HABAKKUK.
THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

(Division.)

 عبدالله | 1.1—2.20. THE BURDEN OF HABAKKUK.
 عبدالله | 3.1—12. THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK.

For the Canonical order and place of the Prophets, see Ap. 1, and pp. 1206 and 1207.
For the Chronological order of the Prophets, see Ap. 77.
For the Inter-relation of the Prophetic Books, see Ap. 78.
For the Formulae of Prophetic Utterance. See Ap. 82.
For References to the Pentateuch by the Prophets, see Ap. 92.
For the Inter-relation of the Minor (or Shorter) Prophets, see pp. 1206 and 1207.

Of Habakkuk (pronounced Habakkuk) nothing can be really known beyond what he says of himself. From this it is clear that he lived in evil days, and was perplexed with the silence and forbearance of a holy God in permitting the evil to continue. Cp. Ps. 73.

His prophecy takes the form of a colloquy with Jehovah; and Jehovah answers his cry by revealing the fact that a time will come when the evil will be visited upon Judah by the Chaldean successors of Assyria (1. 6), and by the Dispersion of Judah (1. 5—11).

The prayer in chap. 3 is very important as being a summary of Jehovah's dealings with His People from the passage of the Red Sea to the prophet's own time.

The prayer is important also, as being the model (together with Isa. 38), outside the Psalter, of the proper construction of a Psalm, with (1) the super-scription, (2) the text, and (3) sub-scription (see Ap. 65); and also, of the meaning and use of the word “Selah” (Ap. 66. II).

The prophecy is undated; but we have a clue afforded in 1. 5, 6. It is given to Habakkuk before the fall of Nineveh, which placed Babylon at the head of the Gentile world. According to traditional or “received” dating, this took place in 625 B.C., but, according to the chronology given in Ap. 50, it was 615 B.C., or 110 years later.

If the hints given in 1. 3, 11 are to be accepted on the above lines, we may date the prophecy of Habakkuk as being given (as a whole), or at any rate commenced, in the year with which Jeremiah begins: viz. in the thirteenth year of Josiah, 618 B.C., i.e. three years before the destruction of Nineveh.

In this case, supposing one among those Habakkuk addressed to be twenty years old, he would be forty-two in Jehoiakim's fourth year and Nebuchadnezzar's first. At the carrying away to Babylon he would be forty-nine; and at the destruction of Jerusalem he would be sixty-one.
1 THE burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see.
2 O LORD, how long shall I cry, and Thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto Thee of violence, and Thou wilt not save!
3 Why dost Thou shew me iniquity, and cause me to behold grievance? for spoiling and violence are before me: and there are that raise up strife and contention.
4 Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore was judgment proceedeth.
5 Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.
6 For I raise up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwellingplaces that are not theirs.
7 Terrible and dreadful, are their judgments and their dignities shall proceed of themselves.
8 Their horses also are swifter than leopards, and are more fierce than the evening wolves: and their horsemen shall spread themselves, and their horsemen shall come from far; they shall fly as the eagle that hasteth to eat.
9 They shall come all for violence: their faces shall be as the east wind, and they shall gather the captivity as the sand.
10 And the lion shall leap as a bear, and the princes shall be in them: they shall leap like soldiers.
11 Then shall his mind change, and he shall pass over, and offend, imputing this his power unto his god.
12 Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, Mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, Thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, Thou hast established them for correction.

1. 1-2. 20 (14, p. 1862). THE BURDEN OF HABAKKUK. (Alternation.)

1 burden. See note on Nah. 1. 1.
2 for. In Ps. 18, 6, 41; 22, 24.
3 Ap. 19, 7. Jer. 20, 8. Showing that the cry is not personal, but made in the name of all who suffered from the evil times.
4 cry out = cry with a loud voice, implying the complaint.
6 ruling = oppression, or injustice. Heb. 'amal.
7 Ap. 44, v. there are that raise up. A reading is found in some codices (named in the Massorah), "I had to endure", strife and contention. There should not be a comma after "strife", as in the RV. The Hebr. accents indicate the one act, "and contention rising up", like the spoiling and violence are before me in the preceding clause.
8 slacked = benumbed.
9 judgment = justice.
10 Ap. 44, x. the righteous = the just one (Art. with Heb. 'eth) wrong = perverted.
11 proceedeth = goeth forth.
12 Behold... regard... wonder. Note the Fig. Anabasis (Ap. 8).

