

Concise Bible Dictionary

W

By George Morrish

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Wagon

See CART.

Wanderings of the Israelites

The Israelites were always directed by God as to their journeyings and when and where to pitch their tents. It was God who caused them to “wander” because of their sin (Num. 32:13).

The accounts of the journeys of the children of Israel have not escaped the unwarrantable attacks to which many parts of scripture have been subjected. Though many of the places mentioned cannot now be identified, and therefore the actual path trodden cannot be traced, yet enough is recorded to show in the main what their route was, and to prove that the several records do not clash one with another. The passage quoted above speaks of the wanderings occupying *forty* years, yet it was after their first visit to Kadesh-barnea in the 2nd year that their real “wanderings” began.

Travelers have visited the districts along which the Israelites are supposed to have traveled, and have not hesitated to say that the cattle and sheep of the Israelites could not possibly have found pasture or fodder on which to have lived.

We read that they brought out of Egypt “flocks and herds,” and in Exodus 12:38 “very much cattle” is mentioned. Before crossing the Jordan the two and a half tribes are described as having “a great multitude of cattle,” but this was after the Midianites had been destroyed, and most of the cattle and sheep may have fallen to these tribes,

the other tribes taking “the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead” with other spoils.

The Israelites were forbidden to graze their flocks and herds “before the mount.” And this implies that there was pasture there for them; the Amalekites also dwelt there, and doubtless had cattle (Ex. 17:8; Ex. 34:3). The actual state of the desert now is no proof of what it was then. It is well known that the Bedouins do not encourage cultivation, and they have destroyed the trees extensively in order to make charcoal, which they can always sell, and this decreases the fertility. A traveler records that “the gardens at the Wells of Moses, under the French and English agents from Suez, and the gardens in the valleys of Jebel Musa, under the care of the Greek monks of the Convent of St. Catherine” are proofs of the fertility of the ground under culture.

The barren state of the desert in general does not preclude the fact that parts of it are fertile. There are few parts of the Sinai Peninsula that do not show signs of vegetation. The numerous valleys of the Sinaitic group of mountains are full of shrubs and grass.

Much farther north, near Kadesh, the Amalekites and Canaanites were able to live in the mountain (Num. 14:40-45).

It is therefore useless and unbelieving to draw conclusions from the present aspect of the land through which the Israelites traveled. If they continued to have much cattle, God could as easily have provided for their cattle as have given them manna from heaven for themselves.

The first part of their journey from Egypt was from Rameses to the Red Sea. Rameses was on the east of the Nile, but some place it farther north than others. The western branch of the Red Sea doubtless then extended

farther north than it does at present, and it cannot be ascertained at what point the sea was crossed. The stations are

Exodus 1. Rameses (Ex. 12:37). 2. Succoth (Ex. 12:37). 3. Etham (Ex. 13:20). 4. Pi-hahiroth (Ex. 14:2). 5. Passage through the Red Sea (Ex. 14:22), and three days' march into the desert of Shur (Ex. 15:22). Numbers 1. Rameses (Num. 33:3). 2. Succoth (Num. 33:5). 3. Etham (Num. 33:6). 4. Pi-hahiroth (Num. 33:7). 5. Passage through the Red Sea and three days' march in the desert of Etham (Num. 33:8).

It will be noticed that in Numbers, Etham is mentioned on both sides of the Red Sea. The word has been interpreted "boundary of the sea" (a meaning which Furst thinks doubtful, but gives no other): if so, it might apply to either side. The desert of Etham may have swept round the end of the Gulf of Suez, as in some maps.

The second part of their journey was from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai, on the east side of the Gulf of Suez, as in the map. The wilderness of Sin, Mount Sinai, and Horeb are in the main identified. The stations are

Exodus 1. Marah (Ex. 15:23). 2. Elim (Ex. 15:27). 3. 4. Desert of Sin (Ex. 16:1). 5. 6. 7. Rephidim (Ex. 17:1). 8. Desert of Sinai (Ex. 19:1), in the third month of the first year. Numbers 1. Marah (Num. 33:8). 2. Elim (Num. 33:9). 3. Encampment by the Red Sea (Num. 33:10). 4. Desert of Sin (Num. 33:11). 5. Dophkah (Num. 33:12). 6. Alush (Num. 33:13). 7. Rephidim (Num. 33:14). 8. Desert of Sinai (Num. 33:15).

In the wilderness of Sinai the Israelites remained until the second month of the second year, during which period the law was given (Num. 10:11; Num. 33:16).

The third part of their journey was from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea, some eighty miles farther north. In this journey only three intermediate stations are mentioned.

Numbers 11-13 1. Taberah (Num. 11:3; Deut. 9:22). 2. Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. 11:34). 3. Hazeroth (Num. 11:35). 4. Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran (Num. 12:16; Num. 13:1-26). Numbers 33 1. 2. Kibroth-hattaavah (Num. 33:16). 3. Hazeroth (Num. 33:17). 4. Rithmah (Num. 33:18).

At Taberah the fire of the Lord burnt among them. At Kibroth-hattaavah the people lusted for flesh: quails were given them, and then God sent upon them a very great plague (Num. 11:4, 31-34). At Hazeroth Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses, and Miriam was smitten with leprosy (Num. 12:10). The above shows that Kadesh is in the same locality as Rithmah, from whence the spies were despatched. The spies are not mentioned in Numbers 33.

There was a prolonged stay at Kadesh or Rithmah in the wilderness of Paran. The return of the spies was waited for. The rebellion broke out on the report of the faithless spies, and God swore they should not enter the land, but should wander in the wilderness that all the men who came out of Egypt might die except Caleb and Joshua. In defiance of this they invaded the land, and were attacked by the Amalekites (Num. 14:33-45). Then followed the rebellion of Korah (Num. 16).

Apparently the Israelites spent about thirty-seven years in traveling three times between Kadesh and Ezion-gaber, at the corner of the Gulf of Akaba, but many of the stations cannot be identified; some may have been situated farther to the west. It is not, however, recorded how long

they remained at the various places, and it is possible that some of them are not included in the lists.

By comparing Numbers 20:22-29 with Deuteronomy 10:6 it will be seen that Mosera and Mount Hor are regarded as the same place, Mosera, or Moseroth, being situated at the foot of Mount Hor. Mosera is therefore a recognized place to which they traveled when the real "wanderings" began. They removed from Kadesh, or Rithmah, to Rimmon-parez, and then to other stations till they arrived at Mosera, or Mount Hor, the first time, though it seems but a short distance (Num. 33:19-30).

From Mosera they traveled southward to Ezion-gaber, there being four stations between (Num. 33:31-35).

