

Thesis submitted to the Department of Biblical Exegesis
of the Hebrew Union College for the degree of Rabbi

Microfilmed 3/28/68

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(RABBI) DAVID KIMCHI AS EXEGETE AND GRAMMARIAN
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO HIS COMMENTARIES ON THE BOOK OF MICAH.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	CHAPTER I.	Page
	THE LIFE OF RABBI DAVID KIMCHI.	1
	CHAPTER II.	
	THE WORKS OF KIMCHI.	
I.	Exegetical	7
II.	Grammatical & Lexicographical	8
III.	Polemical	10
IV.	Philosophical	10
	CHAPTER III.	
	THE CHARACTER OF HIS WRITINGS.	
I.	General Character & Purpose	14
II.	Traditionalist or Literalist?	16
III.	Scientific or Popular in Presentation?	17
IV.	Knowledge of Arabic	20
V.	Influence on Others	21
	CHAPTER IV.	
	HIS EXEGESIS.	
I.	General Nature	25
II.	Method & Style	
	1. Knowledge of Bible	27
	2. Idiosyncrasies	33
III.	Worldly Knowledge	
	1. Knowledge of History	37
	2. Knowledge of Geography and Zoology	39
	3. Biblical Criticism	41
	CHAPTER V.	
	HIS LINGUISTIC ABILITY.	
I.	Treatment of Syntax	47
II.	Grammatical Knowledge	50
III.	Treatment of Accents, Vocalization & Cantillation Marks	53
	CHAPTER VI.	
	HIS USE OF THE SOURCES.	
I.	Bible	59
II.	Massorah	60
III.	Targum	61
IV.	Rabbinic Literature	64
V.	The Other Kimchis	66
VI.	Ibn Ezra & Yefes b. Ali	67
VII.	Rashi	68

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF RABBI DAVID KIMCHI ¹

The history of Jewish Exegesis would indeed be incomplete without the Kimchi family. They must be mentioned in the same breath with such men as Rashi and Ibn Ezra, for their activity and influence mark the climax in the development of the simple commentaries on the Bible.

The first of this illustrious line which was to dominate the literary life of the Jews in Southern France for three generations is Joseph Kimchi. We know that he originated in Spain, although he removed to Narbonne, on the southern border of France. Here he matched wits with the best intellects of his time and was successful in vanquishing no less a renowned scholar than Rabbenu Tam. While no genius nor brilliant intellect, Joseph was superior to his French colleagues by virtue of the fact that he was well versed in the grammar of Janach and Hayyuj. Other French scholars were handicapped in this respect because of their ignorance of the Arabic language.

Joseph Kimchi managed to rear a family in Narbonne---a family which was to make his name indelible upon the pages of history. Some of his descendants were to maintain and enhance his reputation in the Provence, while others sought their fortunes in other parts of the world----Italy, Syria, Turkey and even in England.

Moses Kimchi was the oldest son of Joseph. He was faithful in carrying on his father's grammatical and lexicographical

activities. He wrote a grammar called "Mahalach" which was soon eclipsed by others that were more complete. His chief contribution seems to be his teaching, for when David, his younger brother, was but five years old the father died and left Moses with the responsibility of David's education.²

David Kimchi, although born in the Provence in 1160, was a Spanish subject. He is often called "Sephardi".³ David was an apt scholar and was not satisfied with his brother's teaching alone, but investigated the writings of other men. He read his predecessors' and contemporaries' works assiduously.⁴ ReDaK spent his early years in filling his storehouse with knowledge. He apparently did not write a line in his youth that has been preserved. We may say that his literary life began at forty.⁵ He found that his extensive study of the Talmud stood him in good stead, for he was able to teach the Talmud to children and thus keep body and soul together.⁶ His great learning earned for him the name "Maistre Petit" which the family carried for three hundred years.⁷

Scholars tell us that David Kimchi's intimate friend was Samuel ibn Tibbon (1150-1230).⁸ They were both great admirers of Moses Maimonides, the intellectual giant of the day. Ibn Tibbon translated Maimuni's "Guide to the Perplexed" from the Arabic to the Hebrew. It was probably through Ibn Tibbon's translation that David Kimchi became conversant with the ideas and method of Maimonides.

