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THE PROTOTYPE OF THE DIES IRAE

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The most famous of all medieval Latin hymns, known as the Dies Irae, which is attributed to Thomas de Celano, the companion and biographer of St. Francis of Assisi, is based on the Latin version of Zeph. 1: 14-18. The day of wrath in the poem of Zephaniah, who may have been a great-grandson of a younger son of King Hezekiah of Judah, is the destruction of Jerusalem in 586. Nebuchadnezzar's army besieged the holy city for one year and a half. The Egyptians tried to force the Chaldeans to raise the siege, but their effort was fruitless: the Chaldeans returned and no doubt resumed the siege with renewed energy.

Zephaniah's poem seems to have been composed shortly before the fall of Jerusalem. Its burden is the same as the prediction in Jer. 36:29: The King of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land, and will cause to cease from thence man and beast. In the Maccabean hymn prefixed to the Book of Micah John Hyrcanus' destruction of Samaria in 107 B. c. is compared to a volcanic cruption: just as the mountains melt under Jhyh like wax before the fire, the molten rocks flowing down in streams of lava like a waterfall, so Hyrcanus poured the stones of Samaria down to the valley (Mic. 58).² In Zeph. 1:16^a the

For the abbreviations see above, p. 45.—ET = Expository Times.—FV = Florilegium Melchior de Vogüé (Paris, 1909).—JV = The Holy Scriptures according to the Masoretic Text, a new translation, published by the Jewish Publication Society of America (Philadelphia, 1916).—MK = Meyer's Grosses Konversations-Lexikon (1902-1909).—MLN = Modern Language Notes Baltimore).—OC = The Open Court (Chicago).—RB = Riehm-Bathgen, Handworterbuch des biblischen Altertums.—TAOC = Actes du Scizième Congrès International des Orientalistes (Athens, 1912).—UC = Ungnad-Gressmann, Das Gilgamesch-Epos (1911).—VB = The Holy Bible, edited uith various renderings and readings by Cheyne, Driver, and Sanday (London, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1855).



 $^{^{1}\,\}mathrm{Died}$ after 1253. Celano is a town of the Abruzzi, 73 miles E of Rome.

day of wrath is called a day of blare and roaring which denotes the subterraneous rumbling preceding or accompanying an earthquake.³ The sound of the trumpet and the great shout which made the walls of Jericho fall down (Josh, 6:5) referred originally to the same phenomenon; the statement that the trumpets were blown by the priests, and that the people shouted, represents a later embellishment (BB 362; Mic, 57.†).

Seismic catastrophes were regarded as a manifestation of divine power. When the Law was given at Mount Sinai, in northwestern Arabia, there was a volcanic eruption combined with an earthquake (JAOS 34, 425, n. 12). An earthquake is said to have occurred at the death of Jesus on the cross (Matt. 27:51. We call an overwhelming action of natural forces (French force majoure, Lat, vis major an act of God; the Hebrew regarded a catastrophe as a Day of Jahreh. Originally this term had no eschatological significance (JAOS 34, 413)1 just as the terms act of God or panic have no religious meaning. Theophanies are associated in OT with volcanic eruptions. In the alphabetic psalm prefixed to the Book of Nahum we read that Juvu's wrath fuses all things like fire, the rocks are even set blazing: the mountains quake before Him, the hills at once start to totter; the earth before Him crashes, the dry land and all thereon dwelling; when He scolds at the sea, it is arid, and all the rivers are emptied (Nah. 8).

In Syriae this rumbling noise from the depth of the earth is called turtâsâ which denotes also the rumbling noise caused by wind within the intestines, i. e. borborygmus, not expitus rentris—peditum, πορδή (AJSL 26, 2). Cf. κορκοριγή = Heb. têr 'a and αωνη τοι σεισμοί - qôl ra'š gadôl, Ezek, 3: 13: also the Pauline σαλπεγξ θεοί - 1 Thess. 4: 16 - and the beginning of Chamisso's poem Der Sturm: Der - Utlen Schoss der dunkten Nacht durchdringen - De. Dorrers Schnettertor - WZKM 23, 361). In French you say estat de to ner - and s - écata to be trampette.