13 heathen = nations.
14 which ye will not believe. Some codices read "yet ye will not believe".
16 I raise up, &c. Ref. to Pent. (Dent. 28, 50). Ap. 92.
17 theirs, Heb. his; and so throughout this chapter.
18 dignify = elevation.
21 for violence = i.e. not for conquest, but for destruction.
22 faces = aspect, intent, or eagerness.
23 sup up = swallow up (as in Job 89, 24), as the Palestine burning east wind withers up and destroys all green things, as the sand. Fig. Paranais. Ap. 6.
24 them = it, as above (v. 6). heap dust = heap up mounds. Take it = capture it: i.e. every stronghold.
26 over = through.
27 god. Heb. 'eloh (Ap. 4, V): i.e. his object of worship.
28 Art thou not... Note the change of subject, as shown in the Structure above ("A'"). God. God. Heb. Elohim. Ap. 4, I. we shall not die. This is one of the eighteen emendations of the Septuagint (see Ap. 88), which they say they made because it was considered offensive to say this of Jehovah; hence, the one word of the primitive text "who dieth not" was changed to "who die not" (rendered in A.V., R.V., and American R.V., "we shall not die"). This is the only one of the eighteen emendations which the R.V. and American R.V. notice, and speak of it in the margin as "an ancient Jewish tradition", whereas a list of the emendations is given in the Massorah.
29 From the second person to the first did more than avoid the supposed irreverent expression; it transformed the moral men the truth which, apart from resurrection, pertains to God alone, "Who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6, 16). Cp. 1 Cor. 15, 53, 54. O mighty God = O Rock. Cp. Dent. 82, 4, 15, 18, 30. 1 Sam. 2, 2. 2 Sam. 23, 3. Ps. 18, 2, 31, 46; 19, 14, &c.


15 drag=a fish-net. Occurs only here (v. 16, 16) and in Isa. 18. s. Greek σαγηνος. See Ap. 122. 2. Italian saio saenna, whence (with a different vowel) the Greek σαγηνος=to sweep [a country] clean.

16 fat=fertile, or rich. plenteous=fat.

2. 1 watch=watch-tower; referring to the place where my station. tower=fortress. watch=look-out; referring to the act=keep outlook.

unto: or, in answer when I am reproved: or, get back because of my complaint.

2. 2-20 (8. p. 1827). JEHOWAH'S ANSWER.

(Repeated Alternation.)

B C a. 2. Command to write.

b. s. Reason. That the reader may flee.

c. 1. Incrimination. Pride.


C a. 5-7. Incrimination. Greed.


e. Retaliation. Drunkenness.


2 the LORD. Heb. Jehovah. Ap. 4. II.

Write, &c. Ref. to Pent. (Deut. 27. s). Ap. 47, and Exod. 2. the vision. Supply the logical Ellipsis (Ap. 6): "(Oh that I am about to reveal to thee)." Cp. 1. 4.

upon tables: i.e. boxwood tables smeared with wax.


that he may run that readeth it=that he that readeth it may flee. Heb. פָּרִים to run as a messenger.

Job 9. 23. Jer. 23. 24, 28. Zech. 2. 4; or, to flee for refuge (Ps. 18. 10), as in Hagg. 1. 9.

3 yet=deferred.

appointed: i.e. fixed by Jehovah for its fulfilment and not lie. Fig. Pleneasm (Ap. 6), for emphasis. It will not tarry. Some codices, with five early printed editions (one Rabbinic, four Septa., Syr., and Vulg., read "and will not tarry").

