

ABRAHAM IBN EZRA'S
COMMENTARY ON THE CANTICLES,

AFTER THE FIRST RECENSION:

EDITED FROM TWO MSS., WITH A TRANSLATION,

BY

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LONDON:
TRÜBNER AND CO.

1874.

PREFACE.

THE following pages contain the text, with translation, of an unedited edition of Ibn Ezra's Commentary on the Song of Songs.

It is well known that Ibn Ezra issued more than one edition of some of his works. Besides the commentaries on Exodus and Esther printed in the Rabbinical Bibles, a shorter commentary on Exodus has been published by Reggio¹, and another commentary on Esther by Zedner². Mortara has published³ from an imperfect MS. in his possession part of another commentary on Genesis, and Weiss has published⁴ the הקדמה from a Bodleian MS. of the same unfinished commentary⁵. I hope soon to publish his shorter commentary on Daniel according to three MSS.

The late eminent scholar Rapoport⁶ has inferred the composition of a commentary on the Canticles, different from the printed

¹ ביאור על ספר שמות נקרא הקצר (Prague, 1840).

² ויוסף אברהם הוא פירוש הראב"ע על אסתר מהדורה חניינה (London, 1850; re-edited, Berlin, 1873).

³ *Ozar Nechmad*, ii. 209. The shorter commentary on Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy contained in the same MS. is a mere extract from I. E.'s large commentary, made by one of his pupils. See *ibid.* note.

⁴ *Beth Hamidrash*, Sivan (No. 1), 1865.

⁵ The Bodleian has two MSS. (Mich. 238, Opp. Add. 4to, 22) of this commentary, which extend only to xii. 11. Michael's MS. contains an addition on chapters 48, 49, preceded by this notice, יעקב ממדוריל שמעתי, אני יוסף בר' יעקב ממדוריל שמעתי. This MS. also contains (which Oppenheim's does not) the Preface, the beginning, and some concluding verses which give the date (4927, A.D. 1167); see Dukes in *Hamaggid*, 1860, p. 114.

⁶ *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für jüdische Theologie*, iv. 270.

OXFORD:

BY E. PICKARD HALL AND J. H. STACY,

PRINTERS TO THE UNIVERSITY.

one, from two references, one in the 'Ohel Joseph' of Joseph ben Eliezer ha-Sephardi, the other in Kimchi's 'Book of Roots,' which are not in his opinion to be satisfied by the printed edition. The present edition, however, is not the one he requires to satisfy his conclusion. But the printed commentary is, no doubt, alone sufficient to explain the first reference, as, I think, it would have been to explain the second, but the difficulty in the quotation of Kimchi does not exist. The author of 'Ohel Joseph,' a super-commentary on Ibn Ezra's commentary on the Pentateuch, says (Parashah Bereshith, § 86), וסוד עול' קטן הזכירוהו, רז"ל במדרש קהלת ור' אברה' רמז בו סודות נפלאי' בפירוש שיר השירי. בענין מה דורך מדוד וכו'. Ibn Ezra has, certainly, no note on the actual words מה דורך מדוד (v. 9), but his explanation of the answer to this question, which is contained in the next seven verses, gives the סודות נפלאים. Kimchi, in his 'Book of Roots' (s. v. כפר), says, והחכם רבי אברהם אבן עזרא, כתב כי הוא אשכל הדקל כי יש לדקל שמות משתנים כפי שנוי זמנו ויש לו זמן הנקרא בלשון ערבי כפ"ר ולו ריה טוב¹ of the ספר השרשים in the Bodleian Library, three omit this passage altogether; five have ור' משה אבן עזרא, and one has ור' משה, and these are the better MSS. This passage, therefore, is not from our commentator, but from Moses Ibn Ezra, and probably to be found in his ענק².

It is possible, however, that Ibn Ezra issued a third edition of this commentary, for I have found an anonymous commentator on the Canticles in a Bodleian MS. (Opp. 625, fol.

¹ *Rabbi Davidis Kimchi Radicum Liber &c.* Ediderunt J. H. R. Biesenthal et F. Lebrecht, Berol. 1847.

² I am indebted to Mr. Neubauer for this communication about the manuscripts. The difficulty, therefore, vanishes. Did it exist I think it might be explained. Ibn Ezra (on i. 14), though himself preferring another opinion, says, יש אומרים שהוא הכותב, This agrees with Kimchi as far as the word דקל, except that he seems to give as I. E.'s own opinion an opinion which I. E. has only mentioned; the words that follow (כי יש לדקל וגו') might, I conceive, be Kimchi's explanation, and would not be necessarily a continuation of I. E.'s words.

223) giving two explanations in his name, of which one only can be found in the edition now edited, whilst the printed commentary contains neither. On i. 15 עיניך יונים this commentator, who has already mentioned (but not as Ibn Ezra's, as it is in both editions) the explanation from the dove's fidelity besides three other explanations of the figure, says, וא"ע כתב בעיני היונים שהן בדמות אורגים (?) מצד אל צד וככה הזכירו הקדרים בשירי השקם. This does not agree with the commentaries we possess. Again, on vii. 9 הולך לדודי, the same commentator says, וא"ע פי' הולך לדודי וכל אחד מהם אומרים שילך לידידותי, ולאהבתי למישרים דודי כמו שם אתן את דודי לך פי' אהבתי. This explanation of דודי = דודי cannot be inferred from the printed edition, and there is no note on this verse in the present edition, but Ibn Ezra's note on i. 2 explains it, where he says דודי in vii. 9 is a שם (love) and not a תאר השם (beloved one).

As to the date of this edition, I have no certain information to offer, but I think we may form a conclusion which admits of no reasonable doubt. We know on Ibn Ezra's own authority that the commentary on Ecclesiastes¹ was finished at Rome in the year 4900 (A.D. 1140). It is probable, as Grätz has remarked², that the four other books of the Megilloth were commented on at the same time. This probability receives support from the edition now published. We find from the prefatory verses in the Paris and Berlin MSS. that this commentary was dedicated to a pupil named Benjamin. This is, no doubt, his pupil Benjamin ben Joab, to whom, according to a Vatican MS. (84)³, he dedicated his commentary on Job, which was written at Rome, and, it can hardly be doubted, shortly after his commentary on Ecclesiastes⁴. That this commentary was composed in Italy is likely from his explanation of שושנה (ii. 1) by בלע"ז גליו, for גליו is undoubtedly the Italian *giglio*,

¹ See the prefatory and concluding verses.

² *Geschichte der Juden*, vi. 408.

³ *Assemani Biblioth. Vat. Cod. MSS. Catalogus*, i. 60.

⁴ Cf. Grätz, *ibid.* vi. 409.

and one would have expected the Spanish word¹. It is probable, therefore, that the printed commentary on Ecclesiastes and the present commentary on the Canticles belong to the same date, and this adds to the probability that he began his exegetical labours by commenting on the five Megilloth. The present edition, moreover, contains no reference to any previous commentary, which is the case with the commentaries on the other Megilloth², excepting that on Ruth³, which must be considered to belong to a second recension, like Zedner's edition of the commentary on Esther⁴, and the printed commentary on the Canticles⁵.

I consider, therefore, this commentary to belong undoubtedly to the first recension. Apart from internal evidence this conclusion is supported by the Oxford MS. in which this edition is followed by the printed edition connected by the following notice: ואולם חודש למבאר רצון אזה לחדש פנים שניים להוסיף על: הביאור הראשון וחולק ג'כ לשלש פנים. I shall not now enter upon the question when the second recension was issued, but one thing, I think, is certain, namely, that the two editions were issued at a considerable interval of time apart. The interpretations which Ibn Ezra gives are not unfrequently so different in the two commentaries that it would be difficult to account for the variation in opinion on any other hypothesis. Compare, for example, in the two editions his explanations of the following words: כעמיה (i. 7), תורים (i. 10),

¹ The Oxford reading alone would be no argument. It is, however, supported by the Berlin MS., where גוי is only another form of writing the same word, or may be, like בלעז, a blunder.

² Grätz says, 'Endlich spricht noch dafür, dass er in den Commentarien zu Megillot keines seiner Werke citirt' &c. His statement, however, does not agree with the facts in the cases of the commentary on Ruth and the printed commentary on Canticles.

³ On Ruth i. 15 כנר פירשנו בחוריה.

⁴ On Esther ii. 6 כאשר פירשתי בספר דניאל, on iv. 5 כאשר פירשתי בספר דניאל, כאשר פירשתי בס' דניאל.

⁵ On Cant. vi. 5 כאשר פירשתי בספר דניאל.

שלמי (iv. 2), מתאימות (iv. 1), שגלשו (ii. 13), כמדר (ii. 5), רפדני (iv. 4), כהם (v. 11), עמי נריב (vi. 12), שלהבה (viii. 6). Similar instances may be found in the Second and Third Expositions. I have entered only briefly into the literary questions connected with this edition, but I hope to give a fuller critical account as regards the dates and recensions of Ibn Ezra's works in my introduction to his shorter commentary on Daniel.