*Cont a t E. Sel in, Iter all to Prophetismus 1912) p. 59 and p. 62 of J. M. P. Smitt' commertary on Malachi 4000. Mal. 3: 23, 24 and 19, 20 are later addition to 3: 1 and 5. The messeager in Mal. 3: 1 is Ezra JHPC, No. 316, p. 27. Mal. 3: 22 is a misplaced gloss to 2: 2, just a 65 nion for the rate of the tool of Israel through His messenger (debár is a glos) to na 'à, and lahoè a gloss to et is a misplaced gloss to 2: 2 of, JHL 36, 148. Nor i it true that Amos JHL 35, 287) is the creator of the ethical concept on of the day of JHME: the tetrastich Am. 5: 18 20 is a glos to 8: 4, 5, 8, 9. CC, below, p. 15"



At the terrible Messina earthquake on Dec. 28, 1908 the sea retired, and then a great wave rolled in (EB11 8, 8192). In the case of volcanic activity on the sea-floor shoals of dead fishes may float around the center of eruption (EB11 28, 188b). Therefore Zephaniah says: I'll sweep away all, says Jahveh, from the face of the land: man and beasts, and birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. The terrific heat and the dense clouds of smoke ascending from the burning city will drive the birds away. Also the day of clouds and fogs, the day of darkness and aloom in the fourth hexastich alludes to the conflagration of the city, and in the last line but one of the poem we read that the whole land will be devoured by the fire of JHVH's passion (cf. Jer. 34:2. 22). In the seventh year of the reign of Herod (31 B. c.) there was an earthquake in Judea, which brought great destruction upon the eattle in that country (EB 1150). A large earthquake may entail a loss of life greater than that which takes place in many wars (EB¹¹ 8, 824^b).

Zephaniah says. Jhyh has prepared a great feast and invited His guests, i. e. the wild beasts and birds of prey, hyenas and vultures (cf. Jer. 34:20). Zähh denotes a slaughter, and a slaughter is a sacrifice and a feast (EB 4217, 42).5 Higdîš gĕrû'âu means literally He has caused those whom He has invited to be clean; Assyr, auddušu is a synonym of ellu, clean (BAL 104, n. 2; Numbers, SBOT, 44, 34) and Arab. qúdusa = táhura. If a man is invited to a feast, he cleans himself. Here the vultures and hyenas prepare themselves for the feast: they preen their plumage and whet their beaks; grind their teeth and lick their chops and paws. The Chaldeans are not the invited guests; they are the slaughterers and carvers. Grotius (1644) correctly said: Convivae hie sunt aves, et ferae, ct canes. He also referred the visitation of the sons of the king and all the princes to the execution of the sons of Zedekiah and the high officials at Riblah, i. e. Arbel near Magdala at the northwestern end of the Sea of Galilee (Mic. 29, n. 37; JBL 35, 287).

⁵In certain parts of Germany (e. g. in Leipsic) the killing of hogs is called Schlachtfest, just as in certain parts of England the killing of the family-pig is known as hog-feast. In Augusti-De Wette's Die Schriften des Alten Testaments (Heidelberg, 1810) Schlachtfest is used in Zeph. 1: 7. 8. J. D. Michaelis (1779) has Schlachtfest for Heb. zähh in Is. 34: 6.



The view that Zephaniah's poem predicts the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 was advanced also (1782) by J. D. Michaelis. although C. F. Cramer (1778) had suggested a reference to the Seythian invasion, and (1828) by the Catholic theologian J. A. Theiner. König in his Einleitung (1903) assigns the Book of Zephaniah to the decad after the death of Josiah in 609, but practically all modern exegetes believe that the Day of JHVH in Zephaniah refers to the inroad of the Seythians c. 625.6 The Scythians, however, went along the Mediterranean, they did not invade Judah; and, even if they had attempted to besiege Jerusalem, the city would not have been frightened: it took the Chaldeans a year and a half to reduce the city; Titus' great siege in 70 A. D. lasted 143 days (DB 2, 588b). EB 2417 says: The whole Judean plateau is isolated, and Jerusalem commands it: army after army of the great empires crossed the plains below, and left this mountain town alone; EB 2426 we read: Alexander (EB11 15, 392b) is not likely to have turned back from Gaza on Jerusalem with Egypt still unsubdued . . . struggles between Ptolemy and Antiochus for the possession of Palestine appear to have been limited to the seaboard.