4 Behold. Fig. Asterism (Ap. 6), emphasising the twofold answer to the prophet's prayer: the fate of the wicked in the coming judgment, and the preservation and eternal lot of the righteous. Supply the Ellipsis: "Behold the proud one!"

his: i.e. the Chaldean's of ch. 1; or the lawless one described in ch. 1 and in the verses which follow.


c. just a righteous one. Quoted in Rom. 1. 17 and Gal. 3. 11. Cp. Heb. 10. 3.

live: i.e. live for ever in resurrection life. See notes on Lev. 18. 5. The wicked go on living, without faith, if it refers to this life; therefore "live" must refer to a future life. The Heb. accents place the emphasis on "shall live"; not "the just by his faith," but "a just one, by his faith, will live," and make the contrast not between faith and unbelief, but between the fate of each—perishing and living for ever. In Rom. 1. 17 the context places the emphasis on "the righteous"; in Gal. 3. 11 it is placed on "faith".

8 transgresseth=transgressing, or is acting deceitfully.


Cp. Isa. 5. 14. man=strong man. Heb. מַשָּׁה, as in Ps. 78. 2.

Woo. Note the five woes in vv. 6, 9, 12, 13, 16. how long? i.e. for his time is short. thick clay=plagues. Ref. to Pent. Ap. 92. Occurs in this form only here. On other places in Deut. 16 and 54, where it occurs nine times with a significa meaning, and in Joel 2. 7. bite: or, exact usury. voce=shake.


covetousness=extorteth a gain. Fig. Paronomasia. Ap. 6. Heb. מַשָּׁה... בֵּן. evil. Heb. מַשָּׁה.
2.9. HABAKKUK.

5:18 Oursness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil.

10 Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul.

11 For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

12 Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood, and establisheth a city by iniquity!

13 Behold, is it not of the LORD of hosts that the people shall labour in the vineyard, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity?

14 For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

16 Thou art filled with shame for glory: drink thou also, and let thy foreskin be uncovered:

17 For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts, which made them afraid, because of men's blood, and for the violence of the land, of the city, and of all that dwell therein.

18 What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath hewn it? the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

19 Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake! to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach!

1 Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it.

20 But the LORD is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him.

3 A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth.

2 O LORD, I have heard Thy speech, and was afraid; O LORD, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years let Thy work make known; in wrath remember mercy.

3 O LORD, came from Teman, and the Holy One.

3.3. THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK. (Introspection and Alternation.)

A² B | 1. The Superscription.

F G | 2. I have heard. Consequent effect,


The Giving of the Law.

F G | 14. I have heard. Consequent effect,


The Sending of Grace.

E | 18. The Subscription.

1 Shigionoth. The pl. of Shiggaion (Ps. 7), a crying aloud. See Ap. 65, XX.


heard Thy speech = heard Thy hearing. Fig. Polyptoton. Ap. 6. speech = hearing. Put by Fig. Metonymy (of Subject),

(Repeated Alternation.)

H J | 3-5. His comings.

K² | 6-11. His doings.

J² | 12, 13. His going.

K² | 14, 15. His doings.


Selah. Connecting His coming forth with the glorious effects of it. See Ap. 66. II. Note the three "Selahs" in vv. 3, 9, 12. His glory. Cp. Isa. 6. 3.

4 horn=power. Puthy Fig. Melonymy (of Effect), Ap. 6, for the power put forth by them. Heb. dual = two rays. coming out of = from. I.e. power from His hands forth. the hiding, &c. = hiding (or concealing) of His [full] power.

5 Before Him went, &c. Supply the logical Ellipsis (Ap. 6): "As He went forth to conquer for His People before Him went, &c." See Ex. 16. 7; 18. 27; Ps. 68. 1, 2. burning coals: or, lightning. Cp. Ps. 18. 8; 76. 3; 78. 44.

3. 3. HABAKKUK. 3. 14. HIS DOINGS. (Repetitive Alterations.)

K' 

6 He stood, and measured the earth: He beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: His ways are everlasting.

7 I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction: and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.

8 Was the Lord displeased against the rivers? was Thine anger against the rivers? was Thy wrath against the sea, that Thou didst ride upon Thine horses and Thy chariots of salvation.

9 Thy bow was made quite naked, (according to the oaths of the tribes, even Thy word). Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers.