Of the three¹ MSS. I have used, the Oxford (Opp. 221, fol. 87) and Paris² (334, fol. 67) contain the whole commentary, the Berlin³ (291, Qu^o.) has only the First Exposition. All three contain numerous unimportant variations. The Paris MS. is the best. The Oxford MS. contains several additions not to be found in the Paris and Berlin MSS., nearly all of which, however, have been clearly added from the later edition of the commentary, and can be as easily omitted as they have been inserted. These additions are placed in my text in brackets []. It would have been more critical, perhaps, to have transferred them to the foot of the page, which I have done where they do not agree with the context⁴. I was not aware of the existence of the Berlin MS. till my text had been arranged and printed. It

¹ Steinschneider would lead me to suppose the existence at Leyden of a fourth manuscript: 'Unedirte Recensionen von Hohl. und Daniel habe ich in Oxford, Berlin und Leyden gefunden' (*Hamazkir*, 1873, p. 41 n.). I do not find it in his Leyden Catalogue, but it may be a recent discovery. The Vatican has, perhaps, a MS. of this edition. I see that Codex 78 in Assemani's Catalogue contains Ibn Ezra's commentary on the Canticles, and it begins, like the Berlin MS., with the lines אני אל אדרוש וגו'.

² The Paris MS. has been very inaccurately described in the *Catalogue des Manuscrits hébreux et samaritains de la Bibliothèque impériale*: 'Commentaire du même auteur sur le Cantique des Cantiques. Le texte diffère souvent des textes imprimés.' Mr. Neubauer, who suspected it might be another copy of the Oxford MS., examined it and very kindly collated it for me.

³ Steinschneider would lead me to suppose that the Berlin MS. contained the complete commentary: 'Comm^{um} ineditum triplicem detexti quoque nuper in Biblioth. Reg. Berolin.' (*Cat. Cod. Hebr. Acad. Lugduno-Bataviae*, 1858, p. 357 n.). This manuscript was collated for me by Dr. Ehrlich.

⁴ Vide Corrigenda.

contains, however, few readings which I should have preferred to those which I had already adopted. I have given a synopsis of its variations as an Appendix, and have adopted one or two better readings in the Corrigenda. Paris additions are put in parentheses (). What I have supplied myself is marked { }. My translation is a literal one, but I have tried to express Ibn Ezra's meaning with sufficient clearness. The printed commentary has appeared in an old Latin translation by Gilbert Générard (Paris, 1570, 4to., and 1585, 8vo.).

I shall conclude this preface with an extract from Dr. Grätz¹, in which I think he has taken a correct view of Ibn Ezra and his commentary:—‘Ibn Ezra was fully conscious that the Canticles in their simple literal meaning contain a love-story, but he had not the independence and not sufficient boldness to follow up this knowledge, and, consequently, in the exposition of this book as of other books of Holy Scripture, especially the Pentateuch, he has employed all sorts of devices as a blind, so as not to be charged with heresy as being a rationalist. He explained the Canticles in a simple sense as a love-song, at the same time applying them in an allegorical sense to the synagogue. But he was only serious with the First Exposition (called by him הפעם השנית, because the First puts together the grammatical and lexicographical matter), in which he conceived the Canticles as a song of the love that existed between a young girl and a shepherd. As Ibn Ezra possessed a fine exegetical tact, his “Second” Exposition contains much that is right, and had it been made use of by the later commentators, it might have led to the just interpretation of the Canticles. In truth it is his own fault that the sober side of his commentary was overlooked; he has played at hide and seek.’

H. J. MATHEWS.

4, ARLINGTON VILLAS, BRIGHTON,
February, 1874.

¹ *Schir ha-Schirim oder das Salomonische Hohelied übersetzt und kritisch erläutert* (Wien, 1871), p. 119.

TRANSLATION

OF THE

COMMENTARY OF IBN EZRA ON THE CANTICLES.

Abraham¹ the Spaniard saith: I will comment on this book with all my ability,

As far as it extends, if God be with me.

And, that I may be perfect in his ways, I have made three expositions:

In the first I shall explain every obscure word;

In the second I shall point out its natural meaning after the Peshat;

In the third I shall comment on it after the Midrash.

THE FIRST EXPOSITION.

I. 2. [ישקני] The verb נשק without the letter ל intervening before its object means to kiss the mouth, as here; with ל to kiss the hand or the shoulder or the cheek, as in 1 Kings xix. 20, Gen. xxix. 11.

[דוריק] We also find the singular דורי [in this sense], cf. vii. 10, where it is a noun²; at another time it is an adjective³, cf. Is. v. 1. One⁴ of the Geonim says it is the saliva under the tongue, like דורים (Prov. vii. 18).

3. [חורק] Feminine gender agreeing with שמן, even if שמן is not found feminine elsewhere. And so בית, which is

¹ The dedicatory lines in the Paris and Berlin MSS. have an interest in the original only as a playing upon words, which cannot be reproduced in a translation. ² love. Samuel ben Meir: הולך לדורי שם דבר.

הולך לדורו כמו כי טובים דורך מין. Cf. Preface, p. vii.

³ beloved one. ⁴ Saadiah, as I. E. says in the printed commentary.

masculine, is in another place (Prov. ii. 18) feminine; so also the word שאול¹ is used in two genders.

I. 4. [נוכירה] Some explain² from אזכרתה *the smell of incense*. Cf. זכרו (Hos. xiv. 8).

[מישרים] The right explanation is that it is an epithet³ of wine, cf. למישרים (vii. 10), במישרים (Prov. xxiii. 31). The מ of מין is to be repeated before מישרים⁴, cf. Is. xlviii. 14⁵.

5. [ונאוו] לא נאוו *fair*. Cf. Prov. xix. 10, where לא נאוו means *does not become*. The נ is for the Niphal form⁶. Cf. נעשה⁷ (Lev. vii. 9).

6. [שחרחרת] The doubling here is employed to modify and not to strengthen the meaning⁸. Cf. אדמרמת (Lev. xiii. 43), which means *a little red*.

[ששופתני] The first ש stands for אשר, as in שבשפלנו (Ps. cxxxvi. 23). The meaning of שופתני is *laid me bare*, cf. שופתו (Job. xxviii. 7).

[נחרו בי] נלחמו בי *fought against me*. The נ is formative for the Niphal form. Cf. לחרחר (Prov. xxvi. 21).

[נוטרה] Watcher. Adjective⁹.

7. [איכה] Some say it has the same meaning as איפה *where*.

[שלמה] The ש stands for אשר, like the ש of שאתה (Judg. vi. 17).

[כעמיה] According to some *leaping*, and so they explain ויעמ (1 Sam. xiv. 32); according to others *ashamed*, comparing יעמה (Lev. xiii. 45). But the right explanation in

¹ Cf. Is. xiv. 9, and I. E.'s note.

² *we will smell*. Kimchi says,

ענין ריה וקובל הדבר ברצון. ³ An anonymous commentator in a Bodleian MS. thus explains מישרים as used of wine: ההולך מן הדב וזב דרך הגרון: אל המעין דרך ישר מחוק שהוא מחוק וערב ואינו מתעכב (ב) חוק הגרון. ⁴ That is, ממשרים אהבון = מישרים אהבון, they love thee *more than* wine that glides down the throat. ⁵ Where the ב of בבב is to be repeated before

נשדים. ⁶ Cf. I. E.'s note on Is. lii. 7. ⁷ Cf. I. E.'s note. ⁸ I. E.

says in his note on Ps. xlv. 3, והעין והלמ"ד הוא לחסרון רק הפ"א והעין, כשהם כפולים הם באים ליחרון.

⁹ *a watching woman*, LXX. φυλάκισσας ἐν ἀμπελώσιν. We should say substantive. Cf. Ewald, *Lehrbuch*, § 188 b.

my opinion is¹ from ועומך עמה (Is. xxii. 17), יעמה (Ps. cix. 19).

8. [בעקבי] *The marks of the footsteps of the sheep*. Cf. ועקבותיך (Ps. lxxvii. 20).

[גדיותיך] גדי without עוים is the young of any clean beast.

9. [לסוסתי] The י is redundant. Cf. מלאתי (Is. i. 21), אוהבתי (Hos. x. 11).

[דמיתך] *I compare thee*². Cf. תדמיון (Is. xl. 18).

10. [בתורים] According to some *rows of earrings with frontlet of gold*; others say *figures [of doves]*, explaining from תאר; but I think it probable that it occurs in no other book, and means *bridles*.

11. [נקודות] Cf. נקודים (Gen. xxx. 39).

12. [במסבו] Cf. ומסבי (2 Kings xxiii. 5). *The circular reception-hall*³.

[נרדי] An aromatic similar to saffron.

13. [צרור המור] According to some מור is *musk*, but the word אריתי *I have gathered* (v. 1) forbids this explanation. It is a species of choice aromatic. The meaning of צרור is the same as in Prov. vii. 20.

14. [אשכל הכופר] The Arabic *kāfūr* and the Spanish *canfora*, which grows in the form of clusters. Some say it is a species of *caryophyllus*, but the former opinion is the more probable.

[עין גדי] The name of a place in the land of Israel where the 'cluster of camphire' is found.

15. [יונים] = כיונים *like doves*. Cf. איש אוכלה הוא⁴ (Deut. iv. 24).

16. [רעננה] *Fresh and soft*.

17. [רהיטני] *Like beams of a man's house in the Mishna*⁵.

¹ *wrapped*.

² Cf. Rashi's note.

³ Cf. printed commentary.

