
ISAIAH 63: 1 Who is this who comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this who is glorious in his clothing, marching in the greatness of his strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

The prophet, (or rather the Church he represents), sees the great Deliverer, long promised and expected, making his appearance, after having crushed his enemies, like grapes in the wine-vat. The comparison suggests a lively idea of the wrath of Omnipotence, which its unhappy objects can no more resist than the grapes can resist the treader. Indeed, there is so much pathos, energy, and sublimity in this remarkable passage, as hardly any thing can be conceived to exceed. The period to which it refers must be the same with that predicted in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, some parts of which are expressed in the same terms with this, and plainly enough refer to the very sudden and total overthrow of Antichrist, and of all his adherents and auxiliaries, of which the destruction of Babylon, the capital of Chaldea, and of Bozra, the chief city of the Edomites, was the prototype, Isa 63:1-6. At the seventh verse commences a penitential confession and supplication of the Jews, as uttered in their present dispersion, Isa 63:7-19.

The very remarkable passage with which this chapter begins seems to me to be, in a manner, detached from the rest, and to stand singly by itself; having no immediate connection with what goes before, or with what follows, otherwise than as it may pursue the general design, and stand in its proper place in the order of prophecy. It is by many learned interpreters supposed that Judas Maccabeus and his victories make the subject of it. What claim Judas can have to so great an honor will, I think, be very difficult to make out; or how the attributes of the great person introduced can possibly suit him. Could Judas call himself the announcer of righteousness, mighty to save? Could he talk of the day of vengeance being in his heart, and the year of his redeemed being come? or that his own arm wrought salvation for him? Besides, what were the great exploits of Judas in regard to the Idumeans? He overcame them in battle, and slew twenty thousand of them. And John Hyrcanus, his brother Simon's son and successor, who is called in to help out the accomplishment of the prophecy, gave them another defeat some time afterward, and compelled them by force to become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and to submit to circumcision: after which they were incorporated with the Jews, and became one people with them. Are these events adequate to the prophet's lofty prediction? Was it so great an action to win a battle with considerable slaughter of the enemy or to force a whole nation by dint of the sword into Judaism? or was the conversion of the Idumeans, however effected, and their admission into the Church of God, equivalent to a most grievous judgment and destruction, threatened in the severest terms? But here is another very material circumstance to be considered, which, I presume, entirely excludes Judas Maccabeus, and even the Idumeans, properly so called. For the Idumea of the prophet's time was quite a different country from that which Judas conquered. For during the Babylonish captivity the Nabatheans had driven the Edomites out of their country; who upon that took possession of the southern parts of Judea, and settled themselves there; that is, in the country of the whole tribe of Simeon and in half of that of Judah. See Prideaux, ad. an. 740 and 165. And the metropolis of the Edomites, and of the country thence called Idumea, which Judas took, was Hebron 1 Maccabees 5:65, not Bozrah.

I conclude, therefore, that this prophecy has not the least relation to Judas Maccabeus. It may be asked, to whom, and to what event does it relate? I can only answer, that I know of no event in history to which, from its importance and circumstances, it can be applied: unless, perhaps, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish polity; which in the Gospel is called the coming of Christ and

the days of vengeance, Mat 16:28; Luk 21:22. But though this prophecy must have its accomplishment, there is no necessity for supposing that it has been already accomplished. There are prophecies, which intimate a great slaughter of the enemies of God and his people, which remain to be fulfilled; these in Ezekiel, chap. 38, and in the Revelation of St. John, Rev 20:1-15, are called Gog and Magog. This prophecy of Isaiah may possibly refer to the same or the like event. We need not be at a loss to determine the person who is here introduced, as stained with treading the wine-press, if we consider how St. John in the Revelation has applied this image of the prophet, Rev 19:13, Rev 19:15, Rev 19:16. Compare chap. 34. - L.

Verse 1

Who is this that cometh from Edom - Probably both Edom and Bozrah are only figurative expressions, to point out the place in which God should discomfit his enemies. Edom signifies red, and Bozrah, a vintage. Kimchi interprets the whole of the destruction of Rome.