From Ezion-gaber they turned and traveled northward again and arrived at Kadesh or Kadesh-barnea *a second time*, no stations being mentioned between those two distant places. At Kadesh Miriam died. The people murmured, and the rock was smitten, on which occasion Moses and Aaron offended (Num. 20:1-13).

From Kadesh they traveled to Mount Hor, without any station being mentioned between them, unless Beeroth in Deuteronomy 10:6 comes in here. At Mount Hor Aaron died and was buried (Num. 33:37-38). They were attacked by King Arad the Canaanite, who was defeated and his cities destroyed (Num. 21:1-3).

The King of Edom having refused to let the Israelites pass through his land necessitated their journeying again to the Red Sea in order to compass the land of Edom—perhaps passing Gudgodah and Jotbath (Deut. 10:7), in the route—(Num. 20:14-21; Num. 21:4). From the Red Sea their route is plainly on the east of Edom and

the Salt Sea until they arrived opposite Jericho, where their wanderings ended.

Numbers 21-22 1. From Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea (Num. 21:4). 2. 3. 4. Oboth (Num. 21:10). 5. Ije-abarim (Num. 21:11). 6. The Brook Zared (Num. 21:12; Deut. 2:13-14). 7. The Brook Arnon (Num. 21:13; Deut. 2:24). 8. 9. 10. Beer, in the desert (Num. 21:16, 18). 11. Mattanah (Num. 21:18). 12. Nahaliel (Num. 21:19). 13. Bamoth (Num. 21:19). 14. Pisgah (Num. 21:20 on Abarim). 15. Plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho (Num. 22:1).
Numbers 33 1. By Elath and Ezion-gaber (Deut. 2:8). 2. Zalmonah (Num. 33:41). 3. Punon (Num. 33:42). 4. Oboth (Num. 33:43). 5. Ije-abarim, or Iim (Num. 33:44-45). 6. 7. 8. Dibon-gad (Num. 33:45). 9. Almon-diblathaim (Num. 33:46). 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. Mountains of Abarim, before Nebo (Num. 33:47). 15. Plains of Moab, by Jordan, near Jericho (Num. 33:48).

The many failings and murmurings of the Israelites are recorded in scripture, and stand as solemn warnings to the Christian, as we see in 1 Corinthians 10:1-14. For the typical signification of the journey of the Israelites see under WILDERNESS.

Wars

War is the natural consequence of sin being in the world, and men and nations coveting the possessions of others (James 4:1-3). The principal wars recorded in scripture are, however, different: they are those of Israel in taking possession of Canaan for Jehovah as the Lord's host, and in maintaining their position in His land, for which they had divine instruction. Their warfare is typical of the conflict of Christians against principalities, powers, and the rulers of

the darkness of this world and against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12). There are also the wars *against* Israel, when God used other nations to punish them. But God always maintained His rights in His own people and in His own land.

When Jehovah destroyed the army of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, He was called “a man of war,” and this and other victories were recorded in “the book of the wars of Jehovah” (Ex. 15:3; Num. 21:14). David could say of God, “He teacheth my hands to war” (2 Sam. 22:35; Psa. 18:34).

There are still wars on the earth, for sin is here, and nation rises against nation; and when Israel is again in the land they will be persecuted by their enemies. The kings of the habitable world will be gathered at Armageddon to the battle of that great day of God the Almighty (Rev. 16:14, 16). The Lord must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet. This will be followed by a time when they “shall learn war no more,” when warlike weapons will be beaten into agricultural instruments, and the Prince of Peace will reign over the whole earth.

Washing

A requirement of frequent literal recurrence under the law, but in the New Testament a term bearing commonly a moral force and application. Important truth may be learned from the different significations of the Greek words used for “washing” in John 13. The word in John 13:10 is ἵνα, “to cleanse, wash thoroughly.” One who is cleansed in this sense never needs to be thus washed again; he is, as the Lord said, “clean every whit,” yet in order to have “part with” Christ, he needs, because of the defilement of the way, that his feet should be washed

(here the word is π), John 13:5-14, an action which is applied to *parts* of the body only. The same difference was typified in the cleansing of Aaron and his sons. They were at their consecration *once* “washed” by Moses, but were thenceforward required continually, when executing their service, to wash only their hands and feet in the laver (Ex. 40:12, 30-32).

Washing of Regeneration

This term occurs only in Titus 3:5. “Regeneration” is not used in scripture in the modern ecclesiastical signification of the word, as may be seen from the only other occurrence of it in Matthew 19:28, where it evidently refers to an order of things still future. In Titus the believer is said to be saved by the cleansing in connection with the new order of things introduced by Christianity, as indicated in baptism, and the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

The words “saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,” show that there is a present escape and deliverance from the world and its course, and an entrance into those things which characterize the world to come, of which the Holy Ghost is now the revealer and power, even as Israel escaped from Egypt and its shame through the Red Sea, and anticipated Canaan in their song of praise.

Washpot

Twice used by the Psalmist in the sentence, “Moab is my washpot” (Psa. 60:8; Psa. 108:9). Moab is to be brought down to the lowest servile subjection.

Watches, Night

There were with the Israelites three night watches:

1. From sunset (about 6 P.M.) to 10 P.M. (Lam. 2:19).
2. The middle watch, from 10 P.M. to 2 A.M. (Judg. 7:19).
3. From 2 A.M. till sunrise (1 Sam. 11:11).

Under the Romans there were four night watches, agreeing with the changes of the Roman guards, each being of three hours' duration, from sunset to sunrise. They were sometimes called evening, midnight, cock-crowing, and morning (Matt. 14:25; Matt. 24:43; Mark 6:48; Mark 13:35; Luke 12:38).

Water of Separation

Used for purification in cases of ceremonial defilement, without the re-application of blood (Num. 19:9-21). See HEIFER, RED.

Wave-Offering

See OFFERING.

Wayfaring Man

A traveler (Judg. 19:17; 2 Sam. 12:4; Isa. 33:8; Isa. 35:8; Jer. 9:2; Jer. 14:8).

Weasel

This occurs only in Leviticus 11:29 as one of the unclean animals. The word is *choled*, and occurs nowhere else. Gesenius translates it "weasel," so called from its swift gliding motion, or its gliding into holes. Some, however, judge it to be the mole, the Arabic name of which is *chuld*,

and the Syriac *chuldo*. This latter interpretation is probably the right one.

Weaver, Weaving

This art was early practiced in Egypt, and though the looms were of the simplest description, some Egyptian productions were very fine. Weaving was known to the Israelites, and by it they produced fine work for the tabernacle and the priests' robes. A weaver's beam is often referred to as a heavy thing for a man to use as a weapon (Ex. 28:32; Ex. 35:35; Ex. 39:22,27; 1 Sam. 17:7; Job 7:6, etc). Of the wicked it is said, they "weave the spider's web ... their webs shall not become garments" (Isa. 59:5-6).