10 The mountains saw Thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high.

11 The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: at the light of Thine arrows they went, and at the shining of Thy glittering spear.

12 Thou didst march through the land in indignation, Thou didst thresh the heathen in anger.

13 Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy People, even for salvation with Thine anointed.

9 Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah.

14 Thou didst strike through with His staves the head of His villages: they came uttering His voice, i.e. [at Thy presence].

lifted up, &c. = lifted up his hands [in amazement and submission]. Not a "corruption", but the Fig. Prosopopeia (Ap. 6). "The walls" of Ex. 14. 22 compared to its hands. his hands = its [walls like] hands.

11 The sun and moon, &c. Ref. to Josh. 10. 12, 13. at the light, &c. = like light Thine arrows flew. and at the shining, &c. = like lightning was Thy glittering spear.

3. 12, 13 (J's p. 1289). JEHOVAH'S GOINGS. (Introduction.)

J' 

12 thresh = tread down. Cp. Judg. 5. 4. Ps. 68. 11. heathen = nations: i.e. the nations of Caanah.

13 anointed = i.e. for the salvation of Jehovah's anointed People (sing). See Ps. 105. 15. woundedst = dashest in pieces. out of = from. the wicked = [the] lawless one. Heb. rasha', Ap. 44. viii. Looking forward to the final destruction of Israel's enemy in the person of the Antichrist. The Targum (or Paraphrase) of Jonathan is remarkable: "the kingdom of Babylon will not remain, nor exercise dominion over Israel. The Romans will be destroyed, and not take tribute from Jerusalem; and therefore, on account of the marvellous deliverance which Thou wilt accomplish for Thine Anointed and for the remnant of Thy People, they will praise the Lord". by discovering, &c. = i.e. overturning the house from the top (the neck) so completely as to lay bare the foundations. Such will be the final overthrow of Israel's great enemy, Selah. This third Selah connects this final overthrow and its magnitude, when contrasted with the enemy's previous proud boasting and exaltation in v. 14. It connects Jehovah's doings also ("K's", v. 14) with Jehovah's goings ("J's", v. 13). See Ap. 66. II.

14 strike through = pieces. His slaves = his own weapons. Cp. Judg. 7. 12. head = chief. villages = leaders. Heb. text = "leader" (sing); but margin "leaders" (pl), with some codices and five early printed editions. they came out, &c. = [when] they came forth.
518 out as a whirlwind to scatter me: their rejoicing was as to devour the poor secretly.

15 Thou didst walk through the sea with Thine horses, through the heap of great waters.

16 When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself; that I might rest in the day of trouble; when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops.

17 Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

19 The LORD is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds' feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places.

To the chief singer on my stringed instruments.

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ZEPHANIAH.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AS A WHOLE.

Ε2 | Α1 | 1.1-3.s. MINATORY.
| 2.1-3.20. PROMISSORY.

For the Canonical order and place of the Prophets, see Ap. 1, and pp. 1206 and 1207.
For the Chronological order of the Prophets, see Ap. 77.
For the Inter-relation of the Prophetic Books, see Ap. 78.
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The last of the Prophets immediately preceding the Captivity.

Unlike all the other Prophets, Zephaniah's genealogy is traced back for four generations; and, as Hezekiah of Prov. 22. 1 and Hizkiah of Zeph. 1. 1 are the same word in Hebrew as Hezekiah King of Judah, he was not improbably his great-great-grandson.

Zephaniah's prophecy is dated in 1.1. as being given "in the days of Josiah." In ch. 2.13 he says that Assyria shall be destroyed, and Nineveh made a desolation. Therefore it was before the fall of Nineveh, 616 B.C. according to The Companion Bible dating (Ap. 50), or 625 B.C. (according to "received" dating).

Zephaniah was the contemporary of Jeremiah. By a comparison with 2 Kings 23, which records the destruction of the "remnant of Baal" (Zeph. 1. 4), Josiah's reformation had not been completed. The prophecy may therefore be dated as coming between the twelfth and the eighteenth year of Josiah—say 618 B.C., or about three years before the fall of Nineveh.