I that speak in righteousness "I who publish righteousness" - A MS. has המדבר hammedabber, with the demonstrative article added with greater force and emphasis: The announcer of righteousness. A MS. has צדקה tzedakah, without ב be prefixed; and so the Septuagint and Vulgate. And thirty-eight MSS. (seven ancient) of Dr. Kennicott's, and many of De Rossi's, and one of my own, add the conjunction ו vau to רב rab, and mighty; which the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate confirm. - L.

ISAIAH 63: 2 Why are you red in your clothing, and your garments like him who treads in the wine vat?

Verse 2

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel - For ללבושך lilebushecha, twenty-nine MSS. (nine ancient) of Kennicott's, and thirty of De Rossi's, and one edition, have ללבושיך lilebusheycha in the plural; so the Septuagint and Syriac. And all the ancient Versions read it with מ mem, instead of the first ל lamed. But the true reading is probably מלבושך malbushecha in the singular, as in Isa 63:3. - L.

ISAIAH 63: 3 "I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the peoples there was no man with me: yes, I trod them in my anger, and trampled them in my wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on my garments, and I have stained all my clothing.

Verse 3

And of the people there was none with me - I was wholly abandoned by them: but a good meaning is, No man has had any part in making the atonement; it is entirely the work of the Messiah alone. No created being could have any part in a sacrifice that was to be of infinite merit.

And I will stain "And I have stained" - For אגאלתי egalti, a verb of very irregular formation, compounded, as they say, of the two forms of the preterite and future, a MS. has אגאלהו egalehu, the regular future with a pleonastic pronoun added to it, according to the Hebrew idiom: "And all my raiment, I have stained it." The necessity of the verb's being in the past tense seems to have given occasion to the alteration made in the end of the word. The conversive ו vau at the beginning of the

sentence affects the verb, though not joined to it; of which there are many examples: - anithani remim umikkarney עניתני רמים ומקרני "And thou wilt hear me (or hear thou me) from among the horns of the unicorns," Psa 22:22. - L.

Instead of על בגדי al begadai, upon my garments, one of my ancient MSS. has לארץ בגדי larets begadai, to the earth: but this word is partly effaced, and על al written in the margin by a later hand.

ISAIAH 63: 4 For the day of vengeance was in my heart, and the year of my redeemed has come.

ISAIAH 63: 5 I looked, and there was no one to help; and I wondered that there was no one to uphold: therefore my own arm brought salvation to me; and my wrath, it upheld me.

Verse 5

And my fury "And mine indignation" - For וחמתי vachamathi, nineteen MSS. (three ancient) of Kennicott's, nine of De Rossi's, and one of mine, and four editions, have וצדקתי vetsidkathi, and my righteousness; from Isa 59:16, which I suppose the transcriber retained in his memory. It is true that the Versions are in favor of the common reading; but that noticed above seems to stand on good authority, and is a reading both pleasing and impressive. Opposite, in the margin, my MS. has the common reading by a later hand.

ISAIAH 63: 6 I trod down the peoples in my anger, and made them drunk in my wrath, and I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

Verse 6

And make them drunk in my fury "And I crushed them in mine indignation" - For ואשכרם vaashkerem, and I made them drunken, twenty-seven MSS., (three ancient), twelve of De Rossi's, and the old edition of 1488, have ואשברם vaashabberem, and I crushed them: and so the Syriac and Chaldee. The Septuagint have omitted this whole line.

ISAIAH 63: 7 I will make mention of the loving kindnesses of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he has bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses.

Verse 7

I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord - The prophet connects the preceding mercies of God to the Jews with the present prospect he has of their redemption by the Messiah; thus making a circle in which eternal goodness revolves. The remaining part of this chapter, with the whole chapter following, contains a penitential confession and supplication of the Israelites in their present state of dispersion, in which they have so long marvellously subsisted, and still continue to subsist, as a

people; cast out of their country; without any proper form of civil polity or religious worship, their temple destroyed, their city desolated and lost to them, and their whole nation scattered over the face of the earth, apparently deserted and cast off by the God of their fathers, as no longer his peculiar people.