The Seythians would not have been able to capture Jerusalem, although the inhabitants were no longer faithful worshipers of Juvii: they had adopted the Babylonian worship of the stars, especially of the Queen of Heaven (6 ή βασίλισσα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, Jer. 44:17 · i. e. Istar-Venus; instead of bẽ-malkám, referring to çẽ bã haš-šamáim, in v. 5 we must read bẽ-malkaiám. They had adopted also foreign raiment and foreign superstitions: they leaped over the threshold, as the Philistines did according to 1 S 5:5. In Syria it is still regarded as unlucky to tread on a threshold; in Upper Syria the bride is sometimes carried across the threshold by the friends of the bridegroom. The sons of the king and all the princes in Jerusalem perpetrated violence and fraud, defiling the house of their Lord (Jer. 34:15. 11. 18).

^{&#}x27;See EB 5061, 2. Klostermann's reading sippim instead of sc'ippim, 1 K 18: 21 (JBL 17, 109) is impossible (see Mic. 95). Sippim would never have been corrupted to sc'ippim (cf. AJSL 22, 197, 1. 15; Est. 52, 1. 12; 61, 1. 6). Nor can we adopt Vogel's (apud Grotium) interpretation of Zeph. 1: 9a, qui per portas irruunt ut vi exspolient domos aliorum.



^{*}For the Scythians of. Aleš Hrdlička, The Races of Russia in Smithsonian Miscellaneous Collections, Vol. 59, No. 11 (March, 1919) p. 3.

Jerusalem is doomed: there will be a ery from the Fishgate, a howl from the second city, i. c. the northern part of the city. The Fishgate in the middle of the second northern wall may have been the entrance by which the Tyrians brought fish to Jerusalem (Neh. 13:16). Jerusalem is defended on the E. S. and SW by natural fosses: the attack is therefore expected from the north. There will be a howl from the inmates of The Pit. i. e. the secondary head of the Tyrop@on valley between the eastern and western hills of Jerusalem, SW of the Temple hill (see the maps facing EB¹¹ 15, 332). All merchants will perish. None will escape; the city will be searched with a great light. Zephaniah is represented with a lamp in his left hand, but we need not suppose that the Chaldeans searched the city with lights: the burning houses provided ample illumination. The whole city will be a huge torch (nerôt is pluralis intensivus; 6 has $\mu \epsilon \tau \hat{a} \lambda \hat{v} \chi vov$, $\delta ba - \hat{s} \tilde{c} r \hat{a} \bar{q} \hat{a}$, $\overline{c} b \tilde{e} - nabr \hat{a} \hat{s} t \hat{a}$). The Jerusalemites did not expect any intervention of JHVH, they did not think that He could either help or harm them, just as Epicurus did not believe in divine interference (Eccl. 6). They had settled on their lees, but now the bright wine will be separated from the deposit, and will be racked into a clean cask: the upper strata will be deported, and the dregs will remain (Jer. 52:16). In Jer. 48:11. 12 (Mic. 94) we read:

> Moab was quiet from its youth, and settled on its lees; It was not poured from vessel to vessel or filtered through a strainer. Therefore its taste was not changed, and its flavor not improved.

The hemistich nor filtered through a strainer (Heb. uĕ-lô zuqqáq bĕ-misnán) has been displaced in the received text by the explanatory gloss it did not go into exile (Heb. u-bag-gôlâ lô halák).

