosor king of Babylon had carried away from Jerusalem with Jechonias king of Juda:

5 And this was his dream: Behold there were voices, and tumults, and thunders, and earthquakes, and a disturbance upon the earth.

6 [k] And behold two great dragons came forth ready to fight one against another.

7 And at their cry all nations were stirred up to fight against the nation of the just.

8 And that was a day of darkness and danger, of tribulation and distress, and great fear upon the earth.

9 And the nation of the just was troubled fearing their own evils, and was prepared for death.

10 And they cried to God: and as they were crying, a little fountain grew into a very great river, and abounded into many waters.

CHAP. 10. Ver. 4. *Then Mardochai*, &c. Here St. Jerome advertiseth the reader, that what follows is not in the Hebrew: but is found in the septuagint Greek edition, which the seventy-two interpreters translated out of the Hebrew, or added by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 5. *A dream.* This dream was prophetical and extraordinary: otherwise the general rule is not to observe dreams.

j 4 Kings 24. 15; Supra 2. 6. — *k* Supra 10. 7.

11 The light and the sun rose up, and the humble were exalted, and they devoured the glorious.

12 And when Mardochai had seen this, and arose out of his bed, he was thinking what God would do: and he kept it fixed in his mind, desirous to know what the dream should signify.

CHAPTER 12.

Mardochai detects the conspiracy of the two eunuchs.

AND [l] he abode at that time in the king's court with Bagatha and Thara the king's eunuchs, who were porters of the palace.

2 And when he understood their designs, and had diligently searched into their projects, he learned that they went about to lay violent hands on king Artaxerxes, and he told the king thereof.

3 Then the king had them both examined, and after they had confessed, commanded them to be put to death.

4 But the king made a record of what was done: and Mardochai also committed the memory of the thing to writing.

5 And the king commanded him, to abide in the court of the palace, and gave him presents for the information.

6 But Aman the son of Amadathi the Bugite was in great honour with the king, and sought to hurt Mardochai and his people, because of the two eunuchs of the king who were put to death.

CHAPTER 13.

A copy of a letter sent by Aman to destroy the Jews. Mardochai's prayer for the people.

AND this was the copy of the letter: Artaxerxes the great king who reigneth from India to Ethiopia, to the princes and governors of the hundred and twenty-seven provinces, that are subject to his empire, greeting.

2 Whereas I reigned over many nations, and had brought all the world under my dominion, I was not willing to abuse the greatness of my power, but to govern my subjects with clemency and lenity, that they might live quietly without any terror, and might enjoy peace, which is desired by all men.

3 But when I asked my counsellors how this might be accomplished, one that excelled the rest in wisdom and fidelity, and was second after the king, Aman by name,

4 Told me that there was a people scattered through the whole world, which used new laws, and acted against the customs of all nations, despised the commandments of kings, and violated by their opposition the concord of all nations.

5 Wherefore having learned this, and seeing one nation in opposition to all mankind using perverse laws, and going against our commandments, and disturbing the peace and concord of the provinces subject to us,

6 We have commanded that all whom Aman shall mark out, who is chief over all the provinces, and second after the king, and whom we honour as a father, shall be utterly destroyed by their enemies, with their wives and children, and that none shall have pity on them, on the fourteenth day of the twelfth month Adar of this present year:

7 That these wicked men going down to hell in one day, may restore to our empire the peace which they had disturbed.

8 But Mardochai besought the Lord, remembering all his works,

9 And said: O Lord, Lord, almighty king, for all things are in thy power, and there is none that can resist thy will, if thou determine to save Israel.

10 Thou hast made heaven and earth, and all things that are under the cope of heaven.

11 Thou art Lord of all, and there is none that can resist thy majesty.

12 Thou knowest all things, and thou knowest that it was not out of pride and contempt, or any desire of glory, that I refused to worship the proud Aman,

13 (For I would willingly and readily for the salvation of Israel have kissed even the steps of his feet,)

14 But I feared lest I should transfer the honour of my God to a man, and lest I should adore any one except my God.

15 And now, O Lord, O king, O God of Abraham, have mercy on thy people, because our enemies resolve to destroy us, and extinguish thy inheritance.