⁴ Cf. I. E.'s note.

⁵ These words are not in the Mishna, but in the Babylonian Talmud (Ta'anith, fol. 11 a; Hagigah, fol. 16 a). Our editions read קורח for רהיטני, but Rabinovicz (*Variae Lectiones in Mischnam et in Talmud Babylonicum*) gives רהיטני as the reading of MSS. Rashi (note on

I. 17. [ברותים] A ἀπαξ λεγόμενον. All the commentators say it is the same as ברושים; no letters, however, are interchanged except the quiescents.

II. 1. [חבצלת] Rose.

[שושנת] The Italian *giglio*¹. It is probably so called because it has six (שש) petals.

3. [כתפוח] The tree.

4. [ודגלו] His standard, like דגל elsewhere.

5. [סמכוני] Piel.

[באשישות] i. e. the wine in them.

[רפדוני] Make my couch (רפידתי) about me of apples. Or, following the Arabic², = סעדוני support me, or חזקוני strengthen me.

7. [בצבאות] From צבי gazelle. The plural masculine is צבאים (1 Chron. xii. 8), and the plural feminine צבאות.

[תעירו] Cf. ויעירני (Zech. iv. 1).

8. [מקפץ] The Chaldee renders לנתר (Lev. xi. 21) by this word³.

9. [כתלנו] Wall, as in the Chaldee.

[משגיה] Looking. Cf. השגיה (Ps. xxxiii. 14).

[מציץ] Seeing, as may be gathered from the context. Some explain it from ציצת ראשי (Ezek. viii. 3)⁴.

[החרכים] The Chaldee renders חלון by חרקה.

11. [הסתיו] The Chaldee renders חורף by הסתיו.

[חלף] Is cut off. Cf. יחלף (Is. ii. 18).

12. [הזמיר] Cf. זמיר Is. xxv. 5. It is to be understood here literally of the singing of birds.

[התור] The turtle-dove, like תורים (Lev. v. 7, et al.).

13. [התאנה] The tree.

II. 13. [חנמה] Cf. ויהנמו¹ (Gen. i. 2). חנמ expresses preparing. [פניה] The unripe fruit; *fijj* in Arabic² is similar.

[כמדר] When the blossom falls and the branches divide and the grapes appear, they are called כמדר.

14. [בחגוי] From חוג (Isa. xl. 22), חוגי being a transposition of חוגי; or חוג and חוגי have two different roots. The meaning is, a high place. Cf. בחגוי (Jer. xlix. 16)³.

[המדרגה] As it were a flight of stone steps one above the other. Cf. המדרגות (Ezek. xxxviii. 20).

[ערב] Pleasant and agreeable. Cf. ערבה (Jer. xxxi. 26).

[נאווה] Cf. תאווה (Gen. iii. 6).

15. [אחוו] Imperative mood⁴. In form like שְׁחַדִּי (Job vi. 22). A third instance occurs in Scripture, אֶחָבִי (Ps. xxxi. 24).

[מחבלים] Destroying. Cf. וחבל (Eccles. v. 5).

17. [שיפוח היום] = שיפוח רוח היום till the breeze of day blow.

[הרי בתר] The mountains of division and separation. Cf. ויבחר (Gen. xv. 10).

III. 2. [בשוקים] Streets. The Chaldee renders החוצה (Gen. xxxix. 13) by לשוקא.

4. [הורתי] She who bare me. Cf. הורי (Gen. xlix. 26).

6. [כתמרות] = עמודים pillars. Cf. תימורות (1 Kings vi. 29). They are perhaps so called because they are like palm-trees (תמרים) in their height.

[אבקת] Spices powdered fine as dust (אבק).

[רוכל] Merchant. Cf. רוכליך (Ezek. xxvii. 13, 17, 22).

8. [אחוזי הרב] Cf. לבוש הבדים (Ezek. ix. 11, et al.). I do not know of a third instance in Scripture.

9. [אפריון] Palanquin. A ἀπαξ λεγόμενον.

10. [רפידתו] Its couch. Cf. ירפד (Job xli. 22).

this passage of the Canticles) and Kimchi (ספר השרשים s. v.) both quote רדויש. ¹ Cf. Preface, p. vii. ² rafada, he helped, assisted; propped.

³ Onkelos translates לקפצא.

⁴ Kimchi on the word ציצית says, ו"מ, כוזה מציץ מן החרכים כלומר מראה ציציות ראשו.

¹ Cf. I. E.'s note and the printed commentary. ² *fijj*, unripe; *fajājat*, unripe fruit. ³ Cf. Kimchi's note on Jer. xlix. 16. ⁴ Samuel ben Meir:

לשון פעלו כמו מדוע אחרו פעמי מרכבותיו. Anon. Oxf. MS.: כמו נאחוו. בשבילנו.

III. 10. [רצוף] Some explain it from רצפה *pavement* (Esth. i. 6), but the right opinion, I think, is that it is a past participle¹ from the root of רצפה *live coal* (Is. vi. 6).

IV. 1. [שגלשו] According to some *which are made bald*², comparing the Chaldee, which renders קרה³ (Lev. xiii. 41) by גלוש; but this meaning is improbable. According to others the ל is epenthetic. The right explanation, in my opinion, is that it is a ἀπαξ λεγόμενον and means *which are let loose and come down*.

2. [הקצובות] *Which are of one size* (קצב אחד, 1 Kings vii. 37).

[מתאימות] *Bearing twins* (תאומים).

3. [ומדברך] *Thy speech*.

[כפלה] According to some interpreters *half*⁴ of a pomegranate; but the right explanation, in my opinion, is *the blossom* which falls from the pomegranate when it begins to *break*, cf. פולה (Ps. cxli. 7).

[רקתך] The part above the eye at the corners of the forehead.

[מבעד] = מבפנים *within*. Cf. הבעד (Job xxii. 13).

[צמתך] According to some *the flowing hair*. Cf. צמתך (Is. xlvii. 2).

4. [לתלות] According to some *to hang swords on* (לתלות פיות), comparing פיות in Judg. iii. 16, and it is compounded of two words; according to others the ת stands for א, and the word comes from the verb אלה (Job xxxv. 11), but some grammarians say that the ת is formative, as in תלבושת, and the א is dropped, the meaning, in either case, being *to inform* wayfarers the way by means of its great height.

[שלטי] Cf. השלמים (Jer. li. 11) *the quivers*.

V. 5. [עפרים] *The fawns of the deer*.

8. [תשורי] = תראי *see*. Cf. אשורנו (Num. xxiv. 17).

9. [לבבתיני] *Thou hast taken away my heart* (לבב). Cf. מסעה (Is. x. 33) *he will cut off the branch* (סעיה); similarly ושרשך (Ps. lii. 7).

[ענק] *Chains and necklaces*. Cf. וענקים (Prov. i. 9).

12. [גל] Cf. גלות (Josh. xv. 19). Synonymous with מעין.

13. [שלחך] *Thy plantation*, cf. בשלחה¹ (Is. xxvii. 8); or, *the branch that shoots out* (המשלח) on every side, cf. תשלח (Ps. lxxx. 12), שלוחותיה (Is. xvi. 8).

[פרדס] *Garden*.

14. [קנה] = קנה בשם (Exod. xxx. 23) '*sweet calamus*'.

[ואהלול] *Aromatic wood*². Cf. באהלים (Num. xxiv. 6).

16. [צפון] = רוח צפון *north wind*.

V. 1. [איתי] = לקטתי *I have gathered*. Cf. וארוה (Ps. lxxx. 13).

[יערי] Some explain it like ביערת הדבש³ (1 Sam. xiv. 27).

Others say it is a cane, and means *sugar-cane*, comparing the Chaldee which renders סוף by יערה (Exod. ii. 3).

2. [דופק] Cf. מתרפקים (Judg. xix. 22). דופק refers to דודי not to קול, cf. ii. 8.

[קווצות] *The locks*. קווצות is a transposed form.

[רסיסי] = רביבים *showers*. Cf. לרום (Ezek. xlvi. 14).

3. [אטנפם] In Rabbinical literature this word means *to pollute, defile*.

5. [עובר] = עובר למחר (Gen. xxiii. 16) *current with the merchant*.

[המנעול] Cf. נעל (2 Sam. xiii. 18).

6. [חמק] *Waited a little*. חמק ועבר = חמק עבר, a past verb being followed by another verb without ו. Cf. Jud. v. 27. With חמק compare תתחמקין (Jer. xxxi. 22).

7. [רירי] The Arabic *milhafat*, = צעיף *veil*.

¹ כמו שרוף, as I. E. says in the printed commentary. ² Both Rashi and Joseph Kimchi explain from the Chaldee, but differently. Rashi: כשהבהמות יורדות מן ההר נמצא ההר נקרוז וממורט מהם. Joseph Kimchi: שנמרטו. ³ I. E. ought to have said גבה. ⁴ Cf. Rashi and Ginsburg *in loco*.

¹ Cf. I. E.'s note. ² Cf. I. E. on Ps. xlv. 9. ³ I. E. would explain ביערת הדבש like Kimchi ביערת הדבש; Rashi, however, explains it like I. E.'s second explanation of יערי.

