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Introduction

Hezekiah is greatly distressed, and sends to Isaiah the prophet to pray for him, Isaiah 37:1-4. Isaiah returns a comfortable answer, and predicts the destruction of the king of Assyria and his army, Isaiah 37:5-7. Sennacherib, hearing that his kingdom was invaded by the Ethiopians, sends a terrible letter to Hezekiah, to induce him to surrender, Isaiah 37:9-13. Hezekiah goes to the temple, spreads the letter before the Lord, and makes a most affecting prayer, Isaiah 37:14-20. Isaiah is sent to him to assure him that his prayer is heard; that Jerusalem shall be delivered; and that the Assyrians shall be destroyed, Isaiah 37:21-35. That very night a messenger of God slays one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians, Isaiah 37:36. Sennacherib returns to Nineveh, and is slain by his own sons, Isaiah 37:37, Isaiah 37:38.

Verse 6

Thus shall ye say - x"x" x^ax•xžx"x•xÿ (ko tomerun, æœthus shall ye (explicitly, earnestly, and positively) say. æœThe paragogic nun deepens and increases the sense.

Verse 7

I will send a blast &œl will infuse a spirit into him&œ - &œx x x^xTM xY' x' x' x x— (nothen bo roach) never signifies any thing but putting a spirit into a person: this was İİ½İµİ...İ½İ± İ½İµİ»İ½İ±İ, , the spirit of deceit.&œ - Secker. &œl will send a blast&œ - I do not think that Archbishop Secker has hit the true meaning of these words. I believe x'x'x— (ruach) means here a pestilential wind, such as the Arabs call (simoom), that instantly suffocates both man and beast; and is what is termed &œthe angel of the Lord,&œ God&œ's messenger of death to the Assyrians, Isaiah 37:36.

Verse 8

Rabshakeh returned - From Isaiah 36:2, we learn that the king of Assyria had sent Rabshakeh from Lachish to Jerusalem; now it is likely that Rabshakeh had besieged that place, and that the king of Assyria had taken his station before this city, and dispatched Rabshakeh against Jerusalem. But, as in the verse above it is said, "he had departed from Lachish," probably he had been obliged to raise the siege, and sat down before Libnah, which promised an easier conquest.

Verse 9

He heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia - When he heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia had come out against him, then he sent that blasphemous manifesto which is contained in Isaiah 37:10-13, to terrify Hezekiah into submission. How much was this like, in words and spirit, to the manifesto sent to the Parisians by the late Duke of Brunswick, from the plains of Champaigne, in 1792, which was the forerunner of the mighty torrents of human blood which was shed in the French revolution! And what a blast of God fell upon him and his army - nearly like that which fell on the army of Sennacherib!

He sent messengers again - The word $\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\text{C}}\text{x}^{\text{Z}}\text{x}^{\text{C}}$ (vaiyishma), and he heard, which occurs the second time in this verse, is repeated by mistake from the beginning of the verse. It is omitted in an ancient MS. It is a mere tautology, and embarrasses the sense. The true reading instead of it is, $\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\text{M}}\text{x}^{\text{C}}$ (veyesheb), and he returned, which the Septuagint read in this place, $\text{ἰᾱῖ}\mu\text{ῖ}\text{f}\text{ῖ}$, $\text{ἰ}\mu\text{ῖ}\text{ῖ}\mu$, and which is preserved in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:9: He returned and sent, that is, according to the Hebrew idiom, he sent again.

Verse 12

As Gozan, and Haran - x—x xÿ (Charan): but x”x”xÿ (Haran) is the reading of four of Kennicottâ€™s MSS. and one of De Rossiâ€™s.

Verse 14

And read it $\hat{\text{a}}\infty$ And read them $\hat{\text{a}}\infty$ - $\text{x}\cdot\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}\$ \text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}\cdot$ (vayikraem). So MS. Bodl. in this place; and so the other copy; instead of $\text{x}\cdot\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}\$ \text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}\cdot$ (vaiyikraehu), $\hat{\text{a}}\infty$ and read It. $\hat{\text{a}}\infty$

And spread it **And spread them** - **xTMx[□]x[⊙]x** (vaiyiphresehu). **x^{*}x** (hu) is upon a rasure in a MS., which probably was at first **x^{*}** (mem). The same mistake as in the foregoing note.