16 Despise not thy portion, which thou hast redeemed for thyself out of Egypt.

17 Hear my supplication, and be merci-

[l] Supra 2. 21, and 6. 2.

ful to thy lot and inheritance, and turn our mourning into joy, that we may live and praise thy name, O Lord, and shut not the mouths of them that sing to thee.

18 And all Israel with like mind and supplication cried to the Lord, because they saw certain death hanging over their heads.

CHAPTER 14.

The prayer of Esther for herself and her people.

QUEEN Esther also, fearing the danger that was at hand, had recourse to the Lord.

2 And when she had laid away her royal apparel, she put on garments suitable for weeping and mourning: instead of divers precious ointments, she covered her head with ashes and dung, and she humbled her body with fasts: and all the places in which before she was accustomed to rejoice, she filled with her torn hair.

3 And she prayed to the Lord the God of Israel, saying: O my Lord, who alone art our king, help me a desolate woman, and who have no other helper but thee.

4 My danger is in my hands.

5 [m] I have heard of my father that thou, O Lord, didst take Israel from among all nations. and our fathers from all their predecessors, to possess them as an everlasting inheritance, and thou hast done to them as thou hast promised.

6 We have sinned in thy sight, and therefore thou hast delivered us into the hands of our enemies:

7 For we have worshipped their gods. Thou art just, O Lord.

8 And now they are not content to oppress us with most hard bondage, but attributing the strength of their hands to the power of their idols.

9 They design to change thy promises, and destroy thy inheritance. and shut the mouths of them that praise thee. and extinguish the glory of thy temple and altar,

10 That they may open the mouths of Gentiles, and praise the strength of idols, and magnify for ever a carnal king.

11 Give not, O Lord, thy sceptre to them that are not, lest they laugh at our ruin: but turn their counsel upon themselves. and destroy him that hath begun to rage against us.

12 Remember, O Lord, and shew thyself to us in the time of our tribulation, and give me boldness, O Lord, king of gods, and of all power:

13 Give me a well ordered speech in my mouth in the presence of the lion, and turn his heart to the hatred of our enemy, that both he himself may perish, and the rest that consent to him.

14 But deliver us by thy hand, and help me, who have no other helper, but thee, O Lord, who hast the knowledge of all things.

15 And thou knowest that I hate the glory of the wicked, and abhor the bed of the uncircumcised, and of every stranger.

16 Thou knowest my necessity, that I abominate the sign of my pride and glory, which is upon my head in the days of my public appearance, and detest it as a menstruous rag, and wear it not in the days of my silence,

17 And that I have not eaten at Aman's table, nor hath the king's banquet pleased me, and that I have not drunk the wine of the drink offerings:

18 And that thy handmaid hath never rejoiced, since I was brought hither unto this day, but in thee, O Lord, the God of Abraham.

19 O God, who art mighty above all, hear the voice of them, that have no other hope, and deliver us from the hand of the wicked, and deliver me from my fear.

CHAPTER 15.

Esther comes into the king's presence: she is terrified, but God turns his heart.

AND he commanded her (no doubt but he was Mardochai) to go to the king, and petition for her people, and for her country.

2 Remember, (said he,) the days of thy low estate, how thou wast brought up by my hand, because Aman the second after the king hath spoken against us unto death.

3 And do thou call upon the Lord, and speak to the king for us, and deliver us from death.

4 And on the third day she laid away the garments she wore, and put on her glorious apparel.

5 And glittering in royal robes, after

m Deut. 4. 20, 34, and 32. 9

she had called upon God the ruler and Saviour of all, she took two maids with her.

6 And upon one of them she leaned, as if for delicateness and overmuch tenderness she were not able to bear up her own body.

7 And the other maid followed her lady, bearing up her train flowing on the ground.

8 But she with a rosy colour in her face, and with gracious and bright eyes, hid a mind full of anguish, and exceeding great fear.

9 So going in she passed through all the doors in order, and stood before the king, where he sat upon his royal throne, clothed with his royal robes, and glittering with gold, and precious stones, and he was terrible to behold.