- VIII. 6. [רשפיה] *The coals thereof.* Cf. רשף (Deut. xxxii. 24).
 [שלהבת] The ש stands for אשר, and the ל is quiescent.
 This is the only instance of the kind in Scripture.
 9. [טירת] *Palace.* Cf. טירותם (Num. xxxi. 10).

THE SECOND EXPOSITION.

This book surpasses all the songs which Solomon composed, and far be it, far be it that it should be understood as an erotic poem, but it is to be taken allegorically, like Ezekiel's prophecy concerning the synagogue of Israel, 'and behold thy time was the time of love' (xvi. 8)—'thy breasts are fashioned' (xvi. 7)—'and I covered thy nakedness' (xvi. 8)—'and thou becamest mine' (ib.); and, when it is said with reference to the captivity, 'where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?' (Is. l. 1); and, again, of future times, 'as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee' (Is. lxii. 5). For were it not a book of high import, as being inspired, it would not have been admitted into the canon¹. The following is the literal explanation, and in the Third Exposition I shall explain it allegorically.

(I. 2) *A damsel outside the city in the vineyards sees a shepherd passing by, and falls in love with him, and longs after him in her heart, and says, O that he would kiss me with repeated kisses! Then, as if he were listening to her, she says, For thy love gladdens the heart more than wine.* (3) Because of the fragrance of thine ointments, for thy name is as ointment which is poured forth, *the fragrance of which is diffused around, the damsels love thee.*

(4) *Each of the damsels says to him, Draw me! were even the king to bring me to his apartments we would rejoice more in thee.* The subject of the second אהבוך is again עלמות.

(5) *Then she turns her address to the damsels, who are the*

¹ On the expression לא היה משמא הידים see Ginsburg's Commentary on this book (p. 3).

'daughters of Jerusalem,' If compared with you I am black like Kedar's tents, *on which the sun is always striking*, yet I am comely and fair of form like the curtains of king Solomon; (6) think ye not that this blackness is the colour natural to me; it is only accidental and will go away; the sun has caused it, striking me in the open air, for my brothers have had a quarrel with me and put me keeper, though before this I have never kept even my own vineyard.

(7) *She turns to her beloved and says, Tell me where thou feedest thy flock and where thou makest them to rest, then, shepherd, I will turn, for I rather fear I may get mixed with the flocks of thy fellow-shepherds.*

(8) *He replies, If thou knowest not, betake thee in the foot-tracks of the flock and go feed the little kids, seeing thou art but little in years thyself, above the tents of my companions, where my place is.* (9) To a steed in Pharaoh's chariots, *which are of wood or iron*, I compare thee, *that is, to a fine object.* (10) Thy cheeks are comely, &c. *He compares the veil on her cheeks to the bridle on the mare's cheek, and her necklaces of strung pearls to the mare's neck.* (11) But none other than bridles of gold are meet for thee.

(12) *She answers, Although I have a sweet fragrance, the king indeed in his saloon doth long to inhale my nard,* (13) yet thou hast a far sweeter fragrance, for my beloved is a bundle of myrrh, and I long for him to lie all night betwixt my breasts, (14) that I may embrace him who is like a cluster of camphire in En-gedi.

(15) *He replies, Behold, thou art fair; thine eyes are doves' eyes, like the eyes of a dove which loves its mate and never leaves it.*

(16) *She answers, Behold, thou art fair; we need only a soft couch and cedars for the beams of our house, where we can dwell in retirement,* (II. 1) for here under the open sky I am like the rose of Sharon.

(2) *He replies, Thou art not like the lily of the valleys for all*

to gather, but as the lily among thorns so art thou among the daughters.

(3) *She answers*, As the apple-tree in the garden compared with other trees, so is my beloved for whom I long. (4) He brings¹ me to the house of wine and I drink abundantly with him, and were he to display his love openly like a standard, (5) then would I say to the damsels, Support me with flagons of wine, spread me a couch of apples, to smell and eat with the wine, *as a sick person does, before whom they put flagons of beverage and apples*; (6) finally, let my beloved's left arm be under my head, (7) and I would charge the damsels not to wake me from sleep till the impulse of love draws nigh. *The meaning of 'by the gazelles' is this: women are compared here to them, as you find in the book of Proverbs the young wife compared to the 'loving hind and pleasant roe' (v. 19); therefore, 'I charge you by what is like you' is equivalent to 'I charge you by yourselves.'*

(8) *The days in the vineyards are now over and the damsel returns home. The trees are beginning to blossom, and she says*, I hear my beloved!—(9) he runs like a gazelle—peeping from the lattice, perchance he sees me. (10) My beloved speaks and says to me, (14) Thou art like a dove in a high place where thou art hidden, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice.

(15) *She says to her attendants*, Go ye to the vineyard and guard it from the foxes, (16) for my beloved is mine and I am his, who is like a fawn that feeds among lilies, for his fragrance is scattered abroad. (17) And thou, my beloved, return now to thy place, until the breeze of day² blow, after the shadows lengthen, for it is now mid-day. *So her beloved goes his way.*

Then she has at night a dream. (III. 1) *She says*, Night after night as I lay on my bed I seemed to go round the city searching for my beloved; (3) and I asked the watchmen, Have ye

¹ In the printed commentary I. E. connects this and the following words with קמרת.

² That is, in the cool of the evening.

seen him whom my soul loveth? (4) and it appeared to me that I found him.

(6) *On waking she goes forth to seek him, and on seeing her he is astonished and says*, Who is this coming up from the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed [with myrrh and frankincense]? (7) mark the couch of Solomon! *He expresses his astonishment how she could go alone*, See, even king Solomon is obliged to have many valiant men to guard the object of his love (8) in his fear that robbers may carry her off by night; (9) further, he is obliged to make a palanquin, and all this for the sake of one of the daughters of Jerusalem; (11) he also proclaims that they shall do him honour, and he puts on his head the royal diadem, to appear great in his loved one's eyes. And yet thou, my companion, art fairer than she!

(IV. 1) Like a flock of goats. *When a flock is on a mountain you see one above the other.*—(2) Thy teeth. *Thy teeth are white like a flock of ewes that have been washed.*—And none is bereft among them. *There is not among them a broken tooth, and they are as it were twins.*—(3) Like a thread of scarlet. *Red and fine.*—(4) *The jewels with which she is decorated answer to the shields.*—(5) Thy two breasts. *Thy two breasts have a sweet fragrance, like two fawns which feed among lilies.*

(6) As thou saidst to me, 'Until the breeze of day blow [and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a gazelle or a young hart upon the mountains of separation], I took me to the mountains of myrrh, because of its sweet fragrance, that is, to thyself. (7) But how can I praise thee more? for thou art altogether fair. (8) Come now with me away from Lebanon, for why wilt thou look on me from a high place and frighten me from coming to thee, as if on that spot were a den of lions? (12) Behold, thou art regarded as a close-barred garden, into which one cannot enter. (13, 14) Thy plantation is as a garden of pomegranates and all choice fruits with all spices intermixed. *He means to say*, In thee is blended every sweet and pleasant smell.

(15) Thou art like a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, which refresh the weary soul.

(16) *She answers*, Awake thou north wind, let my beloved come. *Her meaning is*, Let my beloved now go to his own garden; but as the north and south winds will awake and blow upon my garden, so that its spices shall flow forth, my beloved can then come back. *So he goes his way*.

(V. 1) *But she longs for him after he says to her*, I am come into my garden and have gathered my myrrh, and have given my friends and companions to eat, and have given them to drink to their fill.

(2) *Then she sees in a dream the form of her beloved and says*, Although I was asleep my heart was awake, and it appeared to me that my beloved was come. I heard the voice of my beloved knocking, saying, My head is filled with dew through waiting outside; he tarried a little while; (3) then I thought in my heart, 'but I have taken off my dress;' (6) and my soul failed me when he spoke to me, saying, Then I must go, as thou art so long opening.

(8) *On waking she says*, I charge you, what will ye tell him? tell him I am sick with love.

(12) *The pupil of the eye is compared to doves on streams of water, the streams of water being the white part of the eyes.*—

(13) His cheeks. *The hair on both sides is like towers of aromatics.*—Lilies. *In the sweetness of their smell.*—(14) *His fingers are wheels¹ of gold, and the hair on them is compared to the Tarshish-stone.*—*His belly is girt with a white garment overlaid with sapphires, which are red.* That ספיר is a red stone is proved by Lam. iv. 7, where ספיר corresponds with פנינים (of which ארמו is used) as חלב with שלג, for the simile is only repeated in other words; in Exod. xxiv. 10 לבנת is to be explained from לבנה (brick) and not from לבן (white), as is proved by the word כמעשה².

¹ I. E. may mean, as Altschul explains the metaphor: 'His fingers, when spread out, are likened to spokes of golden wheels.' Cf. Rashbam.

² Cf. I. E. in the printed commentary, and on Exod. xxiv. 10, Lam. iv. 7, Is. liv. 11.

It is not possible that this is a description of his belly, for he is not naked.

(VI. 2) My beloved is gone down to his garden. *To be taken literally.*

(4) *He replies on seeing her*, Thou art fair like bannered hosts—(5) thy hair is like a flock of goats—(6) thy teeth like ewes—(7) thy temple like the pomegranate blossom. *He means*, Behold, these are signs that thou art my former love, and thou art not to be confounded with others, for thou art one, and none resembleth thee; (8) behold, king Solomon hath sixty queens; (9) my dove, though, is but one, and even those queens would congratulate her and marvelling exclaim, (10) 'Who is this that looketh forth as the dawn?' (11) I am come down into the nut-garden to see if the pomegranates have blossomed, that we may caress there.