They begin with acknowledging God's great mercies and favors to their nation, and the ungrateful returns made to them on their part, that by their disobedience they had forfeited the protection of God, and had caused him to become their adversary. And now the prophet represents them, induced by the memory of the great things that God had done for them, as addressing their humble supplication for the renewal of his mercies. They beseech him to regard them in consideration of his former loving-kindness, they acknowledge him for their Father and Creator, they confess their wickedness and hardness of heart, they entreat his forgiveness, and deplore their present miserable condition under which they have so long suffered. It seems designed as a formulary of humiliation for the Israelites, in order to their conversion.

The whole passage is in the elegiac form, pathetic and elegant; but it has suffered much in our present copy by the mistakes of transcribers.

The praises of the Lord "The praise of Jehovah" - For תהלות *tehilloth*, plural, twenty-nine MSS. (three ancient) and two editions, have תהלת *tehillath*, in the singular number; and so the Vulgate renders it; and one of the Greek versions, in the margin of Cod. Marchal. and in the text of MSS. Pachom. and 1. D. 2: *την ανεσθη Κυριου*, "the praise of the Lord." - L.

ISAIAH 63: 8 For he said, "Surely, they are my people, children who will not deal falsely:" so he was their Saviour.

Verse 8

So he was their Savior. In all their affliction "And he became their Savior in all their distress" - I have followed the translation of the Septuagint in the latter part of the eighth, and the former part of the ninth verse; which agrees with the present text, a little differently divided as to thee members of the sentence. They read מכל *miccol*, out of all, instead of בכל *bechol*, in all, which makes no difference in the sense; and צר *tsar* they understand as ציר *tsir*. Καὶ ἐγένετο αὐτοῖς εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐκ πάσης θλιψεως αὐτῶν· οὐ πρεσβυς, οὐδὲ ἀγγελος. "And he was salvation to them in all their tribulation; neither an ambassador nor an angel, but himself saved them." An angel of his presence means an angel of superior order, in immediate attendance upon God. So the angel of the Lord says to Zacharias, "I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God," Luk 1:19. The presence of Jehovah, Exo 33:14, Exo 33:15, and the angel, Exo 33:20, Exo 33:21, is Jehovah himself; here an angel of his presence is opposed to Jehovah himself, as an angel is in the following passages of the same book of Exodus. After their idolatrous worshipping of the golden calf, "when God had said to Moses, I will send an angel before thee - I will not go up in the midst of thee - the people mourned," Exo 33:2-4. God afterwards comforts Moses, by saying, "My presence (that is I myself in person, and not by an angel) will go with thee," Exo 33:14. Αὐτος προπορευσομαι σου, "I myself will go before thee," as the Septuagint render it.

The MSS. and editions are much divided between the two readings of the text and margin in the common copies, לא לו, not, and לו לו, to him. All the ancient Versions express the chetib reading, לא לו, not. "And he bare then and carried them all the days of old

And he took them up, and he bore them, all the days of old" - See the note on Isa 46:3 (note). - L.

ISAIAH 63: 9 In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bore them, and carried them all the days of old.

ISAIAH 63: 10 But they rebelled, and grieved his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he himself fought against them.

Verse 10

And he fought against them - Twenty-six MSS. (ten ancient) and the first edition, with another, add the conjunction וָוָו, והוא vehu, and he.

ISAIAH 63: 11 Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? where is he who put his holy Spirit in their midst?

Verse 11

Moses and his people "Moses his servant" - For עָמוּ ammo, his people, two MSS. (one of them ancient) and one of my own, (ancient), and one of De Rossi's, and the old edition of 1488, and the Syriac, read עַבְדוֹ abdo, his servant. These two words have been mistaken one for the other in other places; Psa 78:71, and Psa 80:5, for עָמוּ ammo, his people, and עַמְךָ ammecha, thy people, the Septuagint read עַבְדוֹ abdo, his servant, and עַבְדְּךָ abdecha, thy servant.

Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where etc. "How he brought them up from the sea, with the shepherd of his flock; how," etc. - For אֵיִה aiyeh, how, interrogative, twice, the Syriac Version reads אֵיִךְ eich, how, without interrogation, as that particle is used in the Syriac language, and sometimes in the Hebrew. See Rut 3:18; Ecc 2:16.