10 And when he had lifted up his countenance, and with burning eyes had shewn the wrath of his heart, the queen sunk down, and her colour turned pale, and she rested her weary head upon her handmaid

11 And God changed the king's spirit into mildness, and all in haste and in fear he leaped from his throne, and holding her up in his arms, till she came to herself, caressed her with these words:

12 What is the matter, Esther? I am thy brother, fear not.

13 Thou shalt not die: for this law is not made for thee, but for all others.

14 Come near then, and touch the sceptre.

15 And as she held her peace, he took the golden sceptre, and laid it upon her neck, and kissed her, and said: Why dost thou not speak to me?

16 She answered: [n] I saw thee, my lord, as an angel of God, and my heart was troubled for fear of thy majesty.

17 For thou, my lord, art very admirable, and thy face is full of graces.

18 And while she was speaking, she fell down again, and was almost in a swoon.

19 But the king was troubled, and all his servants comforted her.

CHAPTER 16.

A copy of the king's letter in favour of the Jews.

[o] THE great king Artaxerxes, from India to Ethiopia, to the governors and princes of a hundred and twenty-seven provinces, which obey our command, sendeth greeting.

2 Many [p] have abused unto pride the goodness of princes, and the honour that hath been bestowed upon them:

3 And not only endeavour to oppress the king's subjects, but not bearing the glory that is given them, take in hand to practise also against them that gave it.

4 Neither are they content not to return thanks for benefits received, and to violate in themselves the laws of humanity, but they think they can also escape the justice of God who seeth all things.

5 And they break out into so great madness, as to endeavour to undermine by lies such as observe diligently the offices committed to them, and do all things in such manner as to be worthy of all men's praise,

6 While with crafty fraud they deceive the ears of princes that are well meaning, and judge of others by their own nature.

7 Now this is proved both from ancient histories, and by the things which are done daily, how the good designs of kings are depraved by the evil suggestions of certain men.

8 Wherefore we must provide for the peace of all provinces.

9 Neither must you think, if we command different things, that it cometh of the levity of our mind, but that we give sentence according to the quality and necessity of times, as the profit of the commonwealth requireth.

10 Now that you may more plainly understand what we say, [q] Aman the son of Amadathi, a Macedonian both in mind and country, and having nothing of the Persian blood, but with his cruelty staining our goodness, was received being a stranger by us:

11 And found our humanity so great towards him, that he was called our father, and was worshipped by all as the next man after the king:

12 But he was so far puffed up with arrogancy, as to go about to deprive us of our kingdom and life.

13 For with certain new and unheard of

n Gen. 33. 10. — o Supra 11. 2.

p Supra 3. 10. — q Supra 3. 1.

Chap. 16. Ver. 1. *From India to Ethiopia.* That is, who reigneth from India to Ethiopia.

devices he hath sought the destruction of Mardochai, by whose fidelity and good services our life was saved, and of Esther the partner of our kingdom, with all their nation:

14 Thinking that after they were slain, he might work treason against us left alone without friends, and might transfer the kingdom of the Persians to the Macedonians.

15 But we have found that the Jews, who were by that most wicked man appointed to be slain, are in no fault at all, but contrariwise, use just laws,

16 And are the children of the highest and the greatest, and the ever living God, by whose benefit the kingdom was given both to our fathers and to us, and is kept unto this day.

17 Wherefore know ye that those letters which he sent in our name, are void and of no effect.

18 For which crime both he himself that devised it, and all his kindred hang on gibbets, before the gates of this city Susan: not we, but God repaying him as he deserved.

19 But this edict, which we now send, shall be published in all cities, that the Jews may freely follow their own laws.

20 And you shall aid them that they may kill those who had prepared themselves to kill them, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is called Adar.

21 For the almighty God hath turned this day of sadness and mourning into joy to them.

22 Wherefore you shall also count this day among other festival days, and celebrate it with all joy, that it may be known also in times to come,

23 That all they who faithfully obey the Persians, receive a worthy reward for their fidelity: but they that are traitors to their kingdom, are destroyed for their wickedness.

24 And let every province and city, that will not be partaker of this solemnity, perish by the sword and by fire, and be destroyed in such manner as to be made unpassable, both to men and beasts, for an example of contempt, and disobedience.

THE BOOK OF JOB.

