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A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

A DAY'S JOURNEY.

IT is somewhat unfortunate that Dr. Grieve, in his interesting article under the above heading in the new *Dictionary of the Bible* (T. and T. Clark), should, at its commencement, have quoted Jonah iii. 4 as a passage confirmatory of the definition he there gives. He then proceeds to say: "When the making of a day's journey is predicated of any one, we are not to understand merely that the person travelled for a day, or for so many hours thereof. 'Day's journey' is no mere indication of time, but a real though very indefinite measure of space." Now so far as the idiomatic phrase יום הַיָּרֵךְ is concerned (which occurs altogether eight times in the Old Testament) there can be no doubt that this statement is in the main correct, though I would venture to suggest that such instances as Numbers xi. 31 and Deuteronomy i. 2 (neither of which Dr. Grieve mentions) imply a distance which was really *definite*, and familiarly known as such by the sacred writer and his contemporaries, though the absolute distance would vary more or less at different periods of the Bible history. The late Prof. Lumby has shown how the analogous expression σαββάτου ὁδός (Acts i. 12) had in our Lord's time, by an interesting series of Rabbinic comparisons, become definitely fixed as a distance of 2,000 cubits. (See *Camb. Greek Test.* in loc.)

But the exact expression used by the writer of Jonah, both in iii. 3 and the verse following, is very different. It is יום הַיְהוּדָה, a phrase which is not found elsewhere in Scripture (its occurrence in Acts i. 12 of the Hebrew New Testament offering manifestly no criterion, as the Syriac reads there ^{ⲟⲩⲧⲁⲓⲛ} ^{ⲟⲩⲧⲁⲓⲛ} ^{ⲟⲩⲧⲁⲓⲛ} ^{ⲟⲩⲧⲁⲓⲛ} — "about seven stadia"). The general custom of regarding these two Hebrew terms as synonymous, always a risky practice in exegesis, has led,

in the case of Jonah iii. 4, to considerable confusion. As Dr. T. T. Perowne says, "Some have supposed that as a day's journey would suffice to traverse from one side to the other a city of which the dimensions were such as have been assigned (in the verse immediately preceding), and as, moreover, Jonah is found afterwards (in iv. 5) on the east side of Nineveh, *i.e.* the opposite side to that on which he would have entered it in coming from Palestine, we are intended here to understand that he walked quite through the city in a single day, uttering continually as he went 'his one deep cry of woe.'" It will be remembered that Diodorus gives the diameter of Nineveh as 150 stadia (Diod. ii. 3), just the distance which Herodotus calls "a day's journey" (Herod. v. 53). Accordingly Dr. Pusey maintains that Jonah walked straight through it—"from end to end"—in that one day. Buchanan Blake's popular reading, founded on the same supposition, is still more questionable: "When Jonah had gone a day's journey in the city he cried," etc. (*How to Read the Prophets.*) For, as Keil shows, there seems no valid reason why he should go "a day's journey" (in the linear sense expressed by יום יום), after entering the city, before delivering his message; in fact, if Pusey's view were correct, the prophet would by that time have arrived at, or near to, the opposite wall of the city, there apparently to commence his denunciation at sunset (Kleinert).

It must, however, be remembered, if we would rightly understand this verse, that the numeral אחד is emphatic, whether we regard it as a cardinal or, preferably, as an ordinal. This is a point which even the Revisers seem unfortunately to have lost sight of. Maurer, observing it, has suggested a far more commendable interpretation, *viz.*: "He began to *perambulate* the city, going hither and thither as far as was possible, in the first day." In this he is following the example of the LXX., which, in place of

the usual technical phrase *ἡμέρας ὁδός* (the equivalent of Hebrew יוֹם דֶּרֶךְ) employs here quite consistently the expression *ὡσεὶ πορείας ἡμέρας μιᾶς*. Similarly the Vulgate has "itinere diei unius," a very different expression to the "viam unius diei" of 3 Reg. xix. 4 (cf. Exod. iii. 18; v. 3), this latter being the "iter unius diei" of Cicero and other classical authors.

