

Adam Clarke:

Introduction

The history of Jephthah, and his covenant with the Gileadites, Judges 11:1-10. He is elected by the people, Judges 11:11. Sends an embassy to the king of the Ammonites, to inquire why they invaded Israel; and receives an answer, to which he sends back a spirited reply, vv. 12-27. This is disregarded by the Ammonites, and Jephthah prepares for battle, Judges 11:28, Judges 11:29. His vow, Judges 11:30, Judges 11:31. He attacks and defeats them, Judges 11:32, Judges 11:33. On his return to Mizpeh he is met by his daughter, whom, according to his vow, he dedicates to the Lord, Judges 11:34-40.

Verse 1

Now Jephthah - was the son of a harlot - I think the word זונה (zonah), which we here render harlot, should be translated, as is contended for on Joshua 2:1 (note), viz. a hostess, keeper of an inn or tavern for the accommodation of travelers; and thus it is understood by the Targum of Jonathan on this place: זונה זונה זונה (vehu bar ittetha pundekitha), and he was the son of a woman, a tavern keeper. She was very probably a Canaanite, as she is called, Judges 11:2, a strange woman, זונה זונה זונה (ishshah achereth), a woman of another race; and on this account his brethren drove him from the family, as he could not have a full right to the inheritance, his mother not being an Israelite.

Verse 3

There were gathered vain men to Jephthah - אנשים ריקים (anashim reykim), empty men - persons destitute of good sense, and profligate in their manners. The word may, however, mean in this place poor persons, without property, and without employment. The versions in general consider them as plunderers.

Verse 4

The children of Ammon made war - They had invaded the land of Israel, and were now encamped in Gilead. See Judges 10:17.

Verse 6

Come, and be our captain - The Israelites were assembled in Mizpeh, but were without a captain to lead them against the Ammonites. And we find, from the conclusion of the preceding chapter, that they offered the command to any that would accept it.

Verse 8

Therefore we turn again to thee now - We are convinced that we have dealt unjustly by thee, and we wish now to repair our fault, and give thee this sincere proof of our regret for having acted unjustly, and of our confidence in thee.

Verse 11

Jephthah went with the elders - The elders had chosen him for their head; but, to be valid, this choice must be confirmed by the people; therefore, it is said, the people made him head. But even this did not complete the business; God must be brought in as a party to this transaction; and therefore Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord - the terms made with the elders and the people on which he had accepted the command of the army; and, being sure of the Divine approbation, he entered on the work with confidence.

Verse 12

Jephthah sent messengers - He wished the Ammonites to explain their own motives for undertaking a war against Israel; as then the justice of his cause would appear more forcibly to the people.

Verse 13

From Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan - That is, all the land that had formerly belonged to the Amorites, and to the Moabites, who it seems were confederates on this occasion.

Verse 22

From the wilderness even unto Jordan - From Arabia Deserta on the east to Jordan on the west.

Verse 23

The Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites - Jephthah shows that the Israelites did not take the land of the Moabites or Ammonites, but that of the Amorites, which they had conquered from Sihon their king, who had, without cause or provocation, attacked them; and although the Amorites had taken the lands in

question from the Ammonites, yet the title by which Israel held them was good, because they took them not from the Ammonites, but conquered them from the Amorites. So now the Lord - hath dispossessed the Amorites. - The circumstances in which the Israelites were when they were attacked by the Amorites, plainly proved, that, unless Jehovah had helped them, they must have been overcome. God defeated the Amorites, and made a grant of their lands to the Israelites; and they had, in consequence, possessed them for three hundred years, Judges 11:26.

Verse 24

Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee - As if he had said: "It is a maxim with you, as it is among all nations, that the lands which they conceive to be given them by their gods, they have an absolute right to, and should not relinquish them to any kind of claimant. You suppose that the land which you possess was given you by your god Chemosh and therefore you will not relinquish what you believe you hold by a Divine right. Now, we know that Jehovah, our God, who is the Lord of heaven and earth, has given the Israelites the land of the Amorites; and therefore we will not give it up." The ground of Jephthah's remonstrance was sound and good.

1.The Ammonites had lost their lands in their contests with the Amorites.

2.The Israelites conquered these lands from the Amorites, who had waged a most unprincipled war against them.