(12) *She answers*, Not knowing in what garden thou mightest be my soul put me in chariots of a noble people¹ to seek thee. (VII. 1) I heard all who were looking at me saying, Come back, come back, O Shulamite! I answered them, What is to be seen in the Shulamite that ye have all come forth to see her like a double band of dancers? *as when they come forth in two rows to receive the king on his arrival, for that is the meaning of מוֹחִינִים.*

(2) *He says in reply*, How fair are thy feet! and he calls her noble daughter, borrowing her expression 'chariots of a noble people.' (3) Thy navel. *That is, the belt which girds it, on which is a jewel round as a full moon which never wanes².* According to this explanation כוֹג will have a special meaning.—Thy belly. *Thy belly appears like a heap of wheat which is thick below and thin above.*—By girt with lilies is meant the red garment, like Tamar's³, which covers it, for the heap is not seen being surrounded by lilies.—(5) Thy neck is as a tower of ivory.

¹ I. E. explains עמי נדיר differently in the printed commentary. Here he takes the ' of עמי as a paragogic letter; there he takes עמי נדיר as if it were נדיר עמי (הגדול שיש בעמי), the ' being the suffix of the first person singular.

² See the printed commentary. ³ 2 Sam. xiii. 18.

White.—After comparing her eyes to wide pools he compares her nose to a perfectly erect tower.—(6) *בכרמל*. Like the colour of that name.—Like purple. Soft to the touch.—*מלך אסור ברהמים*. Every king would long to be bound and enchained in the cords of thy hair; this expression we find used by the amorous chieftains of Arabia; and so it is said (verse 7), How fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights! for there is no delight in the world so great to the soul, nor anything so fair and pleasant as the embrace of love. And some explain *רהמים* as if he compares the hair, one tress of which overlaps the other, to the ripple of water in troughs (*רהמים*); and some say that 'the king' means the head.

(9) After comparing her to a palm-tree (verse 8), he longs to be with her. The boughs thereof. The breasts.

(11) She says, I am my beloved's, and it is my duty to be fully obedient to him. (12) Come now, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, for we cannot caress in the city. (VIII. 1, 2) O that thou wert as my brother, so that I could bring thee openly to my mother's house, and she would teach me how to cause thee to drink of well-spiced wine! (3) Then she says again, Now that I have his left arm under my head my desire is all fulfilled. They are now asleep.

(5) She rouses her beloved and says to him, Who is this coming up from the wilderness who has sought her former love as I have done? I have roused thee under the apple-tree, beneath which we are making our night's rest, to remind thee that under it thy mother brought thee forth. She means, Because she conceived under that tree, therefore thy fragrance is like the fragrance of the apple. (6) Put me now on thine heart as a seal on thine hand, and on thine arm as a seal. (8) What has come of that saying of one of my brothers, who said, 'We have a little sister, what shall we do for our sister in the day when her espousals shall be proposed? (9) if she has preserved herself and is a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver, meaning, we will decorate her with ornaments;

but if she is a door, we will enclose her with boards of cedar and she shall be shut up?' (10) She says, Behold, I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers, the sense being like the passage, 'thy breasts are fashioned' (Ezek. xvi. 7). Then I was in the eyes of those that loved me as one that finds favour. (11) She continues to say, Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon. She says all this to praise herself and the depth of her affection for her beloved. Her meaning is, Behold, king Solomon let his vineyard to keepers, taking for the fruit of the vineyard which they brought him a thousand shekels of silver; (12) but I have not done so, for my own vineyard I keep as mine; I delight in it with thee, and take no pleasure in wealth, neither in capital nor interest; so take thou, Solomon, the wine of thy vineyard, and let the keepers also take their two hundred besides.

(13) He replies, Thou that dwellest in the gardens, my fellow-shepherds are come and are listening to thy voice; let me hear it and say to me, (14) Away my love, before they perceive that I am with thee in the midst of the garden.

THE THIRD EXPOSITION

WILL CONTAIN THE COMMENTARY AFTER THE MIDRASH.

Some say that *the daughters of Jerusalem* signify the nations of the world, like 'And I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant' (Ezek. xvi. 61). Others say that *the daughters of Jerusalem* are the daughters of the angels, whilst Jerusalem is the heavenly home. But I think it probable that *the daughters of Jerusalem* mean literally daughters, the mother being the synagogue of Israel, who is represented talking with her daughters as a man talks with his own thoughts; which explanation you will clearly understand from the passage, 'Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?' (Is. l. 1); and again, 'And Jerusalem shall dwell again in her own place, even in Jerusalem' (Zech. xii. 6); and it is said, 'Cause Jerusalem to know' (Ezek. xvi. 2). And as the prophet begins with

the time when they were in Egypt, so Solomon begins with the days of Abraham, who is the head of the nation.

(I. 2) The synagogue of Israel speaks, beginning with Abraham, who observed the commandments of God, which are *the kisses*, as is said, 'And he kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws' (Gen. xxvi. 5). And he delighted more in the worship of God than in wine.

(3) And he proclaimed the wonders of his God, and brought back souls to the fear of Jehovah. *Therefore the maidens love thee.* 'The souls which they had gotten in Haran'¹ (Gen. xii. 5).

(4) *Draw me.* He went forth from his father's house, and was drawn after the Almighty. *The king hath brought me into his chambers.* He revealed his secret to him, and led him into the holy land, and in all this Abraham rejoiced, and in every place he called upon the name of Jehovah.

(5) *I am black but comely.* Afterwards I went down into Egypt, although I was comely in cleaving to part of the commands.

(6) *Because the sun hath laid me bare.* The captivity. The cause was, *My mother's children were angry with me*, for there were in Egypt many idolaters; and so Ezekiel says, 'And I made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt' (xx. 5), 'and I said, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes,' &c. (xx. 7), 'but they rebelled against me' (xx. 8).

(7) And afterwards they repented, as is said, 'And God heard their groaning' (Exod. ii. 24); and this is the meaning of *tell me*, tell me the principles of thy commandments, for thou art my shepherd, and then I shall not mix with the Egyptians.

(8) The Shekhinah says, If thou dost not know the commandments, betake thee in the way of thy fathers, and let thy children that are born to thee pasture in the way of the tribes.

¹ Onkelos: וית נפשחא דשענידו לאוריתא בחרן. Jonathan: וית נפשחא די גיירו. בחרן.

(9) And when the synagogue repents the Shekhinah says, *I compare thee to a mare in Pharaoh's chariots*, thou synagogue of Israel, for thou hast kept the yoke of commandments and not turned aside from the way.

(10, 11) Therefore I will give thee thy reward, and will beautify thee, and thou shalt carry forth silver and gold out of Egypt.

(12, 13, 14) The synagogue of Israel says, Bear in mind for my sake the covenant with Abraham, whose fame went through all the world like nard, and was there like a bundle of myrrh. *My breasts.* The laws and the commandments which he taught the men of his generation till they confessed that there is none to be found like the Lord (blessed be he!); so no cluster of camphire is to be found like that which grows in En-gedi; for he declared the praise of the Lord.

(15) The Shekhinah says, Now thou shalt be beautified with necklaces, the prophets which I shall send thee, and they are *thine eyes*.

(16, 17) The synagogue of Israel says, In the first instance I am willing to worship thee in the tabernacle, but afterwards I will build thee a house of cedars.

(II. 1) But I am like a lily in the valley for every passer by to trample on, and I am afraid the Egyptians will destroy me.

(2) The Shekhinah says, I will place thee as a lily among thorns, which none shall be able to touch.

(3) The synagogue of Israel says, Art not thou my God? thou art like an apple-tree in the eyes of Egypt; O when will the appointed time come when I shall dwell in thy shade, and thou wilt bring me to the land flowing with milk and honey and abounding with corn and wine?

(4) *And his banner over me.* And I shall hear thy words.

(5) *Support me with flagons.* Cf. 'Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price' (Is. lv. 1). *With apples.* The miracles and wonders which thou wilt shew me, the report of which shall go throughout all the earth.

(6) *His left hand.* The morning and evening burnt-offerings.

(7) The prophets say to the synagogue of Israel, *I charge you by the gazelles* which are permitted to be slaughtered, that ye stir not till the appointed time comes. And so our wise men¹ (blessed be their memory!) have handed down of the children of Ephraim that they went forth before the appointed time—and this is meant by *till the desired time come*—and were killed; of whom it is said in the Book of Chronicles, 'And Ephraim their father mourned many days' (1 Chron. vii. 22).

(8) And when the appointed time comes *the voice of my beloved* is heard.

(9) *Behind our wall.* Where we cannot see him. *Looking forth.* From the windows of the firmament. Cf. 'I have surely seen the affliction of my people' (Exod. iii. 7).

(11) *The winter is past.* The term of Abraham. *The rain.* The days of subjection and oppression.

(12) *The flowers.* Moses and Aaron. *The time of singing.* When they sang by the sea. *The voice of the turtle.* When they entered the land of Israel.