*Lit. mortar (VHOK 232). We call the part of the floor of an exchange where a special kind of business is carried on a pit: we speak of a grainpit or a provision-pit. Formerly the orchestra or parquet in a theater was designated as the pit. EB 2412, l. 7 says that the second head of the Tyropæon is a kind of dell or theater-shaped depression (cf. κοίλον, Lat. cavea). John Evelyn uses theater in the sense of basin, circular reservoir. A hill near Honolulu is called The Punchbowl.



The second line of the last hexastich of Zephaniah's Dies Irae says that the blood of the inhabitants will be spilled like dirt, and their marrow like dung. Their dead bodies will cover the ground like manure. In the meaningless $l\tilde{\epsilon}h\hat{u}m\hat{a}m$ we must transpose the h and m, reading $l\tilde{\epsilon}-moh\hat{a}m$, i. e. moh, marrow (Job 21:24) preceded by the emphatic $l\tilde{\epsilon}$, verily (JBL 29, 104; Mic. 40,*; AJP 40, 71, n. 27).

Zephaniah's poem consists of five hexastichs with 3+2 beats in each line. The stichic arrangement in *Kittel's* Hebrew Bible is inadequate. The view that Zephaniah is not a great poet, and his style prosaic (Reuss, J. M. P. Smith) is based on an imperfect understanding of the poem. Only thirty lines in c. 1 are genuine; cc. 2, 3 is Maccabean apart from 2:1-3 which represents a euphemistic liturgical appendix to Zephaniah's poem in c. 1 (see below, p. 153).

Zephaniah's poem may be translated as follows:

ZEPHANIAH'S PREDICTION OF THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

(586 B. c.)

- i 1, 2 al'll sweep away all, {says Jhyh,} from the face of the land:{}β
 - 3 7Man and beast, and birds of the air, and the fish of the sea.
 - 4 I have stretched out my hand against Judah and Glerusalem's dwellers;
 - 5 I'll cut offau (the name of)heta Baal []
 - () along with the priests, (ε) Those who bows to the host of heaven and swear by its queen,
 - 6 But have turned back from Juvii Pand have not sought Him.
- ii 7 Silence before "Juvu":
 Juvu 's day is near.
 **Guvu has prepared the feast,
 has bidden His guests.
 *** ** **J'll punish {} [the sons of the king]
 and {} {all the princes}
 - 9^b Who fill the house of their Lord with violence and fraud;

- 9a I'll punish all that leap over the threshold,π
- 8^b And all that array themselves in foreign raiment.
- iii 10 ρ₅There is a cry from the Fishgate, a howl from the New Town.τ
 - 11 Ay, howl, ye inmates of The Pit! all dealers are destroyed.φ
 - 12 xWith a great torch I'll search

 yJerusalem and punish all lords

 That have settled upon their lees and say in their heart:

 JHVN will not do a good thing or anything bad.
 - 13 Their wealth will be for booty, their houses ruins.
- iv 14 Jhvh's great day is near,
 ay, near and imminent.
 The sound of Jhvh's day is bitter,
 e'en warriors shriek.9
 - 15a A day of wrath is that day,
 - 15^b a day of stress and anguish,
 - 16a A day of blare and roaring,
 - 15° a day of crash and smash,
 - 15° A day of clouds and fogs
 - 16° o'er the lofty battlements,
 - 15^d A day of darkness and gloom
 - 16^b o'er the fencèd cities.

[blind men

- v 17 I'll beset themα so that they walk like when the enemy prevails.ββ
 Their blood will be spilled like dirt, ay, their marrow like dung.
 - 18 Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them

^{*}Döderlein apud Grotium (1776) says: etiam fortissimi anxie clamabunt.

ed.µµ

On the day of the wrath of Jiivii, on the day of His anger.