Wedding

See MARRIAGE.

Weeks, Feast of

See PENTECOST.

Weeks, Seventy

See SEVENTY.

Weights and Measures

In the Old Testament money was weighed. The first recorded transaction in scripture is that of Abraham buying the field of Ephron the Hittite for four hundred shekels of silver, which Abraham "weighed" to Ephron (Gen. 23:15-16). The shekel here was a weight. Judas Maccabaeus, about B. C. 141, was the first to coin Jewish money, though there existed doubtless from of old pieces

of silver of known value, which passed from hand to hand without being always weighed. Herod the Great coined money with his name on it; and Herod Agrippa had some coins; but after that the coins in Palestine were Roman. The following tables must be taken approximately only: the authorities differ.

WEIGHTS.

The principal weights in use were as follows with their approximate equivalents:—

	Avoirdupois			
	Pounds	Ounces	Drams	
Gerah (1/20 of a shekel)				0.439
Bekah (1/2 of a shekel)				4.390
Shekel			8.780	
Maneh or pound (60 shekels)			2	0
14.800				
Talent, <i>kikkah</i> (50 maneh)	102	14		4.000
Talent of Lead (Zech. 5:7), "weighty piece," margin.				

Talent (Rev. 16:21): if Attic=about 55 lbs.

Pound, (John 12:3; John 19:39): about 12 oz. avoirdupois.

It must be noted that there are two shekels mentioned in the Old Testament: one according to the "king's weight," probably the standard shekel used for all ordinary business (Ex. 38:29; Josh. 7:21; 2 Sam. 14:26; Amos 8:5); and another called the "shekel of the sanctuary," of which it is said in Exodus 30:13; Leviticus 27:25; Numbers 3:47 and Numbers 18:16, "the shekel is 20 gerahs," implying perhaps that the common shekel was different. Michaelis says that the proportion was as 5 to 3, the business shekel being the smaller.

Weights and Measures

This seems confirmed by the word *maneh* in the following passages. By comparing 1 Kings 10:17 with 2 Chronicles 9:16 it will be seen that a *maneh* equals 100 shekels (probably, for the word “shekels” has been added by the translators); whereas in Ezekiel 45:12 the *maneh* equals 60 shekels, because the latter would be shekels of the sanctuary. The passage in Ezekiel is obscure, but the sense appears to be that *three weights* (20, 25, and 15 shekels) should be their *maneh*, which makes, as in the above table, a *maneh* = 60 shekels. Some modern tables give the *maneh* as equal to 50 shekels, from the supposition that this is what is meant in Ezekiel 45:12 in the LXX. The *maneh* is translated “pound” (1 Kings 10:17; Ezra 2:69; Neh. 7:71-72).

The word *bekah* occurs in Exodus 38:26: it signifies “half,” and is “half shekel” in Exodus 30:13.

MONEY.

If the weights in the foregoing list be approximately correct, and silver be taken at 5/- per ounce, and gold at £4 per ounce Troy, the money value will be about

Unit of Money	£	s.	d	.
Scripture				
Gerah (1/20 of a shekel)	0	0	1.5	E x .
30:13.				
Bekah, <i>beqa</i> (1/2 of a shekel)		0	1	3
Gen. 24:22.				
Shekel	0	2	6	Gen. 23:15.
Dram (daric, a Persian gold coin)	about	1	2	
0	1	Chron. 29:7.		
Maneh or pound, 60 shekels		7	10	0
Ezek. 45:12.				

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Talent of Silver 375 0 0 E z r a
7:22.

Talent of Gold 6000 0 0 E x .
25:39.

With respect to "Piece of money" (Gen. 33:19; Job 42:11) and "Piece of silver" (Josh. 24:32) *qesitah*, Gesenius compares Genesis 33:19 with Genesis 23:16 and supposes the weight to equal 4 shekels.

Unit of Money £s.d. Scripture

Mite, π 0 0 3/32 M a r k
12:42.

Farthing, 0 0 3/16 Matt.
5:26

Farthing, ð 0 0 3/4 Matt.
10:29.

Penny, 0 0 7.75 M a t t .
20:2.

Piece of silver, μ 0 0 7.75 Luke
15:8-9.

Tribute money, μ 0 1 3.5
Matt. 17:24.

Piece of money, 0 2 7 Matt.
17:27.

Pound, μ 3 4 7 Luke 19:19-
25.

Talent (Roman) 193 15 0 Matt.
18:24.

Piece of silver, 0 2 6 Matt.
26:15.

Money, ð indefinite Matt. 25:18.

Weights and Measures

The Greek word $\acute{\alpha}$ is the common word for “silver,” and “money,” as *l'argent* in French. “Piece of silver” in the AV is always $\acute{\alpha}$, except in Luke 15:8-9, where it is μ .

The above gives no idea of the purchasing value of these sums, which often varied. A penny () was the usual daily wages of a working man: its purchasing value then must have been considerably more than it is now.

Liquid Measure

Name	Quantity	Unit of Measure	
Scripture			
Caph	0.552	pints	
Log(1.3 caphs)	0.718	pints	Lev. 14:10-24.
Cab (4 logs)	2.872	pints	2 Kings 6:25.
Hin (12 logs)	1.077	gallons	Ex. 29:40.
Bath, Ephah (72 logs)	6.462	gallons	1 Kings 7:26.
Cor, Homer (720 logs)	64.620	gallons	E z e k . 45:14.
Pot,	0.96	pints	Mark 7:4, 8.
Measure,	7.5	gallons	Luke 16:6.
Firkin, μ	8.625	gallons	John 2:6.
Measure,	64.133	gallons	Luke 16:7.

Dry Measure

Log	0.718	pints	
Cab (4 logs)	2.872	pints	2 Kings 6:25.
Omer (1.8 cabs)	5.169	pints	Ex. 16:16, 36.
Tenth deal (tenth of an Ephah)	5.169	pints	E x . 29:40.
Measure, seah (6 cabs)	2.154	gallons	1 Sam. 25:18.
Ephah (18 cabs)	6.962	gallons	Lev. 5:11.

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Half Homer, *letheb* (90 cabs) 4.040 bushels Hos. 3:2.

Homer, *chomer* (180 cabs) 8.081 bushels Lev. 27:16

Measure, ĩ 2.000 pints Rev. 6:6.

Bushel, μ 2.000 gallons Matt. 5:15.

Measure, 2.875 gallons Matt. 13:33.