(13) *The fig-tree.* From which to take the firstfruits. *The vines.* For the drink-offerings of wine.

(14) *My dove.* The Shekhinah says after Israel's departure out of Egypt, I compare thee walking after me in the wilderness to a dove *in the secret places of a steep*, which signifies the clouds. *Shew me thy face.* 'And they believed Jehovah' (Exod. xiv. 31). *Let me hear thy voice.* 'Then Moses sang' (Exod. xv. 1).

(15) *Take us the foxes.* The worshippers of the calf.

(16) I repented through *the lilies*, that is, the righteous.

(17) *Till the breeze of day blow . . . on the mountains of separation.* For the Shekhinah said, 'I will not go up in the midst of thee' (Exod. xxxiii. 3). 'And Moses took the tabernacle and pitched it without the camp' (Exod. xxxiii. 7).

¹ Cf. Targum on this verse.

(III. 1) The synagogue of Israel says, Then I was in night darkness, and I besought the Shekhinah to go in the midst of me.

(3) *The watchmen.* Moses and Aaron.

(4) And only a little time, less than a year, elapsed before the Shekhinah came up in the midst of me and went down into the tabernacle, and they were delighted to enter the land, and they said, 'Lo, we be here' (Num. xiv. 40).

(5) The Shekhinah says to them, *I charge you.*

(6) *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness?* When the synagogue entered the land its fame went throughout all the world—this is the meaning of *the myrrh and frankincense*.

(7) And it was, as if it were, like *Solomon's bed*, being perfumed with all sorts of spices. *The valiant men* are the ten thousands who entered the land from twenty years old and upward, when Moses and Eleazar the priest numbered them¹.

(9, 10) *A palanquin.* The temple which Solomon built, the pillars and pavement of which were, as it were, silver and gold, from the multitude of the silver and gold vessels which he put in the sanctuary; we find, indeed, that the walls were overlaid with silver and gold². *The covering of it of purple.* In colour like purple. *The midst thereof.* The priests and Levites.

(11) *Go forth and behold.* 'And (all the men of Israel) assembled themselves unto king Solomon' (1 Kings viii. 2).

(IV. 1) The Shekhinah praises the synagogue of Israel, *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.—Thou hast doves' eyes.* The prophets. *Thy hair.* The Nazarites, who let the hair grow.

(2) *Thy teeth.* The men of war.

(3) *Thy lips.* The singers. *Thy temples are like the pomegranate blossom.* Thy priests. Cf. 'A bell and a pomegranate' (Exod. xxviii. 34).

(4) *Thy neck.* The commanders of the host.

(5) *Thy two breasts.* The two laws, the written law and the

¹ Num. i. 45, 46.

² 1 Kings vi. 21, 22.

oral law, for the breasts produce the milk; cf. 'Come ye, buy, and eat,' &c. (Is. lv. 1)¹.

(6) *Till the breeze of day blow* are the words of the Shekhinah. The meaning is, I will dwell on Mount Moriah as long as the day does not change, that is, as long as the deeds of the synagogue of Israel do not change.

(7) *Thou art all fair, my love.* Keeping my commandments.

(8) *With me from Lebanon.* Those who come to the three feasts. *From the top of Shenir.* Even those on the other side of the Jordan. *From the lions' dens.* When the people come to keep the festivals, even those who are outside the land, in the land of the uncircumcised, who are compared to lions and leopards—all of them shall come, and the nations of the world shall not be able to hinder them or to harm them.

(9) *Thou hast ravished my heart.* Thou hast fulfilled the delight of my heart by one of the prophets, namely, Elijah, who brought Israel back to repentance. *With one chain.* The tribe of Judah, for the kings of Judah were mostly pious.

(10) *How fair is thy love.* Gilgal and Shiloh and Nob and Gibeon, and the house of the sanctuary. *And the smell of thine ointments.* The worship of God, and good deeds.

(11) *Honeycomb.* The reasons for the observances of the law. *And the smell of thy garments.* The talith and the fringes.

(12) *A spring shut up.* The modest daughters of Israel.

(13, 14) From *thy plants* to *all the chief spices* twelve different kinds are enumerated, to correspond with the twelve tribes of Israel; the meaning is, the daughters of all the tribes.

(15) *A fountain of gardens.* The immersions for purification.

(16) *Awake, O north wind.* When the north wind awakes and the day changes, instead of the breezes blowing upon the garden so that its spices flow out, the reverse takes place. The meaning is, when Israel changed in their deeds then the Shekhinah went to *his garden*, that is, went up on high, as is written, 'I will go and return to my place' (Hos. v. 15). *And eat his pleasant*

¹ Cf. I. E.'s note on Is. lv. 1.

fruits. This refers to the work of the tabernacle. The meaning is, he will delight in dwelling with thee, as one is delighted who eats pleasant fruits.

(V. 1) The Shekhinah says, *I am come into my garden.* I have returned to my place on high, after receiving the drink-offerings of wine, and the shewbread and the firstfruits. And Israel was rejoicing and eating thank-offerings. The meaning is, 'To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Jehovah: I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams' (Is. i. 11); just as it is said, 'For every beast of the forest is mine' (Ps. l. 10), and if I needed I could have the whole of them.

(2) *I am asleep.* The synagogue of Israel says, Although I have been taken captive to Babylon *my heart waketh*, and I have not worshipped idols. *It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh.* By the prophets, bidding them build the house and go forth from Babylon. *For my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* With the tears of the synagogue of Israel. Cf. 'She weepeth sore in the night' (Lam. i. 2).

(3, 4) The synagogue of Israel says, Because I was late in building the house, and my deeds were not pleasing, he rebuked me by [the hands of] the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo. *By the hole.* From the window of the firmament.

(5) *I rose up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh.* The meaning is, the outside of the building was good but not the service of the inside.

(6) Therefore *my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone*, after assuring me by Zechariah that he would dwell in the midst of me, 'And I will dwell in the midst of thee' (ii. 14). *My soul failed when he spoke.* My soul fails when I think of when he spoke to me.

(7) *The watchmen found me.* The wicked kingdom of Greece. *They took away my veil.* They hindered Israel from keeping most of the commandments.

(8) *I charge you.* As if the synagogue said, Who will tell the Shekhinah what I have borne for his name?

(10) All that Solomon relates, beginning with *My beloved is white and ruddy*, as far as *Such is my beloved* (ver. 16), refers to the manifestation of the Shekhinah in his works; for as thought cannot comprehend him, much less can eye behold him, therefore he describes his wonderful works, and they make proclamation concerning him. *White*. To the upright his works are pure. *And ruddy*. Like a burning fire to the wicked. Cf. 'Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?' (Is. lxiii. 2.) *Chiefest*. 'Thousand thousands ministered unto him' (Dan. vii. 10).

(11) *His head is as the choicest gem*. His throne of glory. *His locks are black*. 'Cloud and darkness are round about him' (Ps. xcvi. 2).

(12) *His eyes*. The seven principal angels. Cf. 'Upon one stone seven eyes' (Zech. iii. 9); and again he says, 'Those seven are the eyes of Jehovah which run to and fro through the whole earth' (iv. 10).

(13) *His cheeks*. The two angels that stand before him. *His lips*. His messengers that do his commandment, who speak with the prophets, like Gabriel and the one clad in linen garments¹.

(14) *His hands are wheels of gold*. The spheres, the heavens. *With Tarshish-stone*. The stars. *His belly*. The belt of the highest sphere, the wide mesial line². *Sapphires*. The signs.

(15) *His legs*. Fire and atmosphere. *Upon sockets of fine gold*. The earth. Cf. 'Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened?' (Job xxxviii. 6.) *His countenance is as Lebanon*. Whoso enters Lebanon sees a beautiful and valuable tree, which seems to be unequalled and unsurpassed till he sees another yet more fair; and it seems marvellous in his eyes; so is it with the works of the Shekhinah. *Excellent as the cedars*. Which are by the water side; for his works do not cease. Cf. 'They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness' (Lam. iii. 23).

(16) *His mouth*. His laws and his commandments, 'which are more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold';

¹ Ezek. ix, x; Dan. x, xii.

² The Zodiac.

[sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb], (Ps. xix. 11).—I have already mentioned that *the daughters of Jerusalem* are the thoughts of the children of Israel.

(VI. 2) *Is gone down into his garden*. Is gone up on high to be with the righteous, who are his ministers above.

(4) The Shekhinah says, Since thou art become penitent and hast sought me, thou shalt now return to thy former reign. This refers to the time of the Hasmonaeans, when Israel's kingdom was restored. Now thou shalt be beautiful again, and the nations of the world shall be afraid of thee.

(5, 6) Therefore thy prophets shall cease from thee (this is the meaning of *turn away thine eyes*), therefore thy Nazarites and thy men of war shall return.

(8) *There are threescore queens*. The 'dukes' who were in Seir¹. *And fourscore concubines*. Noah and his sons, and such was their number². *And virgins*. The children of Ishmael.

(9) *Is but one*. For she does not mix with the nations of the world.

(10) *Who is this that looketh forth?* The synagogue of Israel was of high standing until a causeless enmity broke out amongst them.