Verse 15

Unto the Lord **â€œBefore Jehovahâ€** - That is, in the sanctuary. For **â€œel**, the Syriac, Chaldee, and the other copy, 2 Kings 19:15, read **â€œliphney**, **â€œbefore the face.**

Verse 18

The nations - $\text{נָסִיחַ} \text{ } \text{נָסִיחַ} \text{ } \text{נָסִיחַ}$ (haratsoth), נָסִיחַ the lands; נָסִיחַ instead of this word, which destroys the sense, ten of Kennicott's and five of De Rossi's MSS. (one ancient) have here גּוֹיִם (goyim), נָסִיחַ nations; נָסִיחַ which is undoubtedly the true reading, being preserved also in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:17. Another MS. suggests another method of rectifying the sense in this place, by reading מַלְכָּם (malcam), נָסִיחַ their king, נָסִיחַ instead of אֲרָצָם (artsam), נָסִיחַ their land; נָסִיחַ but it ought to be מַלְכֵיהֶם (malcheyhem), נָסִיחַ all the countries and their kings.

Verse 20

Save us נָסִיחַ Save us, we beseech thee נָסִיחַ - The supplicating particle, נָסִיחַ (na), is supplied here from eighteen MSS., three ancient, of Dr. Kennicott, and ten of De Rossi, and from the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19.

That thou art the Lord, even thou only נָסִיחַ That thou Jehovah art the only God נָסִיחַ - The word אֱלֹהִים (Elohim), נָסִיחַ God, נָסִיחַ is lost here in the Hebrew text, but preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:19. The Syriac and Septuagint seem here to have had in their copies אֱלֹהִים (Elohim), instead of יְהוָה (Yehovah).

Verse 21

Then Isaiah - sent unto Hezekiah - The Syriac and Septuagint understand and render the verb passively, was sent.

Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib נָסִיחַ Thy prayer unto me concerning Sennacherib - I have heard נָסִיחַ - שָׂמַח (shamati); this word, necessary to the sense, is lost in this place out of the Hebrew text. One MS. of Dr. Kennicott's and one of De Rossi's have it written above the line in a later hand. The Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies; and it is preserved in the other copy; 2 Kings 19:20.

Verse 23

Against the Holy One of Israel - For אֵל (el), to, the other copy has אֵל (al), against, rather more properly.

Verse 24

By thy servants נָסִיחַ By thy messengers נָסִיחַ - The text has אֲבֵדְיָךְ (abdeycha), thy servants; but the true reading seems to be מַלְאֲכֶיךָ (malacheycha), thy messengers, as in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23; and as the Septuagint and Syriac found it in their copies in this place.

Reproached the Lord - אֲדֹנָי (Adonai): but one of my MSS. has יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי (Yehovah Adonai), Jehovah the Lord. This reading is not found, I think, in any other MS., but several have יְהוָה (Yehovah) for אֲדֹנָי (Adonai).

I will enter into the height of his border נָסִיחַ I will penetrate into his extreme retreats נָסִיחַ - The text has מָרוֹם (marom), the height which seems to have been taken by mistake from the line but one above. Two MSS. have here מִלֹּחַ (malon), the lodge or retreat; which is the word in the other copy, 2 Kings 19:23, and I think is the true reading.

The forest of has Carmel - The forest and his fruitful field; that is, I will possess myself of the whole country.

Verse 25

Water נָסִיחַ Strange waters נָסִיחַ - The word זָרִים (zarim), strange, lost out of the Hebrew text in this place, is supplied from the other copy. A MS. supplies the word רַבִּיּוֹת (rabbim), many, instead of it.

With the sole of my feet - With my infantry.