[] {The whole land will be devoured} {} [by the fire of His passion.] γγHe'll surely work destruction on δδthe dwellers of the land. εε

, ,			Ivery la word which came to Zanhaniah han Cuchi han Cadaliah
(a)	1,	1	JHVH's word which came to Zephaniah ben-Cushi ben-Gedaliah ben-Amariah ben-Hezekiah, 77 king of Judah
(0)			-5.5
(β)		3	I shall cut off the men from the face of the land, $\eta\eta$ says JHVH
(γ)			I shall sweep away (δ) I shall sweep away (ϵ) the (ζ) 4 all of
(η)		4	from this place (θ) the remnant of (ι) the parsons
(K)		5	on the roofs (λ) those who bow $\theta\theta$ to JHVH and
(μ)		6	and have not resorted to JHVH (ν) 7 the Lord (ξ) for
(o)		Sa	and it will come to pass on the day of JHVH's feast that
(π)		9a	on that day (ρ) 10 and it will come to pass on that day, says
(σ)		10	the sound of (τ) and a great crash from the hills [JHVH
(v)		11	people (\$\phi\$) all those that weighed out money were cut off
(χ)		12	and it will come to pass at that time (ψ) accus.
(ω)		13	They will build houses, but will not inhabit them;
			They will plant vineyards, but will not drink their wine.
aa)		17	the men $(\beta\beta)$ they sinned against JHVH
$\gamma\gamma)$		18	for extermination (ζζ) all
$(\epsilon\epsilon)$	2,	1	Bow yourselves and bend to the L ord, $ye[u]$ sinful people!
		2	Ere Fate descend upon you like a peregrine. () KK
		3	Seek Him, AX all ye humble of the land, perform His order!
			Seek righteousness, seek humility, perhaps ye'll be shield-

- (ζζ) 1, 1 in the days of Josiah ben-Amon
- $(\eta\eta)$ 3 that is, the ' (wicked) with the ruins ()
- $(\theta\theta)$ 5 those who swear (a) 3 who are
- (kk) 2, 2 Ere there come upon you (the day of) Jhvh's blaze of wrath.

 Ere there come upon you the day of Jahveh's wrath.
- ($\lambda\lambda$) 3 JHVH ($\mu\mu$) on the day of JHVH's wrath.

The Hebrew text should be read as follows:

צפניה

מעל-פני הארמֽה^: מ ∞אסָׂף אֹסֶף־כְל ּנאם־יהוְהּ} ורגי הים: אךם ובהמָה זעוף־שמִים מּיַרָּם ועל־זיויטבי ירויטלם גטִיתי יִדִי על־יהוּדְה והכרתִיתּ (את-שם) # הבעל [] () עָמְייּ (י) הכהנים: ואת-המשתחוים» לצבא השכים ואת-גהניטבעים במלכתם: ואת-הנסוגים מאחרי יהוה יולא דריטהו: ^{*}ולא כי-קרוב יום-יהוְה הָם מפני ייהוָה :הקריש קרָאִיו יהור הובח להבח ועל-🏗כל השָרים יופקדתִי על־3[בנִי המְלֹךְן. הכפלאים בית-אדניהם חמם ומרמה: ופקדתי על-כל הדולגים עלִי המפתוּ״ ועלי כל הלבשים מלבוש נכרי: ויללה מן-המשנחד: יטיער הרגים מישטר הרגים iii 11 הילילו ישבי המכתש כי־נרמה כל־יכנעוֹ¢ ופקדתי על-האנשים" אתַפְשׁ יִירושׁלָם בֹנֵרְות 12 xx 12 האמרים בלבבם הקפאים עלי יטמריקם^{יי} כי-לְא ייטִיב יהוְה ולא ירע: ובתיהם לשממה״: והיה חילם למשסה קרוב יום-יהוה הגדול 14 iv קרוב וממַקר־מאד " וקול יום-יהוה מרר״ צרח גם-גבור: יום-עברה היום הקוא 156 מ יום-צרה ומצוקה יום־יִטֹאָה ומיטואָה יום יטופר ותרועה 15°.16° יום ענן וערפל 16°.15° על-הפגות הגבקות יום חשקה ואפלה $16^{\rm b}.15^{\rm d}$ על-הערים הבצרות: ים והלכו כעורים aaייברלים והלכו כעורים 17 v כי־אויב יגברקק ולמחם כגללים: ושָׁפָּך דמָם כעפָר