3.God, who is the Maker of heaven and earth had given those very lands as a Divine grant to the Israelites.

4.In consequence of this they had possession of them for upwards of three hundred years.

5.These lands were never reclaimed by the Ammonites, though they had repeated opportunities of doing it, whilst the Israelites dwelt in Heshbon, in Aroer, and in the coasts of Arnon; but they did not reclaim them because they knew that the Israelites held them legally. The present pretensions of Ammon were unsupported and unjustifiable.

Verse 27

The Lord the Judge be judge - between the children of Israel - If you be right, and we be wrong, then Jehovah, who is the sovereign and incorruptible Judge, shall determine in your favor; and to Him I submit the righteousness of my cause.

Verse 29

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah - The Lord qualified him for the work he had called him to do, and thus gave him the most convincing testimony that his cause was good.

Verse 31

Shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering - The text is *וְהָיָה לַיהוָה* (*vehayah layhovah*), (*vehaalithihu olah*); the translation of which, according to the most accurate Hebrew scholars, is this: I will consecrate it to the Lord, or I will offer it for a burnt-offering; that is, "either it be a thing fit for a burnt-offering, it shall be made one; if fit for the service of God, it shall be consecrated to him." That conditions of this kind must have been implied in the vow, is evident enough; to have been made without them, it must have been the vow of a heathen, or a madman. If a dog had met him, this could not have been made a burnt-offering; and if his neighbor or friend's wife, son, or daughter, etc., had been returning from a visit to his family, his vow gave him no right over them. Besides, human sacrifices were ever an abomination to the Lord; and this was one of the grand reasons why God drove out the Canaanites, etc., because they offered their sons and daughters to Molech in the fire, i.e., made burnt-offerings of them, as is generally supposed. That Jephthah was a deeply pious man, appears in the whole of his conduct; and that he was well acquainted with the law of Moses, which prohibited all such sacrifices, and stated what was to be offered in sacrifice, is evident enough from his expostulation with the king and people of Ammon, Judges 11:14-27. Therefore it must be granted that he never made that rash vow which several suppose he did; nor was he capable, if he had, of executing it in that most shocking manner which some Christian writers (tell it not in Gath) have contended for. He could not commit a crime which himself had just now been an executor of God's justice to punish in others.

It has been supposed that the text itself might have been read differently in former times; if instead of the words *וְהָיָה לַיהוָה*, I will offer It a burnt-offering, we read *וְהָיָה לַיהוָה* *אֵלֶּי* *וְהָיָה לַיהוָה*, I will offer Him (i.e., the Lord) a burnt-offering: this will make a widely different sense, more consistent with everything that is sacred; and it is formed by the addition of only a single letter, (א (aleph)), and the separation of the pronoun from the verb. Now the letter א (aleph) is so like the letter א (ain), which immediately follows it in the word *וְהָיָה לַיהוָה* (*olah*), that the one might easily have been lost in the other, and

thus the pronoun be joined to the verb as at present, where it expresses the thing to be sacrificed instead of the person to whom the sacrifice was to be made. With this emendation the passage will read thus: Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me - shall be the Lord's; and I will offer Him a burnt-offering. For this criticism there is no absolute need, because the pronoun *x"xo* (hu), in the above verse, may with as much propriety be translated him as it. The latter part of the verse is, literally, And I will offer him a burnt-offering, *xoxoxox* (olah), not *xoxoxoxox* (leolah), For a burnt-offering, which is the common Hebrew form when for is intended to be expressed. This is strong presumption that the text should be thus understood: and this avoids the very disputable construction which is put on the *xo* (vau), in *xox"oxoxoxTMxoxTMx"xo* (vehaalithihu), Or I will offer It up, instead of And I will offer Him a burnt-offering.

From Judges 11:39 it appears evident that Jephthah's daughter was not Sacrificed to God, but consecrated to him in a state of perpetual virginity; for the text says, She knew no man, for this was a statute in Israel. *xox^ax"oxTM x—x§ x'xTMxox"oxox* (vattehi chok beyishrael); viz., that persons thus dedicated or consecrated to God, should live in a state of unchangeable celibacy. Thus this celebrated place is, without violence to any part of the text, or to any proper rule of construction, cleared of all difficulty, and caused to speak a language consistent with itself, and with the nature of God.