Long Measure

Finger or Digit, *etsba* .7584 inches Jer. 3:21.

Handbreadth or Palm (4 digits), *tephach* 3 . 0 3 3 7 inches 1 Kings 7:26.

Span, *zereth* (3 palms) 9.1012 inches Ex. 28:16.

Cubit, *ammah*, $\pi\eta$ (2 spans) 1 8 . 2 0 2 5 inches Gen. 6:15.

Fathom, (4 cubits) 6.0675 feet Acts 27:28.

Reed, *qaneh*, (6 cubits) 9.1012 feet Ezek. 40:3-8.

Furlong, (400 cubits) 606.750 feet Luke 24:13.

Sabbath-day's journey (2000 cubits) 3033.75 feet Acts 1:12.

Mile, μ (3,200 cubits) 4854.0 feet Matt. 5:41.

Acre. As much land as a yoke of oxen would plow in a day. 1 Sam. 14:14.

The above measures are calculated from the cubit being the same as the Hebrew *ammah* and the Greek $\pi\eta$, which latter is found in Matthew 6:27; Luke 12:25: John

21:8; Revelation 21:17. This may be called the *short* cubit (perhaps not the shortest: See CUBIT). In Ezekiel 41:8 is the expression, “a full reed of six great cubits.” The “great cubit” is supposed to be a cubit and a handbreadth. This would make Ezekiel’s reed to be about 10.618 feet. By adding a sixth to any of the above measurements they will correspond to the great cubit. There can be no doubt, however, that the “furlong” and the “mile” were Greek measures.

Though all these reckonings are only approximate, they help to throw light upon many passages of scripture. Thus Isaiah 5:10 shows that there is a curse resting upon the fields of a covetous man. In Revelation 6:6 the quantities prove that the time then spoken of will be one of great scarcity.

Wells

There are several Hebrew words for the wells that were in Palestine. Some may have been dug in connection with springs of water and others have been principally supplied by water from the surrounding land. The word *ayin* differs from either of the above: it signifies literally “an eye,” and was like an eye in the ground from which the waters sprang up, and is not said to be dug, and yet is called “a well” in the AV. It occurs in Genesis 24:13-45; Genesis 49:22; Exodus 15:27 and Nehemiah 2:13; and the same word is often translated “fountain.” From the same is *mayan* (Psa. 84:6; Isa. 12:3; &c). The words *beer*, *bor* refer to any well, cistern, or pit (Gen. 16:14; Gen. 24:11,20; Deut. 6:11; etc.).

There is the same difference in the New Testament, and the two words π , “spring” or “fountain,” and , “well,” are both used respecting Jacob’s well; so that

apparently it was a fountain (John 4:6) within the well (John 4:11-12).

In John 4:14 (π) is used symbolically: it is “a fountain” which Christ gives that springs up into eternal life. It is the Holy Spirit, the power of life that springs up in the soul towards its heavenly source.

In 2 Peter 2:17 an apostate is a spring or fountain “without water”; he has left the only source of life.

Wen

A suppurating sore (Lev. 22:22).

West

This was expressed by

1. *yam*, “the Sea,” referring to the Mediterranean, which lies on the west of Palestine (Gen. 12:8; and so forth).

2. *maarab*, μ “sun-setting,” because the sun sets in the west (1 Chron. 7:28; Matt. 8:11).

3. *maarabah*, “sun-setting,” only in Isaiah 45:6.

4. *mebo hashshemesh*, from the “going down of the sun,” only in Joshua 23:4 and Zechariah 8:7.

Whale

The word *tannin* (Gen. 1:21; Job 7:12; Ezek. 32:2); and $\tilde{\eta}$ (Matt. 12:40); refer to any sea monsters, without defining any particular one. In the case of Jonah the Hebrew word is *dag*, or *dagah*, a fish; it may not have been a whale: sharks have been known to swallow men entire, and whatever fish it was that swallowed him, it was a miracle that preserved him alive, and caused him to be safely landed on shore again. It is only by denying the miracle that any

difficulty arises. The Hebrew word *tannin*, is also translated in the AV “dragon,” “sea monster,” and “serpent.”

Wheat

This cereal was extensively grown in Palestine; the harvest was in May and June. In the parable it is used by the Lord as representing the children of the kingdom, the fruit of the good seed that He was sowing on the earth, in contrast to the tares, or darnel, which Satan secretly sowed among the good seed.

The Lord Himself, being the second Man “out of heaven,” is compared to the grain of wheat that must have remained alone unless it had died, but which in dying would bring forth much fruit. This clearly shows that there was no union of Christ and natural man by His incarnation alone, and that through the death of Christ the fruit produced by His resurrection is of the same order as Christ Himself (Matt. 13:25-30; John 12:24; 1 Cor. 15:48-49).

There are three or four varieties of *Triticum* grown in Palestine.

Wheels

These are used symbolically in Ezekiel in connection with the living creatures of God’s providential administration on earth. The Spirit was in the wheels, and the wheels had the appearance of a beryl, and were full of eyes: typical of the controlled but intelligent motion of events: wheels were within wheels, which mark the control of the events as mysterious and hidden.

Whirlwind

This is often referred to in the Old Testament as one of the means wielded by God in His judgments on the earth. It is twice connected with the south (Job 37:9; Isa. 21:1; Isa. 40:24; Isa. 41:16; Jer. 23:19; Jer. 30:23).

Wilderness

This term and that of DESERT do not usually refer in scripture to such places as the vast sand-plains of Africa, though there are some such in Palestine, but the words mostly refer to non-arable plains where the vegetation but thinly covers the limestone with patches of verdure. In places where the ground is not worth cultivating it can be used for pasture. Some of such deserts are comparatively small, but others are extensive. The wilderness of JUDAH is a plain extending the whole length of the Dead Sea; but some of it can be used for pasture land. It may be said to include the wilderness of EN-GEDI, that of MAON, and probably that of ZIPH and of JERUEL.

The wilderness of BETH-AVEN and of GIBEON were in the allotment of Benjamin.

The wilderness of DAMASCUS was far north, and that of BEER-SHEBA far south; and that of SHUR, still farther south-west.

Those of KEDEMOTH, of EDOM, and of MOAB were east of the Dead Sea.

The rest were not in Palestine proper, but were the deserts through which the Israelites passed or were located in their wanderings: namely, ETHAM, KADESH, PARAN, SIN, SINAI, and ZIN. See WANDERINGS OF THE ISRAELITES.