(12) And this is the meaning of the words of the synagogue of Israel *I did not know*, as if it said, I did not perceive before I had brought it on myself (which is the meaning of *my soul put me*), namely, that my people which is noble had become chariots for the nations of the world to ride on, in opposition to the prophecy 'and thou shalt tread upon their high places' (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

(11) The Shekhinah says, *I went down into the garden of nuts*, that is, I went up on high till *the vine should flourish*, that is, till Israel, who is compared to a vine, should do good and pleasing deeds. He uses *nuts* (אגוז) because the fruit is hidden (גנוז), the Shekhinah meaning that he would not

¹ Gen. xxxvi.

² Rashi says, נח ובניו עד אברהם תולדות יוצאי החיבה שמנים המצאם.

reveal his wonders in the captivity. Do not wonder because he says *I went down*, for we find ירר used in reference to mountains (Judg. xi. 37).

(VII. 1) The Shekhinah says, Although thou hast rebelled and art in captivity, thou shalt return again, and all the world shall wonder at thee, and shall come forth to meet thee with dances.

(2) *How beautiful are thy feet.* When thou goest forth to thy land. *The joints of thy thighs.* Like שוק על ירך¹ (Judg. xv. 8), foot-soldiers and horsemen.

(3) *Thy navel.* The Great Sanhedrin², which is compared to half a round threshing-floor³. *Which wanteth not liquor.* The law, which is compared to wine. *Thy belly is like an heap of wheat.* The Little Sanhedrin⁴. *Set about with lilies.* The multitude of the righteous.

(4) *Thy two breasts.* The laws.

(5) *Thy neck.* The chiefs of the host. *Thine eyes.* The prophets, who were at first limited in number, shall now be many. *Thy nose.* The high priest. Cf. 'They shall put incense in thy nostrils' (Deut. xxxiii. 10).

(6) *Thine head.* King Messiah, who is of the sons of David. *And the hair of thine head.* Messiah, the son of Joseph. *The king is bound.* These words indicate that Messiah, the son of David, is meant, who is bound till the appointed time comes, for he was born on the day when Jerusalem was laid waste⁵.

(7) *How fair art thou.* Then in thy deeds.

(8) *This thy stature.* This means what the Scripture says, 'Thy people also shall be all righteous' (Is. lx. 21). Then the righteous shall be multiplied. 'The righteous shall flourish as the palm-tree' (Ps. xcii. 13). *And thy breasts.* Those who occupy themselves with the law, whose words give forth the fruit of its sayings.

¹ Jonathan : פרשין עם רגלין.

² The Great Sanhedrin consisted of 71.

³ Mishna, Sanhedrin iv. 3: סנהדרין היחה כחצי גורן עגולה כרי שיורו רואין זה את זה.

⁴ The Little Sanhedrin consisted of 23. ⁵ Cf. Midrash Ekha Rabbathi i. 16.

(9) The Shekhinah says, Then I will come into the companionship of the righteous. *Now also thy breasts shall be.* Then they shall fulfil all the commandments. *And the smell of thy nose.* Then the high priest shall serve me.

(10) *And the roof of thy mouth.* The singers.

(11) *I am my beloved's.* The synagogue of Israel says this when the appointed time comes.

(12) *Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the field.* The meaning is, Jerusalem. Cf. 'We found it in the fields of the wood' (Ps. cxxxii. 6). *Let us lodge in the villages.* Cf. 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls' (Zech. ii. 8).

(13) *Let us get up early to the vineyards.* Even before this thou shalt see that Israel is become penitent. And this is the meaning of *if the vine flourish*, there in Jerusalem I will worship God openly.

(14) *The mandrakes give a smell.* The good deeds of the synagogue of Israel correspond with the deeds of their fathers of old.

(VIII. 1) *O that thou wert as my brother.* The synagogue of Israel says to Messiah, O that thou wert as my brother and I would find thee and cleave to thee.

(2) *I would lead thee and bring thee into my mother's house, who would teach me.* My mother's house signifies Jerusalem. *She would teach me* means, she would teach me the commandments, and I would rejoice with thee as a woman who drinks wine with her husband.

(3) *His left hand.* Then the morning and evening burnt-offerings shall be restored.

(4) *I charge you.* Solomon says to the synagogue of Israel, I charge you that ye stir not till the appointed time comes, so that ye imperil not your lives.

(5) *Who is this that cometh up?* The nations of the world will say this of the synagogue of Israel when it goes up with Messiah from the wilderness of the nations. The synagogue says to him, *I have roused thee under the apple-tree*, meaning, I have

roused thee by my words, and my prayers have brought thee forth; cf. 'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver' (Prov. xxv. 11).

(6) After this the synagogue of Israel says to the Shekhinah, *Set me as a seal upon thine heart*, meaning that the Shekhinah shall never depart from me.

(7) *Many waters*. Even if all the nations of the world should assemble together, they would not be able to hurt the synagogue of Israel.

(8) *We have a little sister*. When Israel goes up they shall say one to the other, We have a little sister, which means the two tribes and a half, for these were first taken captive, as is said, 'When at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali' (Is. viii. 23). *And she hath no breasts*. Perchance she has no laws. *In the day when she shall be spoken for*. When she shall stand to be judged.

(9) *If she is a wall*. If she has kept herself like a wall, in not going beyond the precept, we will build a place for her, and palaces full of silver, and we will follow in her path. *And if she is a door*. If she is an open city, without a wall, by her not keeping the commandments, we will enclose her, so that she cannot come towards us.

(10) Then she answers and says, *I am a wall*, I have kept my precept, and my breasts, which are the laws, have kept me. Then she will be in the eyes of the Shekhinah as one who finds favour.

(11) *Solomon had a vineyard*. Cf. 'For the vineyard of Jehovah of hosts is the house of Israel' (Is. v. 7). The meaning is, Solomon was king over all Israel; *in Baal-hamon* means that the whole multitude (המון) belonged to him. *He let out the vineyard unto keepers*. The meaning is, he was the cause of the division of the kingdom, and he gave his sons possession of only two of the twelve parts, namely, Judah and Benjamin. *A man brought for the fruit thereof a thousand shekels of silver*. Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who had the ten parts.

(12) *My vineyard, which is mine*. The synagogue of Israel says this. The meaning is, all the tribes shall be reunited. *The thousand to thyself, Solomon*. Solomon signifies king Messiah, who is called Solomon because he comes from his family; cf. 'And my servant David shall be their prince for ever' (Ezek. xxxvii. 25). The meaning is, then the ten tribes shall return to thee Solomon, who art king Messiah, as also the two hundred which belonged to the keepers of his fruit, [the two tribes] which Solomon left his sons.

(13) *Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken*. Then the Shekhinah will say to the synagogue of Israel, Thou that dwellest in the sanctuary, the eternal house, that is like a throne of glory, as is said, 'A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our sanctuary' (Jer. xvii. 12). *The companions hearken*. The meaning is, the angels long to hear thy new songs; cf. 'O sing unto Jehovah a new song' (Ps. xcvi. 1); and again, 'In that day shall this song be sung' (Is. xxvi. 1) to Jehovah. I too long to hear thy glorious voice, for this is the meaning of *cause me to hear it*.

(14) *Flee, my beloved*. The synagogue of Israel says, If thou longest to hear my songs come down to me and flee from the place of thy *companions*, that is, the angels who minister in thy presence, and come to *the mountains of spices*, that is, the mountains of Zion, for there Jehovah hath commanded blessing, life for evermore.

END OF THE COMMENTARY ON THE SONG OF SONGS.

PRAISE HIM WHO MADE THE LIGHTS!

VARIATIONS OF THE BERLIN MS.

N. B. Except where noticed B. omits all Oxford readings bracketed [].

p. 3, l. 1. B. omits.

l. 2. דבריו. B. דברים; אפרוש. B. שאפרוש.

l. 3. ר"ל בנו בכורו ישראל. Copyist remarks in margin בנו.

l. 5. חקתי. B. חקתי.

l. 6. אפרש. B. continues זה.

l. 8. אבארנו שלש. B. בארתיו שלש; ולהיות. B. ולהיותי.

l. 9. ראשונה. B. הא'.

l. 11. ואני אקח הצורך ואניח הנשאר. B. continues המדרש. למי שראוי שיונח לו.

l. 13. דע כי נשיקה. B. נשיקה.

p. 4, l. 1. (למישרים). B. omits.

l. 2. וכן מה טובו. B. continues דודים; שג"כ נקרא. B. שהוא. דודיק.

l. 3. מלשון. B. לשון.

l. 4. כמו. B. omits.

l. 5. הזכרת הריח של. B. אזכרתה ריח; שהוא. B. (שהוא). וכמו. B. וכמהו.

l. 7. ימושך. B. מושך; יתהלך במישרים. B. omits.

ll. 7, 8. כמו... כשדים. B. omits; l. 8. לא. B. omits.

l. 9. ו[ה]נ"ץ. B. as O.

l. 10. אדמדמ. B. אדמדמת.

l. 11. מקום. B. (ב)מקום.

l. 12. והטעם גלתני כמו ולא. B. ומעמו... לא.

l. 13. לבנין. B. omits.

ll. 14, 15. ו"א שהוא איפה הם. B. ו"א... איפה.

l. 15. מקום. B. (ב)מקום.

l. 16. ואמר. B. ואומ'; כמו. B. (as O.) כשי"ץ.