Those who assert that Jephthah did sacrifice his daughter, attempt to justify the opinion from the barbarous usages of those times: but in answer to this it may be justly observed, that Jephthah was now under the influence of the Spirit of God, Judges 11:29; and that Spirit could not permit him to imbrue his hands in the blood of his own child; and especially under the pretense of offering a pleasing sacrifice to that God who is the Father of mankind, and the Fountain of love, mercy, and compassion.

The versions give us but little assistance in clearing the difficulties of the text. In the Targum of Jonathan there is a remarkable gloss which should be mentioned, and from which it will appear that the Targumist supposed that the daughter of Jephthah was actually sacrificed: And he fulfilled the vow which he had vowed upon her; and she knew no man: and it was made a statute in Israel, that no man should offer his son or his daughter for a burnt-offering, as did Jephthah the Gileadite, who did not consult Phinehas the priest; for if he had consulted Phinehas the priest, he would have redeemed her with money.

The Targumist refers here to the law, Leviticus 27:1-5, where the Lord prescribes the price at which either males or females, who had been vowed to the Lord, might be redeemed. When a man shall make a singular vow, the persons shall be for the Lord at thy estimation: the male from twenty years old even unto sixty, shall be fifty shekels of silver; and if it be a female, then thy estimation shall be thirty shekels; and from five years old unto twenty years, the male twenty shekels, and for the female ten. This also is an argument that the daughter of Jephthah was not sacrificed; as the father had it in his power, at a very moderate price, to have redeemed her: and surely the blood of his daughter must have been of more value in his sight than thirty shekels of silver.

Dr. Hales has entered largely into the subject: his observations may be seen at the end of this chapter.

Verse 33

Twenty cities - That is, he either took or destroyed twenty cities of the Ammonites, and completely routed their whole army.

Verse 34

With timbrels and with dances - From this instance we find it was an ancient custom for women to go out to meet returning conquerors with musical instruments, songs, and dances; and that it was continued afterwards is evident from the instance given 1 Samuel 18:6, where David was met, on his return from the defeat of Goliath and the Philistines, by women from all the cities of Israel, with singing and dancing, and various instruments of music.

Verse 35

Thou hast brought me very low - He was greatly distressed to think that his daughter, who was his only child, should be, in consequence of his vow, prevented from continuing his family in Israel; for it is evident that he had not any other child, for besides her, says the text, he had neither son nor daughter, Judges 11:34. He might, therefore, well be grieved that thus his family was to become extinct in Israel.

Verse 36

And she said unto him - What a pattern of filial piety and obedience! She was at once obedient, pious, and patriotic. A woman to have no offspring was considered to be in a state of the utmost degradation among the Hebrews; but she is regardless of all this, seeing her father is in safety, and her country delivered.

Verse 37

I and my fellows - Whether she meant the young women of her own acquaintance, or those who had been consecrated to God in the same way, though on different accounts, is not quite clear; but it is likely she means her own companions: and her going up and down upon the mountains may signify no more than her paying

each of them a visit at their own houses, previously to her being shut up at the tabernacle; and this visiting of each at their own home might require the space of two months. This I am inclined to think is the meaning of this difficult clause.

Verse 39

And she knew no man - She continued a virgin all the days of her life.

Verse 40

To lament the daughter of Jephthah - I am satisfied that this is not a correct translation of the original $\text{xœx}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{xœx}^{\text{'}} \text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{TM}} \text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{a}}$ — (lethannoth lebeth yiphtach). Houbigant translates the whole verse thus: Sed iste mos apud Israel invaluit, ut virgines Israel, temporibus diversis, irent ad filiam Jepthe-ut eam quotannis dies quatuor consolarentur; â€œBut this custom prevailed in Israel that the virgins of Israel went at different times, four days in the year, to the daughter of Jephthah, that they might comfort her.â€• This verse also gives evidence that the daughter of Jephthah was not sacrificed: nor does it appear that the custom or statute referred to here lasted after the death of Jephthahâ€™s daughter.