All the rivers of the besieged places נָסִיחַ All the canals of fenced places נָסִיחַ - The principal cities of Egypt, the scene of his late exploits, were chiefly defended by deep moats, canals, or large lakes, made by labor and art, with which they were surrounded. See Harmer's Observ. 2 p. 304. Claudian introduces Alaric boasting of his conquests in the same extravagant manner: -

Subsidere nostris

$\text{Sub pedibus montes; arescere vidimus amnes.}$

$\text{Fregi Alpes, galeisque Padum victricibus hausit.}$

$\text{De Bello Getic. 526.}$

$\text{The mountains have passed away under our feet; we have seen the rivers dried up. I have broken the Alps,}$

and laden out the Po with our victorious helmets.â€

Verse 26

Lay waste defended cities into ruinous heaps â€œLay waste warlike nations; strong fenced citiesâ€ - $\text{x}'\text{x}\text{o}\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ x $\text{x}:\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ (gallim nitstsim). It is not easy to give a satisfactory account of these two words, which have greatly embarrassed all the interpreters, ancient and modern. For $\text{x}'\text{x}\text{o}\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ (gallim) I read $\text{x}'\text{x}\text{o}\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ (goyim), as the Septuagint do in this place, $\hat{\imath}\mu\hat{\imath}\hat{\imath}^{\frac{1}{2}}\hat{\imath}$. The word x $\text{x}:\text{x}^{\text{TM}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ (netsim) the Vulgate renders in this place compugnantium; in the parallel place, 2 Kings 19:25, pugnantium; and the Septuagint $\hat{\imath}^{\frac{1}{4}}\hat{\imath}\pm\hat{\imath}\hat{\imath}^{\frac{1}{4}}\hat{\imath}^{\frac{1}{2}}\hat{\imath}^{\frac{1}{2}}$, fighting, warlike. This rendering is as well authorized as any other that I know of; and, with the reading of the Septuagint, perfectly clears up the construction. See the margin on all the preceding verses.

Verse 27

Corn blasted - $\text{x}\text{O}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ “ $\text{x}\check{\text{z}}\text{x}$ ” (shedemah), parched: it does not appear that there is any good authority for this word. The true reading seems to be $\text{x}\text{O}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ “ xdx ” (shedephah), blasted, as it is in six MSS. (two ancient) here, and in the other copy.

Verse 29

Will I put my hook in thy nose - Et fraenum meum: Jonathan vocem $\text{x}\check{\text{z}}\text{x}^{\text{a}}\text{x}'$ (metheg), interpretatus est $\text{x}-\text{x}\check{\text{z}}\text{x}^{\bullet}$ (zemam), i.e., annulum, sive uncum, eumque ferreum, quem infigunt naribus camelae: eoque trahitur, quoniam illa feris motibus agitur: et hoc est, quod discimus in Talmude; et camela cum annulo narium: scilicet, egreditur die sabbathi. â€œAnd my bridle: Jonathan interprets the word (metheg) by (zemam), a ring, or that iron hook which they put in the nostrils of a camel to lead her about, check her in her restiveness, etc. And this is what we mean in the Talmud, when we say, And the camel with the ring of her nostrils shall go out on the Sabbath day.â€ - Jarchi in 2 Kings 19:28. Ponam circulum in naribus tuis. â€œI will put a ring in thy nostrils.â€ - Jerome. Just as at this day they put a ring into the nose of the bear, the buffalo, and other wild beasts, to lead them, and to govern them when they are unruly. Bulls are often ringed thus in several parts of England. The Hindoos compare a person who is the slave of his wife to a cow led by the ring in her nose.

Verse 36

Then the angel - Before â€œthe angel, â€œthe other copy, 2 Kings 19:35, adds â€œit came to pass the same night, that â€œ - The Prophet Hosea, Hosea 1:7, has given a plain prediction of the miraculous deliverance of the kingdom of Judah: -

â€œAnd to the house of Judah I will be tenderly merciful:

And I will save them by Jehovah their God.

And I will not save them by the bow;

Nor by sword, nor by battle;

By horses, nor by horsemen.â€

- L.

Verse 38

His sons smote him - What an awful punishment of his blasphemy! Who can harden his neck against God, and be successful? God does not lightly pass by blasphemy against himself, his government, his word, his Son, or his people. Let the profligate take care!