p. 4, l. 17. וי"א. B. continues כמו על; כמו. B. מגו' ועל. B. 18. והנכון... יעטה. B. omits.

l. 19. גדי. B. גדיים; בלי. B. (as O.) בלא; הוא. B. הנולד. B. continues קטן; יקרא.

l. 20. הטהורה. B. טהורה; יתירה. B. (as O.) נוסף.

l. 22. וואמ'. B. וזהב. B. הזהב; און. B. (ה)און.

p. 5, ll. 1, 2. כי... זהב. B. בספר אחר והוא מתג.

l. 2. במסבי. B. (as O.) מסבי.

l. 4. תשחית. B. ישחית; מורי. B. אריתי.

l. 5. בושם. B. omits; אשכל. B. omits.

ll. 6-9. כמפור וי"א שהוא דבר אחר. B. כאפור... אוכלה [הוא].

l. 10. אומ'. B. אמרו; מעידים בו. B. continues אדם.

l. 11. [אותיות]. B. as O.

l. 12. חבצלת השרון בלשון קדר טגסה וי"א. B. חבצלת ורד. לשון קדר סוסנת. B. שושנת... עלים. ll. 12, 13. ורד; ובלעם גוי ויתכן שנקראת כן בעבור היותה בעלת עלין וי"א שהוא ורד.

l. 14. מהבנין. B. מבנין; [רפדוני]. B. as O.

l. 15. סערוני. B. סערוני; סביב התפוחים. B. [סביבי] תפוחים.

l. 16. כמו. B. וצבי. B. (במ'). B. omits.

l. 17. לנתר. B. continues בהם.

l. 19. צרות. B. תרגום; מוציא. B. שהוא מן; בעיניו. B. (מענינו).

l. 20. בי(הנה). B. omits.

l. 22. שם האילן; שני. B. (as O.) שתי; העופות. B. העוף. B. אילן.

p. 6, l. 1. מן. B. (as O.) כמו.

l. 2. הענבים. B. הענפים; יפול. B. (as O.) ישל.

l. 3. הענבים. B. omits.

l. 4. מקום. B. והוא מקום; והוא. B. omits; (ה)סלע. B. היא. B. continues המדרגה; מרום שבתו.

l. 5. האבנים. B. סולם אבנים.

ll. 5, 6. נעים... לי. B. מתוק כמו וערבה לה.

l. 7. [והוא]; במקום. B. במקרא; שחרו נער. B. שחדו בעדי. B. as O.

- p. 6, l. 8. י"י. B. continues עד שיפוח; כל חסידיו B. שיפוח.
- l. 9. (ה) נדוד. B. נדוד; והפרידה. B. אותם; והפרדה. B. continues בתוך.
- l. 10. וינם. B. ויכם.
- l. 12. אילני. B. 12, 13. נקרא; נקרא (ו); תמרות. B. תימורות. B. אילנות התמרות.
- l. 14. ולא . . . במקרא; בדים. B. חבדים; ע"ד. B. כמו. B. omits.
- l. 15. על. B. עלי; יציעתו (as O.). B. יציעתו.
- l. 16. פועל. B. (as O.). B. פועל; מרצפת. B. רצפת.
- l. 18. או גבה B. continues (הוא); כתרנו. B. [מן] תרגום. B. הוא.
- l. 19. כמו. B. continues ווענינו.
- l. 20. הזכיר התאר ולא הזכיר העצם והוא B. continues אחד. B. מולידות. B. מולדות; הרחלים ומלת.
- l. 21. [מ] לשון. B. as O.; רקתך. B. omits.
- II. 21, 22. י"מ שהוא. B. (as O.). B. המפרשים אמרו כי הוא.
- l. 22. והוא B. continues הרמון. B. omits; (בעיני).
- p. 7, l. 1. [בארץ]. B. as O.
- l. 2. [כמו]. B. as O.; כמו. B. omits.
- l. 4. שתי. B. (as O.). B. וי"א; והם שתי. B. [ו] הם ב'; שני. B. שתי. B. ואחרים אמרו.
- l. 5. ומדקדקים אומר. B. ומדקדק[ים] אמר[ו]; מנו'. B. מן.
- l. 7. החצים; גבהו. B. continues גבהותו; ישרה. B. דרך. B. So B., but omits חברו.
- l. 8. עפרים. B. continues הם.
- l. 9. הסירות (את); B. omits; (ולא קרוב). B. תראי. B. תראי. B. לסברת. B. לבבי.
- l. 11. ממעיין. B. (as O.). B. מן; כמו.
- l. 12. נטען. B. continues נטען; או. B. נטען.
- l. 13. פרדם. B. continues כמו.
- l. 14. נטע. B. נטע.
- l. 17. מתרגו'. B. . . . 17, 18. שהוא מן כיערת. B. כמו ביערת. B. סוקר. B. תי' שבו תמצא הסוכר.

- p. 7, l. 18. מתרפקים. B. מתרפקים.
- l. 19. לא. B. (ו) לא.
- l. 20. אטנפם; וכן. B. וכמוהו; רביבי. B. רביבי (ם). B. אנטפס.
- l. 21. קדמונינו ז"ל לכלוך וטנוף וגאול. B. רז"ל . . . וטינוף.
- l. 22, and p. 8, l. 1. ובא . . . וי"י. B. והוא פועל עבר.
- p. 8, l. 1. מגו'. B. כמו; שכב נפל. B. נפל שכב; כמו. B. וכמהו.
- l. 3. הוא B. continues קדר; הרגל. B. הרגל; רגול. B. רגול.
- l. 4. והנכון. B. as O.; והקרוב. B. [וכן]; נכבד. B. ונכבד.
- l. 5. ישנה. B. (as O.). B. ישנא.
- l. 7. ובלא חסרון. B. ומגרעת.
- l. 8. כמו מגדל. B. (as O.). B. ממגדל.
- l. 9. במ' תבתיק בעשת שן מגו'. B. פיל כמו.
- l. 11. תמצא כיוצא בה. B. as O.; תמצאנה. B. [שם].
- l. 12. לה. B. להן; המחנה. B. [ה] מחנות.
- l. 13. ומנו'. B. מן.
- l. 14. המכובר. B. (as O.). B. המכובר; בלשון רז"ל. B. omits. B. הוא פרי. B. הפרי.
- l. 15. מן. B. (as O.). B. כמו; הנצנו. B. הנצו.
- l. 16. אשר על; ומחול. B. מחלים; מחלים. B. (המחלים). B. שעל.
- l. 17. לו חבר. B. בלשון (הקדש) חבר לו; אומן. B. אמן. B. במקרה.
- l. 18. הסהר כלי. B. continues אגן.
- l. 19. השחרונים. B. as O.; [תרגום]. B. 21.
- p. 9, l. 1. בלשונם ג"כ סייג. B. גם בלשונם סייג; רבותינו. B. רז"ל. B. לתורה.
- l. 2. עיין בדברי. B. עין ובדברי.
- l. 4. כמו (ברהטום). B. omits.
- l. 5. וממנו. B. מלשון.
- l. 7. ה'ב'. B. התי"י.

p. 9, l. 8. (הנה). B. omits.

l. 9. כמו גחליה כמו ולחומי רשף. B. כמו . . . גחליה .
B. omits.

l. 10. כמו. B. מנו.

CORRIGENDA.

p. 3, l. 2. שאפרוש דברים. Read with B. אפרוש דבריו.

l. 5. חקתי. Read with B. חקותי.

p. 4, ll. 13-15. Omit O. additions.

p. 5, ll. 1, 2. כי . . . זהב. Read with B. מתנ.

p. 7, l. 2 from bottom. רז"ל . . . וטינוף. Read with B. קדמונינו
ז"ל לכלוך ומנוף וגאול

p. 8, l. 2 from bottom. ענול. Read with B. בלי ענול.

p. 10, l. 14. Omit O. addition.

p. 15, l. 10. כובול?

p. 17, last word. כמו?

ADDENDA.

p. ix, l. 27. Wolf (*Biblioth. Heb.* i. 78) has wrongly attributed to Ibn Ezra a Leyden MS. commentary on the Canticles by a Rabbi Ezra. See Steinschneider's Leyden Catalogue (Warn. 32).

p. 5, l. 2. במסבי. O. {ו}מסבי.

p. 7, l. 2. ישכון. MS. ישפוט.

l. 1 from bottom. ונעל הדלת. MSS. ונעל את הדלת.

p. 21, l. 7. ועתה. MSS. ואתה.

p. 22, l. 1 from bottom. בעת [הראשונה]. MSS. בעת [הראשון].

דודי. אמרה כנסת ישראל אם תתאוה לשמוע שירי רד אלי [וברח]
ממקום חבריך הם¹ המלאכים המשרתים [לפניך] ובא אל הרי הבשמים
[הם] הררי ציון ששם צוה יי את הברכה חיים עד העולם:

(נשלם² פי' שיר השירים, שבח לעשה אורים:)

¹ O. שם. ² MS. נשלמה; O. ends thus:

כשלשה פנים מזהירים:	סויים פי' שיר השירים
בעז די שריה עמיה נהורא:	ביארו רב אברם בנו עזרא
נכתם פז וספירים:	אמריו פנינים מזהירים
כחבצלת השרונים:	שפתיו שושנים לשונו