Typically the wilderness was outside Canaan, and stands in contrast to it. The wilderness was the place of testing to

the Israelites, and it is the same to the Christian, to humble him, and to prove what is in his heart (Deut. 8:2). He has to learn what he is in himself, and the God of all grace he has to do with. There is need of constant dependence or there is failure, while the experience is gained of knowing One who never fails to succor. Canaan is figuratively a heavenly position and conflict, corresponding with the need of the armor of Ephesians 6:11, to stand against the wiles of the devil. For this one needs to realize what it is to be dead and risen with Christ. It is association in spirit with Christ in heaven.

Will-Worship

Worship that springs from the will of man and which satisfies the flesh (Col. 2:23). Ordinances commanded by man come under this category, though their observance may be thought to be acceptable to God by the worshippers.

Willow (Ereb)

Supposed to be the *Salix Babylonica*. Its boughs were used at the Feast of Tabernacles, a season of joy; but at the captivity and since, it is a symbol of sorrow. It was on such that the captives hung their harps when in captivity, of which the Psalmist spoke prophetically (Lev. 23:40; Job 40:22; Psa. 137:2; Isa. 15:7; Isa. 44:4). In Ezekiel 17:5 thy word is *tsaphtsaphah*, supposed by some to be the Arabic *safsaf*, a willow or osier which grows by the water.

Wimple

See GARMENTS.

Wind

The wind, as all else, is used by God to work out His purposes with man (Ex. 10:13; Psa. 135:7; Ezek. 13:13). As the unseen wind comes and goes we know not whither, "so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Its power is felt, and the result abides. The wind is also used as a symbol of the unseen influence of Satan (Jude 12); and where permitted he carries out his evil designs by the wind (Job 1:19).

Window

There are several Hebrew words so translated. Windows were openings to admit light and for ventilation; not glazed, but furnished with latticed work, through which persons could, though themselves unobserved, see what was passing outside. Some had shutters attached. There was a window in the ark Noah built, and windows in the temple; and many are to be made in the temple described by Ezekiel (Gen. 6:16; Gen. 8:6; 1 Kings 7:4-5; Ezek. 40:16-36).

In the East windows were usually made to open horizontally, which explains how a person sitting in a window could fall out (Acts 20:9). The passage in Isaiah 54:12, "I will make thy windows of agates," is better translated, "I will make thy battlements, or pinnacles, of rubies." At the flood the expression the "windows of heaven" is in the sense of the "floodgates," as in the margin (Gen. 7:11).

Wine

There are several Hebrew words translated wine, and though various expressions are attached to it as "sweet,"

“new,” “strong,” “good,” “mixed,” “spiced,” “on the lees,” all are wine; and the wine was intoxicating, as seen already in the days of Noah (Gen. 9:21). Intemperance is the abuse of it, and against such abuse there are abundant protests and warnings in the scripture. Wine is mentioned with corn and oil, among the good gifts wherewith God would bless His earthly people (Deut. 7:13; Psa. 104:15). It was daily offered in the temple as a drink offering (Num. 28:7).

Wine was created by the Lord in His first recorded miracle (John 2:3-10). He was blasphemously spoken of as a wine-bibber; and He said at the last Passover, “I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God” (Mark 14:25). He also instituted the Lord’s Supper with the cup of wine. Paul recommended Timothy to take a little wine for his frequent sickness; and a bishop must not be given to much wine. There is therefore adequate evidence that wine is regarded as a beneficent gift of God, of which man may make a moderate use. If, however, a man has no power over his appetite, doubtless he had better abstain from wine altogether. Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:10).

Wine-Press, Wine-Fat

These are said to be “trodden,” which signifies that the grapes were placed in a receptacle, and were trodden on by the feet, a pipe conveying the juice into a vessel at the side. Places have been found which apparently were used for this purpose: they are hewn out of a rock with a shallow channel by which the juice could escape (Judg. 6:11; Neh. 13:15; Job 24:11; Isa. 5:2; Isa. 63:2; Mark 12:1; &c). In

Egypt the grapes were also pressed in a bag by its being twisted tighter and tighter.

Symbolically the vine-press is used as a figure of the execution of God's judgments: the people, as grapes, are placed in the press, and there crushed: "and blood came out of the winepress, even unto horses'bridles, by the space of 1600 furlongs"—about the extent of Palestine (Rev. 14:19-20; Rev. 19:15).

Wings

Used as a symbol of protection. Under "the shadow of God's wings" is referred to in the Psalms; and the Lord said He would often have gathered Israel as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not (Psa. 17:8; Psa. 36:7; Psa. 57:1; Matt. 23:37; &c). Wings were given for rapid motion. The living creatures in Ezekiel 1 had each four wings, and those in Isaiah 6:2 and Revelation 4 had each of them six wings. God's executives are swift messengers.

Winked

The former times of ignorance God "overlooked," but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, for a day has been appointed when the Lord Jesus will judge the habitable world in righteousness (Acts 17:30).

Winnowing

This was accomplished in the open air, by throwing up the grain with a shovel, or a fan (, really a kind of shallow basket); the wind carried away the chaff. Boaz winnowed his barley in the evening, when there would

be more wind (Ruth 3:2; Isa. 30:24). John the Baptist said of the Lord that His fan was in His hand, and He would thoroughly purge His floor; gather His wheat into the garner; and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire (Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17). It is now a day of grace, a sowing time, but the harvest will come, and the winnowing will surely follow.

Winter

See SEASONS.

Wise Men

See MAGI.

Wit, to

“How” (2 Cor. 5:19).

Wit, to; Wot, Wist

“To know” (Gen. 24:21; Ex. 16:15; Acts 3:17; Acts 23:5). From the Anglo-Saxon *witan*, “to know.”

Witch, Witchcraft

The word *kashaph* is “to use magical formulas or incantations,” “to practice sorcery.” A witch was not suffered to live (Ex. 22:18; Deut. 18:10; 2 Kings 9:22; 2 Chron. 33:6; Mic. 5:12; Nah. 3:4). In 1 Samuel 15:23 the word is *qesem*, divination. In Galatians 5:20 it is μ , sorcery. See DIVINATION.

Withs

Slender twigs twisted into a rope (Judg. 16:7-9).

Witness

The testimony or evidence adduced or given in confirmation of an assertion, and so often used judicially. The term also sometimes speaks simply of an expression of mind or feeling. Until God intervenes in power to establish His own purpose in regard to this world, He maintains a testimony to that which He will assuredly accomplish.

The words μ , μ , and, μ are translated both "testimony" and "witness." The idea runs all through the scriptures in respect both to God Himself and to His people. Paul declared before the heathen at Lystra that God "had not left himself without witness" as to His existence and His goodness, in giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling their "hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). The invisible things of God are testified of, "being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, or divinity" (Rom. 1:19-20).