The following is Dr. Halesâ€™ exposition of Jephthahâ€™s vow: - â€œWhen Jephthah went forth to battle against the Ammonites, he vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, â€œIf thou wilt surely give the children of Ammon into my hand, then it shall be that whatsoever cometh out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall either be the Lordâ€™s, or I will offer it up (for) a burnt-offering,â€• Judges 11:30, Judges 11:31. According to this rendering of the two conjunctions, x^{a} (vau) in the last clause â€œeither,â€• â€œor,â€• (which is justified by the Hebrew idiom thus, â€œHe that curseth his father and his mother,â€• Exodus 21:17, is necessarily rendered disjunctively, â€œHis father or his mother,â€• by the Septuagint, Vulgate, Chaldee, and English, confirmed by Matthew 15:4, the paucity of connecting particles in that language making it necessary that this conjunction should often be understood disjunctively), the vow consisted of two parts:

1. That what person soever met him should be the Lordâ€™s or be dedicated to his service; and,
2. That what beast soever met him, if clean, should be offered up for a burnt-offering unto the Lord.

â€œThis rendering and this interpretation is warranted by the Levitical law about vows.

â€œThe $\text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{a}}$ (neder), or vow, in general, included either persons, beasts, or things dedicated to the Lord for pious uses; which, if it was a simple vow, was redeemable at certain prices, if the person repented of his vow, and wished to commute it for money, according to the age or sex of the person, Leviticus 27:1-8: this was a wise regulation to remedy rash vows. But if the vow was accompanied with $\text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{a}} \text{x}^{\text{a}}$ (cherem), devotement, it was irredeemable, as in the following case, Leviticus 27:28.

â€œNotwithstanding, no devotement which a man shall devote unto the Lord, (either) of man, or beast, or of land of his own property, shall be sold or redeemed. Every thing devoted is most holy to the Lord.

â€œHere the three x^{a} vaus in the original should necessarily be rendered disjunctively, or as the last actually is in our translation, because there are three distinct subjects of devotement to be applied to distinct uses, the man to be dedicated to the service of the Lord, as Samuel by his mother Hannah, 1 Samuel 1:11; the cattle, if clean, such as oxen, sheep, goats, turtle-doves, or pigeons, to be sacrificed; and if unclean, as camels, horses, asses, to be employed for carrying burdens in the service of the tabernacle or temple; and the lands, to be sacred property.

â€œThis law therefore expressly applied in its first branch to Jephthahâ€™s case, who had devoted his daughter to the Lord, or opened his mouth to the Lord, and therefore could not go back, as he declared in his grief at seeing his daughter and only child coming to meet him with timbrels and dances: she was, therefore necessarily devoted, but with her own consent to perpetual virginity in the service of the tabernacle, Judges 11:36, Judges 11:37; and such service was customary, for in the division of the spoils taken in the first Midianitish war, of the whole number of captive virgins the Lordâ€™s tribute was thirty-two persons, Numbers 31:15-40. This instance appears to be decisive of the nature of her devotement.

â€œHer fatherâ€™s extreme grief on the occasion and her requisition of a respite for two months to bewail her virginity, are both perfectly natural. Having no other issue, he could only look forward to the extinction of his name or family; and a state of celibacy, which is reproachful among women everywhere, was peculiarly so among the Israelites, and was therefore no ordinary sacrifice on her part; who, though she generously gave up, could not but regret the loss of, becoming â€œa mother in Israel.â€• And he did with her according to his vow which he had vowed, and she knew no man, or remained a virgin, all her life, Judges 11:34-39.

â€œThere was also another case of devotement which was irredeemable, and follows the former, Leviticus 27:29. This case differs materially from the former.

1. It is confined to Persons devoted, omitting beasts and lands.

2. It does not relate to private property, as in the foregoing. And,

3. The subject of it was to be utterly destroyed, instead of being most holy unto the Lord.

This law, therefore, related to aliens, or public enemies devoted to destruction either by God, the people, or by the magistrate. Of all these we have instances in Scripture.

1. The Amalekites and Canaanites were devoted by God himself. Saul was, therefore, guilty of a breach of the law for sparing Agag the king of the Amalekites, as Samuel reproached him, 1 Samuel 15:33: "And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord;" not as a sacrifice, according to Voltaire, but as a criminal, whose sword had made many women childless. By this law the Midianitish women who had been spared in battle were slain, Numbers 31:14-17.