לא־יוכל להצילם ביום אפו באיט קנאתו, את־יייטבי האָרין: ״ גם־כספס וגם זהכם ביום עברת יהוה ו תאכל כל הארין מאכן בהלה יעשה

```
(a) 1.1 רבר יהוה אשר היה אל צפניה בן-בושי בי-נדריה בי-אפריה בן-חזקיהא פרך יהורה:
(3) אכף אכף (\gamma) אכף ארכה מינר פני הארמה\eta\eta נאם יהיה את הארם מינר פני הארמה\eta\eta
את שאר(a) הכפרים (b) בין הפקום הזה(b) את שאר(a) הכפרים (b) ביעל הגנות (b) ביעל הגנות
ארנ' (\xi) ארנ' את יהוה \theta המשתחוים \theta\theta ר'היה \theta ואשר רא בקשו את יהוה (\alpha) ארנ' (\beta) כי
הוא נאס יהות (פין מהיה ביים ההוא א פין פיים ההוא (פין מהיה ביים ההוא הא א יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה א יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה (פין מהיה ביים ההוא נאס יהוה ביים הוא ביים הוא ביים הוא ביים ההוא ביים הוא ביים ביים הוא ביים הוא ביים הו
נברתו כל נטירו\phi (\phi) ושבר גדול מהגבינית (\epsilon) וו ינס (\phi) גברתו כל נטירו\epsilon (ככף
                 יבני בתים ורא ישבו־בם 13^{6} (\omega)
                                                                                                                                                                                   (ע) בו יהיה בינת ההיא (ע) את
ונטעו ברכום ורארושתו אתרוונם
(66) בל
                                                              (קק) או בי ברה
                                                                                                                                                      ריהוה חטאי (אָאָ)
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      בחאר 17 ממ)
                                                            הגוון,,ו הגבבר
                                                                                                                                      2.1 התקוששי וקרי רא רני
                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           (\epsilon \epsilon)
                                                                     בטרם רדת-חק ערוכם בנין עבר () אא בקשיה XX כר-עניין ארץ []משפטי פערי
                                                                 : אידי תכתרי אא
                                                                                                                                            בקשורצרק בקשו עניה
```

הנשבעים (מא) ((m) (אטיהו בן־אמיי (תמ(m) יוני והירשעיםיר את־ה מכשרית ((m) הנשבעים 1,1 ((m) בטרם ראדיביא עריבב (יום) חרוו־אף יהוה $(\kappa\kappa)$ אשר

את יהוה בטרם רא־יבוא ינריבם יום־אף יהוה: (μμ) ביום אף יהוה (λλ)

For the reading 'imme' cf. the remarks on minne, AJSL 19, 133; see also Dillmann' § 167, 3; VG 497, 1, 7.

¹³ We must not substitute has sa'nannim; see my paper The Son of Man in The Monist, vol. 29, p. 124.

For the etymology of **simarim see JSOR 1, 91.

⁴⁸ For mimaldiér möd see ZDMG 58, 623, +; JBL 29, 101, n. 46; 37, 214, 216, n. 8.

⁴⁴ Also in Lam, 3; 19 we must read 'onji u měrôri, my stress and my bitterness, and in Lam, 1; 7 u měrôrůh which is a gloss derived from 3; 19.

⁴⁸ For kémarim vor kómarim see AJSL 32, 66, 74, 75.

³⁶ For niţili lasf see Nobleke, Syr. Gr. § 280; cf. MNL 32, 407 and n. 9 to the paper cited in n. 11.

¹⁷ For 'ānāṇ' sec AJP 40, 65, n. 7.

We must transpose malfelit and resarim. For similar confusions of the scribes of, Mic. 24. We need not read mulfelit, although we have mulfelim in Jer. 18:23 (and Ezek, 21:20) see Knutzsch's AT ad loc.). Mulfeli means prop. tumble down. This stem is identical with Arab. kásila, to be lazy; of, German trage, lazy, and our to drag, to move on languidly; see JAOS 22, 10, n. 5; AJP 27, 160, n. 2; contrast GB 3566.