This Book takes its name from the holy man of whom it treats. It is not a strictly historical narrative, though Job is an historical personage; it is a didactic poem with an historical basis. It is uncertain who was the writer of it. In the Hebrew it is written in verse, from the beginning of the third chapter to the forty-second chapter.

CHAPTER 1.

Job's virtue and riches. Satan by permission from God strippeth him of all his substance. His patience.

THERE was a man in the land of Hus, whose name was Job, and that man was simple and upright, and fearing God, and avoiding evil.

2 And there were born to him seven sons and three daughters.

3 And his possession was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a family exceeding great: and this man was great among all the people of the east.

4 And his sons went, and made a feast by houses every one in his day. And sending they called their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

CHAP. 1. Ver. 1. *Hus.* The land of Hus was probably in northern Arabia.— Ibid. *Simple.* That is, innocent, sincere, and without guile.

Ver. 4. *And made a feast by houses.* That is, each made a feast in his own house and had *his day* inviting the others, and their sisters.

5 And when the days of their feasting were gone about, Job sent to them, and sanctified them: and rising up early offered holocausts for every one of them. For he said: Lest perhaps my sons have sinned, and have blessed God in their hearts. So did Job all days.

6 Now on a certain day when the sons of God came to stand before the Lord, Satan also was present among them.

7 And the Lord said to him: Whence comest thou? And he answered and said: I have gone round about the earth, and walked through it.

8 And the Lord said to him: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a simple and upright man, and fearing God, and avoiding evil?

9 And Satan answering, said: Doth Job fear God in vain?

10 Hast not thou made a fence for him, and his house, and all his substance round about, blessed the works of his hands, and his possession hath increased on the earth?

11 But stretch forth thy hand a little, and touch all that he hath, and see if he blesseth thee not to thy face.

12 Then the Lord said to Satan: Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand: only put not forth thy hand upon his person. And Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord.

13 Now upon a certain day when his sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother,

14 There came a messenger to Job, and said: The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them,

15 And the Sabeans rushed in, and took all away, and slew the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell thee.

16 And while he was yet speaking, another came, and said: The fire of God fell from heaven, and striking the sheep and the servants, hath consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell thee.

17 And while he also was yet speaking, there came another, and said: The Chaldeans made three troops, and have fallen upon the camels, and taken them, moreover they have slain the servants with the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell thee.

18 He was yet speaking, and behold another came in, and said: Thy sons and daughters were eating and drinking wine in the house of their elder brother:

19 A violent wind came on a sudden from the side of the desert, and shook the four corners of the house, and it fell upon thy children and they are dead, and I alone have escaped to tell thee.

20 Then Job rose up, and rent his garments, and having shaven his head fell down upon the ground and worshipped,

21 And said: [s] Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done: blessed be the name of the Lord.

22 In all these things Job sinned not by his lips, nor spoke he any foolish thing against God.

CHAPTER 2.

Satan, by God's permission, striketh Job with ulcers from head to foot: his patience is still invincible.

AND it came to pass, when on a certain day the sons of God came, and stood before the Lord, and Satan came among them, and stood in his sight,

2 That the Lord said to Satan: Whence comest thou? And he answered and said: I have gone round about the earth, and walked through it.

3 And the Lord said to Satan: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a man simple, and upright, and fearing God, and avoiding evil, and still keeping his innocence? But thou hast moved me against him, that I should afflict him without cause.

4 And Satan answered, and said: Skin for skin, and all that a man hath he will give for his life:

s Eccli. 5. 14; 1 Tim. 6. 7.

Ver. 5. *Blessed.* For greater horror of the very thought of blasphemy, the scripture both here and ver. 11, and in the following chapter, ver. 5 and 9, uses the word *bless* to signify its contrary.

Ver. 6. *The sons of God.* The angels. — Ibid. *Satan also, &c.* This passage represents to us in a figure, accommodated to the ways and understandings of men, 1. The restless endeavours of Satan against the servants of God; 2. That he can do nothing without God's permission; 3. That God doth not permit him to tempt them above their strength: but assists them by his divine grace in such manner, that the vain efforts of the enemy only serve to illustrate their virtue and increase their merit.