God having for fifteen hundred years manifested His patience towards the guilty antediluvian world, He, after warning the people by the preaching of Noah, bore witness to His righteousness and His power by the deluge, and at the same time manifested, His grace in saving Noah and his family in the ark.

The witness which God vouchsafed of Himself to Abraham was that He was "THE ALMIGHTY GOD"; to Moses it was "I AM THAT I AM"; and to Israel, "JEHOVAH." The ark was often called the "Ark of the testimony," and the tabernacle was the "Tent of witness," the witness of good things to come. To Nebuchadnezzar God was witnessed to as the "GOD OF HEAVEN." To the Christian He is "GOD AND FATHER."

Israel were of old God's witnesses, and will also be in the future.

When Christ was on earth He bore witness to God as LOVE and LIGHT. The Lord Jesus is declared to be "the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14); and His works and His words were witnesses that He had come from God. The Father also bore witness to Him as His beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased. The Lord Jesus confessed before the Jewish council that He was the Son of God, and before Pilate that He was the King of the Jews (Matt. 26:63-64; Matt. 27:11).

Peter and John were witnesses of the truth before the council, so that they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13). Stephen also was a true witness, and his testimony led to his becoming a martyr (μ). In Hebrews 11 is given a "great cloud" of witnesses to the principle of faith in Old Testament saints, some of whom were also martyrs. God will to the last have a testimony on earth as seen in His "two witnesses" of Revelation 11.

In Christianity there are said to be three witnesses—"the Spirit and the water and the blood: and these three agree in one"—they affirm that God has given to the believer "eternal life, and this life is in His Son." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John 5:8-11).

The Church, in the absence of the Lord Jesus, is the vessel of the testimony of Christ, hence Christians should be in their whole life and deportment true witnesses to the rejected Christ. The testimony of the church is characterized by—separation from the world; devotedness to the interests of the Lord Jesus on earth; faithfulness to the truth; unblamable moral conduct; and indeed, as the

pillar and ground of the truth, by everything that becometh godliness.

Under the law of Moses it was enacted that in all charges of guilt two or three witnesses were necessary (Deut. 17:6). In the church the same order is maintained, "in the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word [or matter] be established" (Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim. 5:19).

Wives' Fables, Old

A term of contempt for anything not worth listening to, associated with what is profane. Timothy was warned against such (1 Tim. 4:7).

Wizard

See DIVINATION.

Woe

A declaration of "woe" on man is frequently found in scripture. It is especially pronounced on those who have had privileges and have not answered to them. In the Prophets there are many woes against Israel and Judah, and also against the nations which had to do with Israel. The Lord when on earth pronounced woes upon those who should have been the leaders of His people. The Revelation shows that God's "woes" will fall with mighty power on those denounced (Rev. 18:13).

Woe Worth

"Woe be to the day" (Ezek. 30:2). From the AngloSaxon *weorthan*, "to be, become."

Wolf

The well-known animal, described in scripture as “ravening,” and seeking its prey in the evening. They are very destructive among the sheep, worrying and destroying more than they can eat. This makes the wolf a fit emblem of the wicked, who molest the sheep and lambs of God’s flock, and even creep in among them. How great will be the change in the millennium is denoted, among other things, by the wolf and the lamb dwelling together (Gen. 49:27; Isa. 11:6; Isa. 65:25; Jer. 5:6; Ezek. 22:27; Hab. 1:8; Zeph. 3:3; Matt. 7:15; Matt. 10:16; Luke 10:3; John 10:12; Acts 20:29). The Hebrew is *zeeb*, Arabic *dhīb*, the common *Canis lupus*.

Woman

It is evident from scripture that women were anciently held in much more honor and esteem in Eastern countries than they are now. Solomon, speaking of women, said that such as his soul sought for he did not find one in a thousand (Eccl. 7:28). This tells of fallen human nature; but the true thought of woman is that she is the glory of the man, his true helpmeet. This is fulfilled in the relationship of the church to Christ.

In the New Testament the true place of the woman in subjection to the man is plainly stated, as indicated in creation; and in the assembly the woman is to be silent, and not to teach. Her bearing and deportment are expressive of what she learns as taught of Christ (1 Cor. 11:3-15; 1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-12). Nevertheless women were greatly honored in ministering to the Lord, and are accredited as helping on the work of the Lord in the gospel and among the saints (Luke 8:2-3; Luke 8:23:27, 55-56; Rom. 16:1, 3, 6; Phil. 4:2-3; 2 John 1:1, 10).

Wood

See FOREST.

Wool

The fleece of sheep and other animals. That of sheep was used for weaving into cloth, and is generally referred to as “wool.” In the figurative language of Isaiah 1:18 undyed wool represents the state resulting from the removal of sin by Jehovah from His people; the sin being compared to that which had been dyed crimson. The law forbade the wearing of a garment made of linen and wool: it was an unnatural mixture, figurative of the working of the Spirit and the flesh in a Christian (Lev. 19:19; Deut. 22:11).

Word, the

A designation of the Lord Jesus, employed by John in the opening of his gospel, and mentioned in Luke 1:2. The word is *logos*, which occurs constantly in the New Testament and is translated “word, saying, speech,” and so forth. In John 1 it is “the Word who is in view,” and what is stated asserts clearly three things concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. His eternal existence: “in the beginning was the Word;” “all things were made by him.”
2. His true deity: “the Word was God.”
3. His distinct personality: “the Word was with God.”

As the Word, the Lord Jesus is the substance and expression of the mind of God in regard of man; and the term covers what He was on earth for man—life, light, and love. See also Revelation 19:13.

It has been said that _____ presents “the intelligent and the intelligible.” The same Greek (translated “the word”) is used to express the scriptures and the truth preached (Acts 16:6; Acts 17:11; Gal. 6:6; Phil. 1:14; 1 Thess. 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:2,8; 1 Pet. 3:1; 2 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 2:7; Rev. 3:8).

Works

These are activities, divine or human, which may proceed from good or evil. We read of “dead works”: acts of mere ceremony, and the religious efforts of the flesh—the flesh profiteth nothing (Heb. 6:1; Heb. 9:14). These stand in contrast to “works of faith,” which are the expression of life by the operation of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 11). The works of the flesh are detailed in Galatians 5:19-21.

Man is justified by faith apart from the “works of the law” (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16), but real faith will produce “good works,” and these can be seen of men, though the faith itself be invisible (James 2:14-26).

The Lord Jesus when on earth declared that His works gave evidence that He was Son of God, and had been sent by the Father, and that the Father was in Him, and He in the Father (John 9:4; John 10:37-38; John 14:11).

When the Jews were persecuting Christ because He had healed a man on the Sabbath day, He said, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (John 5:17). God had rested from His works of creation on the seventh day, but sin had come in, and in the Old Testament allusions are frequent as to the activity of Jehovah for the spiritual blessing of man.