2. In Mount Hor, when the Israelites were attacked by Arad, king of the southern Canaanites, who took some of them prisoners, they vowed a vow unto the Lord that they would utterly destroy the Canaanites and their cities, if the Lord should deliver them into their hand, which the Lord ratified; whence the place was called Hormah, because the vow was accompanied by (cherem), or devotement to destruction, Numbers 21:1-3; and the vow was accomplished, Judges 1:17.

3. In the Philistine war Saul adjured the people, and cursed any one who should taste food till the evening. His own son Jonathan inadvertently ate a honey-comb, not knowing his father's oath, for which Saul sentenced him to die. But the people interposed, and rescued him for his public services; thus assuming the power of dispensing, in their collective capacity, with an unreasonable oath. This latter case, therefore, is utterly irrelative to Jephthah's vow, which did not regard a foreign enemy or a domestic transgressor devoted to destruction, but on the contrary was a vow of thanksgiving, and therefore properly came under the former case.

And that Jephthah could not possibly have sacrificed his daughter, (according to the vulgar opinion), may appear from the following considerations: -

1. The sacrifice of children to Molech was an abomination to the Lord, of which in numberless passages he expresses his detestation, and it was prohibited by an express law, under pain of death, as a defilement of God's sanctuary, and a profanation of his holy name, Leviticus 20:2, Leviticus 20:3. Such a sacrifice, therefore, unto the Lord himself, must be a still higher abomination, and there is no precedent of any such under the law in the Old Testament.

2. The case of Isaac before the law is irrelevant, for Isaac was not sacrificed, and it was only proposed for a trial of Abraham's faith.

3. No father, merely by his own authority, could put an offending, much less an innocent, child to death upon any account, without the sentence of the magistrate, (Deuteronomy 21:18-21), and the consent of the people, as in Jonathan's case.

4. The Mishna, or traditional law of the Jews is pointedly against it; ver. 212. "If a Jew should devote his son or daughter, his man or maid servant, who are Hebrews, the devotement would be void, because no man can devote what is not his own, or whose life he has not the absolute disposal of." These arguments appear to be decisive against the sacrifice; and that Jephthah could not have devoted his daughter to celibacy against her will is evident from the history, and from the high estimation in which she was always held by the daughters of Israel for her filial duty and her hapless fate, which they celebrated by a regular anniversary commemoration four days in the year; Judges 11:40. • - New Analysis of Chronology, vol. iii., p. 319.

The celebrated sacrifice of Iphigenia has been supposed by many learned men to be a fable founded on this account of Jephthah's daughter; and M. De Lavour, Conference de la Fable avec l'Histoire Sainte, has thus traced the parallel: -

The fable of Iphigenia, offered in sacrifice by Agamemnon her father, sung by so many poets, related after them by so many historians, and celebrated in the Greek and French theatres, has been acknowledged by all those who knew the sacred writings, and who have paid a particular attention to them, as a changed copy of the history of the daughter of Jephthah, offered in sacrifice by her father. Let us consider the several parts particularly, and begin with an exposition of the original, taken from the eleventh chapter of the book of Judges.

The sacred historian informs us that Jephthah, the son of Gilead, was a great and valiant captain. The

Israelites, against whom God was irritated, being forced to go to war with the Ammonites, (nearly about the time of the siege of Troy), assembled themselves together to oblige Jephthah to come to their succor, and chose him for their captain against the Ammonites. He accepted the command on conditions that, if God should give him the victory, they would acknowledge him for their prince. This they promised by oath; and all the people elected him in the city of Mizpeh, in the tribe of Judah. He first sent ambassadors to the king of the Ammonites to know the reason why he had committed so many acts of injustice, and so many ravages on the coast of Israel. The other made a pretext of some ancient damages his people had suffered by the primitive Israelites, to countenance the ravages he committed, and would not accord with the reasonable propositions made by the ambassadors of Jephthah. Having now supplicated the Lord and being filled with his Spirit, he marched against the Ammonites, and being zealously desirous to acquit himself nobly, and to ensure the success of so important a war, he made a vow to the Lord to offer in sacrifice or as a burnt-offering the first thing that should come out of the house to meet him at his return from victory.