We thus see that the idea involved is not in the least concerned with the actual distance covered by the prophet (whose object of course was preaching, not travelling), but with the fact that on his arrival he straightway (Calvin) proceeded to utter his cry through street after street *on that one day*, with the wonderful result which is forthwith chronicled in the succeeding verses of the chapter. Dr. Pusey may, or may not, be right in entirely restricting the preaching to that single day. Certainly the exact words which Jonah used are applicable to that particular day only, for only on that day was the respite one of *forty* days. He may, or may not, be correct in also confining the prophet's utterance (on that day) to the incessant repetition of the few startling words—*עוֹד אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְנִינְוָה נֹהֲפֶכֶת*. On the one hand, as he remarks, "simplicity is always impressive." But on the other hand, it has been forcibly pointed out, "the repentance of Nineveh is one of the most singular events in history; a great and proud city suddenly smitten into the most profound humiliation, from the greatest of its inhabitants unto the least of them, is a spectacle to which history affords no parallel" (Rev. H. Martin on *Jonah*, p. 333). And such a unique repentance may well have been (to some extent at all events) influenced by their learning on subsequent days the miraculous details of the personal history of their strange visitor. This is the view taken by Alford, Cook, Kennedy, and other well-known commentators.

The point, however, still remains, that the main result is

attributed by the sacred author himself to the startling proclamation made *on that one day*, delivered abruptly as he wandered through the crowded streets and market-places of the city (Theodoret); the special phrase *מִהַלְלֵךְ יוֹם אֶחָד* being thus seen to be absolutely unconnected with the idea of miles and yards involved in the other Hebraism.

Turning now to verse 3, we have the statement—*עִיר־גְּדוֹלָה לְאֱלֹהִים מִהַלְלֵךְ שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים*, which by Hitzig and Kalisch has been held to refer to the diameter, and to imply that Nineveh had a main street 55 miles long! Perowne, Payne-Smith and others have regarded it as the circumferential distance, in this following Cyril Alex., who says: *εἰς τοῦτο μεγέθους ἐκτεινομένην ὡς δεῖσθαι πορείας ἡμερῶν τριῶν, εἰ τις ἔλοιτο περιουστειν*. Though this was true at the time when probably the Book of Jonah was written (if, as Schrader says, we include within the circuit of Nineveh not only Kouyunjik, but also Nimroud and Khorsabad) it certainly could not have been true of the city in Jonah's day, as it only attained its magnificent proportions under Sargon a hundred years afterwards. It is just as certain, moreover, that the Assyrians themselves had no idiom which represents "a day's journey," nor in fact any time measurement of distance. Lange, ignoring the idiomatic usage, suggests that *מִהַלְלֵךְ* may mean the actual roadway which united together the market places of the different individual cities forming the great aggregate of Nineveh, and which it would be necessary to travel over in order to go entirely through the city. In support of this view he quotes Ezekiel xlii. 4, but overlooks the fact that while *יָרֵךְ* is used in that very verse in the sense he speaks of, the force of *מִהַלְלֵךְ* must be ascertained by a comparison with Nehemiah ii. 6, the only other instance where the word occurs. That comparison shows conclusively that the word has nothing to do with distance, but solely with time,

and the statement in Jonah iii. 3 refers to the time it would take to walk about and visit the chief parts of the city (Schrader), which, like the modern Constantinople, was made up of distinct quarters or towns. Probably the best English rendering would be "a city of three days' going about," a rendering which of course lends no support to Dr. Grieve's otherwise estimable article on יָרֵךְ יוֹם.

In conclusion two other points should just be noticed in regard to Dr. Grieve's argument: (1) that Deuteronomy i. 2 fixes the definition of יָרֵךְ יוֹם (at that time) at fifteen miles, roughly speaking, the distance there referred to being about 165 miles; and (2) that it is somewhat unfortunate that the term *ἡμέρας ὁδός* has been loosely used in S. Luke ii. 44, since there, too, the idea involved is not that of the LXX. usage, but simply that not until the evening encampment was reached was the absence of the Divine Youth seriously noticed. Farrar, in fact, mentions a tradition that this first halting-place was El Bireh (בִּירֵה of Josh. xviii. 25), which was only *six* miles from Jerusalem, and certainly not a יָרֵךְ יוֹם. The Syriac reads ܡܝܢ ܘܢܝܢܝܢ in S. Luke the same as in Jonah.

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