The shepherd of his flock - That is, Moses. The MSS. and editions vary in this word; some have it רֹעֵה roeh, in the singular number; so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Chaldee. Others רֹעֵי roey, plural, the shepherds. - L.

ISAIAH 63: 12 who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses? who divided the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name?

ISAIAH 63: 13 who led them through the depths, as a horse in the wilderness, so that they didn't stumble?

Verse 13

That led them through the deep - As a beast goeth down into the valley - In both these verses there is an allusion to the Israelites going through the Red Sea, in the bottom of which they found no more

inconvenience than a horse would in running in the desert, where there was neither stone nor mud; nor a beast in the valley, where all was plain and smooth.

ISAIAH 63: 14 As the livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused them to rest; so you led your people, to make yourself a glorious name.

Verse 14

The Spirit of the Lord caused him to rest "The Spirit of Jehovah conducted them" - For תניחנו *tenichennu*, caused him to rest, the Septuagint have ὠδηγησεν αὐτους, conducted them; they read תנחם *tanchem*. The Syriac, Chaldee, and Vulgate read תנחנו *tanchennu*, conducted him. Two MSS. have the word without the 'yod in the middle.

ISAIAH 63: 15 Look down from heaven, and see from the habitation of your holiness and of your glory: where are your zeal and your mighty acts? the yearning of your heart and your compassion is restrained toward me.

Verse 15

And thy strength "And thy mighty power" - For גבורתיך *geburotheycha*, plural, thirty-two MSS. (seven ancient) and twenty-one of De Rossi's, and seven editions, have גבורתך *geburathecha*, singular.

Are they restrained? - For אלי *elai*, from (or in regard to) me, the Septuagint and Syriac read אלינו *eleynu*, from us. - L.

ISAIAH 63: 16 For you are our Father, though Abraham doesn't know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us: you, LORD, are our Father; our Redeemer from everlasting is your name.

Verse 16

Our Redeemer; thy name is from everlasting "O deliver us for the sake of thy name" - The present text reads, as our translation has rendered it, "Our Redeemer, thy name is from everlasting." But instead of מעולם *meolam*, from everlasting, an ancient MS. has למען *lemaan*, for the sake of, which gives a much better sense. To show the impropriety of the present reading, it is sufficient to observe, that the Septuagint and Syriac translators thought it necessary to add עלינו *aleynu*, upon us, to make out the sense; That is, "Thy name is upon us, or we are called by thy name, from of old." And the Septuagint have rendered גאלנו *goalenu*, in the imperative mood, ῥῦσαι ἡμας, deliver us. - L.

ISAIAH 63: 17 O LORD, why do you make us to err from your ways, and harden our heart from your fear? Return for your servants' sake, the tribes of your inheritance.

Verse 17

Why hast thou made us to err - A mere Hebraism, for why hast thou permitted us to err. So, Lead us not into temptation; do not suffer us to fall into that to which we are tempted.

ISAIAH 63: 18 Your holy people possessed it but a little while: our adversaries have trodden down your sanctuary.

Verse 18

The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while "It is little that they have taken possession of thy holy mountain" - The difficulty of the construction in this place is acknowledged on all hands. Vitringa prefers that sense as the least exceptionable which our translation has expressed; in which however there seems to be a great defect; that is, the want of that in the speaker's view must have been the principal part of the proposition, the object of the verb, the land, or it, as our translators supply it, which surely ought to have been expressed, and not to have been left to be supplied by the reader. In a word, I believe there is some mistake in the text; and here the Septuagint help us out; they had in their copy ἡ ὄρος, mountain, instead of ἡ ἀμ, people, τοῦ ὁσίου σου, the mountain of thy Holy One. "Not only have our enemies taken possession of Mount Sion, and trodden down thy sanctuary; even far worse than this has befallen us; thou hast long since utterly cast us off, and dost not consider us as thy peculiar people." - L.

ISAIAH 63: 19 We have become as they over whom you never bear rule, as those who were not called by your name.