He then fought with and utterly discomfited the Ammonites; and returning victorious to his house, God so permitted it that his only daughter was the first who met him. Jephthah was struck with terror at the sight of her, and tearing his garments, he exclaimed, Alas! alas! my daughter, thou dost exceedingly trouble me; for I have opened my mouth against thee, unto the Lord, and I cannot go back. His daughter, full of courage and piety, understanding the purport of his vow, exhorted him to accomplish what he had vowed to the Lord, which to her would be exceedingly agreeable, seeing the Lord had avenged him of his and his country's enemies; desiring liberty only to go on the mountains with her companions, and to bewail the dishonor with which sterility was accompanied in Israel, because each hoped to see the Messiah born of his or her family. Jephthah could not deny her this request. She accordingly went, and at the end of two months returned, and put herself into the hands of her father, who did with her according to his vow.

Several of the rabbins, and many very learned Christian expositors, believe that Jephthah's daughter was not really sacrificed, but that her virginity was consecrated to God, and that she separated from all connection with the world; which indeed seems to be implied in the sacred historian's account: And she knew no man. This was a kind of mysterious death, because it caused her to lose all hope of the glory of a posterity from which the Messiah might descend. From this originated the custom, observed afterwards in Israel, that on a certain season in the year the virgins assembled themselves on the mountains to bewail the daughter of Jephthah for the space of four days. Let us now consider the leading characters of the fable of Iphigenia. According to good chronological reckonings, the time of the one and of the other very nearly agree. The opinion that the name of Iphigenia is taken from the daughter of Jephthah, appears well founded; yea, the conformity is palpable. By a very inconsiderable change Iphigenia makes Iphthygenia, which signifies literally, the daughter of Jephthah. Agamemnon, who is described as a valiant warrior and admirable captain, was chosen by the Greeks for their prince and general against the Trojans, by the united consent of all Greece, assembled together at Aulis in Baeotia.

As soon as he had accepted the command, he sent ambassadors to Priam, king of Troy, to demand satisfaction for the rape of Helen, of which the Greeks complained. The Trojans refusing to grant this, Agamemnon, to gain over to his side the gods, who appeared irritated against the Greeks and opposed to the success of their enterprise, after having sacrificed to them went to consult their interpreter, Chalcas, who declared that the gods, and particularly Diana, would not be appeased but by the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the daughter of Agamemnon.

Cicero, in his Offices, says that Agamemnon, in order to engage the protection of the gods in his war against the Trojans, vowed to sacrifice to them the most beautiful of all that should be born in his kingdom; and as it was found that his daughter Iphigenia surpassed all the rest in beauty, he believed himself bound by his vow to sacrifice her. Cicero condemns this, rightly judging that it would have been a less evil to have falsified his vow than to have committed parricide. This account of Cicero renders the fable entirely conformable to the history.

Agamemnon was at first struck with and troubled at this order, nevertheless consented to it: but he afterwards regretted the loss of his daughter. He is represented by the poets as deliberating, and being in doubt whether the gods could require such a parricide; but at last a sense of his duty and honor overcame his paternal affection, and his daughter, who had warmly exhorted him to fulfill his vow to the gods, was led to the altar amidst the lamentations of her companions; as Ovid and Euripides relate, see Met., lib. 13.

Some authors have thought she really was sacrificed; but others, more humane, say she was caught up in a cloud by the gods, who, contented with the intended sacrifice, substituted a hind in her place, with which the sacrifice was completed. Dictys Cretensis says that this animal was substituted to save Iphigenia.

The chronology of times so remote cannot, in many respects, but be uncertain. Both the Greeks and Romans grant that there was nothing else than fables before the first Olympiad, the beginning of which was at least four hundred and fifty years after the destruction of Troy, and two hundred and forty years after Solomon. As to the time of Solomon, nothing can be more certain than what is related in the sixth chapter of the first book of Kings, that from the going out of Egypt, under Moses, till the time in which he began to build the temple, was four hundred and eighty years.

“According to the common opinion, the taking of Troy is placed one hundred and eighty years before the reign of Solomon; but his reign preceded Homer three centuries, according to some learned men, and always at least one century by those who related it lowest. Indeed, there is much uncertainty in fixing the express time in which Homer flourished.

“Pausanias found so much difference concerning this in authors, that he was at a loss how to judge of it. However, it is sufficient for us that it was granted that Solomon was at least a century before Homer, who wrote more than two centuries after the taking of Troy and who is the most ancient historian of this famous siege.”