The apostle Paul, in writing to Titus, insists strongly on good works, that Christianity might not be unfruitful.

Everyone will have to give an account of himself to God (Rom. 14:12); and the wicked dead will be raised and *judged* according to their works (Rev. 20:12-13).

World, the

The word commonly so rendered in the Old Testament is *tebel*, signifying "the habitable earth:" it is an expression of limited bearing, applied to that sphere which comes more directly under divine dealings (Psa. 90:2); and to the inhabitants, who will be judged (Psa. 9:8). The word in the New Testament answering to the above, is; μ its various applications can be seen (Luke 2:1; Acts 11:28; Acts 17:6, 31; Acts 19:27; Heb. 2:5). In the last passage it is the coming world, that is, that which is put under the Son of Man, that is spoken of.

In the New Testament μ is the more general word, which in Greek writers signifies "order, regularity, ornament"; it is translated "adorning" (1 Pet. 3:3). The heaven and the earth, because of their order and beauty, are called *cosmos*, "the world." This word is employed for "world" in its various meanings, as for instance the material earth (Rom. 1:20); the inhabitants of the world that will be judged (Rom. 3:6); and in a moral sense as the condition and spirit which is opposed to God (1 Cor. 2:12; James 4:4; 1 John 2:16).

Another word, ι , "age, duration," is applied both to the present age, the course of this world, and to age-enduring, or eternity (Rom. 12:2; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 1:21; Eph. 6:12). With a preposition it is translated "forever," and when the word is repeated, "forever and ever," or "to the ages of ages" (2 Cor. 9:9; Gal. 1:5; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17).

In two passages this word refers to the material worlds (Heb. 1:2; Heb. 11:3).

World to Come

The word translated “world” in the following passages is *aiōn* (see WORLD): it may therefore be rendered “the age to come.” The Lord declared that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost of attributing His miracles to the power of Satan, should not be forgiven in the present age, nor in the age to come (Matt. 12:32). He also promised that those who gave up property or earthly relations for the sake of the kingdom of God, should, beside present blessing, have eternal life in the age to come (Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30). Christ has been exalted above every name named in this world or in the world to come (Eph. 1:21). In Hebrews 6:5 Paul speaks of some who had tasted of the powers of the age to come, doubtless alluding to miracles.

The word in Hebrews 2:5 is *ἡ γῆ*, “habitable earth.” The habitable earth to come is not put in subjection to angels, but to the Son of Man.

The “present age” was well understood by the Jews to be in contrast to that age which should be introduced by the Messiah. Saints in Old Testament times looked forward to this, as for example Abraham (John 8:56; Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:10). Christians are able by faith to enjoy even now the blessings of that coming age, when the Lord with universal sway will establish His kingdom on earth, and have everything under His administration (Compare Rom. 14:17). Every moral question will be settled then. The world to come will usher in eternity (1. Cor. 15:24,28).

Worms

The worm is used symbolically to show the extreme feebleness of man (Job 17:14; Job 25:6). In blessing Israel Jehovah said, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob" (Isa. 41:14); and the Lord, to indicate the low estate in which He was, said, "I am a worm and no man" (Psa. 22:6). In the grave man's body becomes the companion of worms, if they do not actually feed upon it (Job 21:26; Job 24:20; Isa. 14:11). Of the eternal punishment of the wicked it is recorded "their worm dieth not" (Mark 9:44,46,48: Compare Isa. 66:24). Herod Agrippa, being smitten by an angel, was literally "eaten of worms" (Acts 12:23). In Job 25:6 man is compared to a worm—literally "a maggot"—an apt figure of moral corruption.

Wormwood (Laanah, אֲבִימֹן)

This occurs in scripture only in a metaphorical sense. Turning to idolatry is compared to being a root that beareth gall and wormwood (Deut. 29:18). Some turned "judgment to wormwood," probably alluding to the unrighteous judges (Amos 5:7). Because of the wickedness of His people, God...said He would feed them with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink (Jer. 9:15; Jer. 23:15). Jeremiah, in lamenting over the condition of Israel, compared it to being drunk with wormwood (Lam. 3:15, 19). On the sounding of the third trumpet in the Revelation, a star named Wormwood fell from heaven, and the third part of the waters were turned to wormwood, of which many men died: the moral sources of life will become destructive (Rev. 8:10-11). There are several species in Palestine: the *Artemisia absinthium* and *A. chinensis* are the wormwood of commerce.

Worship

The worship of God has been described as “the honor and adoration which are rendered to Him by reason of what He is in Himself, and what He is to those who render it.” It is pre-supposed that the worshipper has some relation with God, and that the order of service or worship is prescribed. The Israelites had been redeemed out of Egypt by God, and thus as a ransomed people could draw near to His appointed place to worship according to His order. The Psalmist could say, “O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation ... for the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods ... O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand” (Psa. 95:1-7).

The worshippers could not enter God’s sanctuary in Old Testament times: their place of approach was its outer courts; and even the priests, except once a year, went no further than the holy place. All this is now changed: redemption has been wrought, the veil has been rent from top to bottom, God has come out, and worshippers, as priests, have boldness for entrance to the holiest. God has been revealed in the counsels of His love as Father, and the Holy Spirit has been given. The language of the Psalms therefore is hardly fitting for Christian worship, because of the nearness into which the believer is brought. In the millennium the *people* will not have access in the same sense: the true figure for the Christian attitude is that of the priest, not that of the people.

They that worship God must worship Him in spirit and in truth, and the Father seeketh such to worship Him (John 4:24). They delight in what He is: they “joy in God,” and they love Him. To worship “in spirit” is to worship according to the true nature of God, and in the power of that communion which the Holy Spirit gives. It thus stands in contrast to worship consisting in forms and ceremonies, and to the religiousness of which the flesh is capable. To worship “in truth” is to worship God according to the revelation which He has been pleased to give of Himself. It would not therefore *now* be worshipping God “in truth” to worship Him simply as “a great God,” “our Maker,” and “a great King above all gods,” as in Psalm 95; for He has been pleased to reveal Himself in another light, even as “Father” to those who are His. They enter into His presence in the spirit of sonship, and in the sense of the love which has given them a place before Him in Christ, as sons according to His good pleasure: the sense of this love, and of the good pleasure of God in having us before Him in Christ, is the spring of worship. The Father and the Son are known, the Father’s will is that the Son should be honored as revealing the fountain of love, and the Son leading the hearts of the many sons into the Father’s love. Worship is thus distinguished from ascriptions of praise and thanksgiving; it is the homage of love (Rom. 8:15).

Wot

See WIT.

Wrath

The wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men is plainly declared in scripture, and will surely fall upon the children of disobedience (Rom. 1:18; Col. 3:6). The fierceness of that wrath is spoken of (Rev. 16:19). How vain then for the false teachers to speak only of the love of God, and to say that because “God is love” there will be mercy for all eventually. There is grace for all now, but there is as surely a day of wrath coming, for God is righteous.

Wrestling

For the wrestling of Jacob with “a man” see JACOB. The conflict of the Christian is compared to wrestling: it is not with flesh and blood, but is against principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this age; against spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies. For this the whole armor of God is needed. All this phalanx of evil is against Christians, to prevent them from first keeping the place that God has given to them in grace, and then from fighting the Lord’s battles in the absence of the Lord Himself, both in the spread of the gospel in its heavenly character, the maintenance of the truth connected with a glorified Christ, and the perfecting of His saints (Eph. 6:11-12).

Writing

The earliest intimation of writing in scripture is when Amalek was defeated, and it is significant that the first thing Moses was instructed to write, as far as is revealed, should be respecting *judgment* upon Amalek, an enemy of God’s people: his remembrance was to be utterly put out from under heaven (Ex. 17:14). This incident took place

some 2500 years after the creation of Adam and we cannot suppose that there had not been writing before this. Moses was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and writing is found in or on all their ancient monuments.

Hales puts the date of Menes, the first king of Egypt, B. C. 2412, but even this is more than 1500 years from the creation. God created an intelligent man, and may have instructed him in the art of writing, as He surely also gave him a language by which He could Himself hold intercourse with him

God brought the animal creation to Adam that he might name them and in them he had before him forms far more numerous than were needed for an alphabet, such as was adopted by the Egyptians long after. The Hebrew letters were originally symbolical, as some of their names infer: as א, א aleph, an ox; ב, ב beth, a house; ג, ג gimel, a camel, etc. For the earliest Egyptian letters derived from nature see the table below.

The Aztecs, who preceded the Mexicans, were able to record their laws, their ritual, and a complete system of chronology. A Mexican MS looks like a collection of pictures, each a separate study. The Chinese, who profess to have had the art of writing from time immemorial, with endless genealogies, have kept their records in their 80,000 symbolical characters, to which there are 214 radical keys.

The history and book of Job is judged to have been quite early, and he speaks not only of writing, but of a book: "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever!" (Job 19:23-24). This refers to his words being engraved on a rock and filled in with lead.

Engraving on stones was practiced in ancient Egypt, a specimen of which may be seen on Cleopatra's Needle in London, on the banks of the Thames. Ancient engraving on stone has rendered service in modern times, as in the Rosetta Stone, the writing of which, being in Egyptian and Greek, gave the first key to the deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphics. See also the Moabite Stone.

In the Sinai peninsula there are many inscriptions cut in the rocks, which have never yet been satisfactorily explained. Some of them have been taken to be of Israelitish origin when Israel "wandered" in those parts; others judge them to be simply the greetings and names of travelers; and others are of the opinion that Christian pilgrims wrote them, while some believe them to be of an earlier date than this and assign them to Pagan pilgrims to Serbal. Many of the inscriptions are in an Arabic dialect, but interspersed with rude engravings of horses, asses, dogs, and ibexes.

As already intimated, the Israelites may in the first instance have had a system of hieroglyphics, by means of which they (as did the Egyptians and others) recorded all necessary things. All existing alphabets have been traced by Gesenius to the Phoenician, thus:—

Phoenician		
Ancient Greek	Ancient Persian	A n c i e n t
Hebrew	Ancient Aramæan	
Roman	Later Greek	S a m a r i t a n
Hebrew Square Characters		

It is generally stated that the Phoenician alphabet was derived from the Egyptian Hieratic. From the Phoenician is traced the ancient Hebrew, thence the Samaritan, and thence the modern square Hebrew, as shown in the accompanying table.

The connection however between the Egyptian and the Phoenician alphabets is doubted by some. Dr. Poole, in the Encyclopaedia Britannica, judges that if the latter had been derived from the former, their names would have described the original signs: whereas Aleph signifies an ox, not an eagle; Beth a house, not a bird; Gimel a camel, not a basket; and so on, as far as it is known, to the end.

It may be noticed that God Himself wrote the Ten Commandments on the stones that He gave to Moses, and He may have given the ancient Hebrew characters. It will be found that the whole Hebrew alphabet, except *teth*, is in those "ten words."

Writing was needed on other substances besides stones. When a man put away his wife he had to give her a "bill of divorcement" (Deut. 24:1). Papyrus was early used as paper, but being very fragile, it gave place to parchment and vellum, being written on with reeds. It is on the two latter that nearly all the ancient MSS of the scriptures have been preserved to this day. But the skins were expensive and could not be always obtained, which resulted in some of the copies of the New Testament being rubbed out, and something of much less importance being written on the same surface, as in the specimen here given. To enable such erased writing to be read, chemical means have to be resorted to. Such copies are called *Palimpsests* "rubbed a second time," or Rescripts.

This is part of the Codex Nitriensis, which contains large portions of Luke's Gospel, and dates from the sixth century. The original leaves have been folded in half, and then written over in Syriac (by Severus of Antioch against Grammaticus) in the ninth or tenth century. The specimen gives a portion of (Luke 20:9-10).

Writing is such an abstruse thing that no barbarous people has been known to commence any system of writing before seeing specimens of this wonderful art. It is well known that a missionary once wrote on a piece of wood the name of a tool that he needed, and handed it to a chief, asking him to take it to his wife. He asked what he was to say. He was to say nothing; only take the wood. He took it and was amazed when the missionary's wife threw the wood away and gave him the tool. It was entirely beyond his comprehension that the marks on the piece of wood could convey a message. It was altogether a deep mystery; he hung the piece of wood round his neck, and could often be seen telling the wonderful thing it had done.

Yet we are so familiar with writing that we think it no mystery at all; still there are occult intricacies in it. Our thoughts have to be expressed in words, our words are composed of letters; each of those letters has a distinct sound; and each sound needs some character to represent that sound, which must call forth the *same* sound, and rapidly form those sounds into words which again convey to the one who reads exactly the same thoughts that were passing through the mind of the writer. Is there no work of God in that?

Again, writing expresses decision and purpose. We may have many thoughts pass through our minds in a day, but none may need or deserve to be written. "It is written" implies a decision one has arrived at as an individual; or what has been recorded as an Act of Parliament; or much higher still, what God has been pleased to cause to be written as His revealed will in the holy writings, for which man can never be too grateful.

Concise Bible Dictionary

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