Proof of Kimchi's devotion to Maimonides and his writings is furnished by the fact that when he was a comparatively old man of seventy-five years, he took up the cudgels in defence of Rambam. The occasion was the controversy which broke out because of Maimonides'

two books, "Sepher ha-Maada" and "More Nebuchim". ReDaK sought to bring about a peaceful agreement between the rigid Talmudists, on the one hand, and the firm philosophers, on the other.

The opponents of Maimonides were divided into two factions.⁹ In one camp were to be found the iron-bound traditionalists like Rabbi Solomon b. Abraham of Montpellier; his pupil, Jonah of Gerona; Jonah of Toledo, the Chasid; and David b. Saul. These men were strong in their knowledge of Talmud, but weak in the worldly sciences. They were sticklers for tradition and accepted only the literal meaning of the Haggada as well as of the Halacha. In their eyes, anyone who found another meaning of the Haggada besides the literal one and who denied miracles was an Apikoros. Naturally, they banned Maimonides' books as heretical.¹⁰

The second camp of opposition was far different in its composition from the first. The men of this group were Sephardic Jews who were well versed in the sciences of the day. Meir b. Todros and Judah b. Alfakhar were the leaders and they were supported by men of similar ilk. They opposed Maimonides not because he tried to get at the essence of things, but because he attempted to reconcile philosophy with the beliefs found in the Torah and the Talmud. Judah Alfakhar could not possibly see any evidences of the Aristotelian soul in the Scriptures and, therefore, he was angry with those who took up the shield and buckler in defence of Rambam.¹¹

It is interesting to note here that most of those who were Maimonideans were quite unprepared to answer the arguments of the anti-Maimunists. They did not probe the depths of the questions and were unable to answer the objections and contradictions.

raised by the Sephardic scholars. 12

The storm finally broke when Rabbi S. bar Abraham and his party denounced those who read the teachings of Rambam as idolatrous priests and excommunicated them. Furthermore, they arranged to have the books of Maimonides burnt. The friends of Rambam, in turn, pronounced the ban upon their opponents, the anti-Maimonists. 13

When David Kimchi saw that his offers of peace were ignored, he determined to travel to the scene of the controversy in Spain with the hope of winning over the opposing factions to the side of Maimonides. 14 He was selected as the delegate from the communities of Lunel and Narbonne for this purpose. Despite his advanced age, he did not spare himself, but undertook the journey in order to intercede for the master. As he passed from town to town through Spain, the heads of the Kehilot placed him under ban. Weary and worn by the strain of the trip, he fell sick at Avila and was unable to proceed with his journey. He then set to work to win Alfakhar over to the cause with correspondence. He wrote him in a kindly and humble tone, but Alfakhar was adamant. He favored those who attacked Maimonides and answered ReDaK in a sharp and arrogant manner. 15 Samuel ibn Tibbon, likewise, did not escape the reproach of Alfakhar for having spread the ideas of Maimonides. 16 However, others of the Sephardic school were more considerate of ReDaK and chided Alfakhar for his disrespect for age and scholarship. 17 Meshullam b. Kalonymos b. Todros, although an admirer of Alfakhar, rebuked him for his unkindly treatment of Kimchi with the following statement: "Is it right to cause the death of the righteous as well as the wicked with thy tongue?" 18 Judah b. Alfakhar saw the error of his ways and resolved to make amends to the worthy Kimchi. 19 Other fanatical opponents who had ex-

communicated Kimchi, later freed him from the ban out of respect for his character and sincerity of purpose. 20 But the lengthy and arduous struggle was too much for the aged Kimchi with the result that he soon left his worldly cares behind to take his chair of honor in the "Yeshiva shel Ma'alah".

David b. Joseph Kimchi lived a full and exemplary life. He died in 1235. One needs but to turn to the records of his life to see there the ideals practiced which were promulgated in his teachings and writings. His ability as a scholar is unquestionable. Others have acquired similar proficiency in traditional lore and acquaintance with erudition, but few have been as capable and at the same time as modest and self-sacrificing as the idealistic Kimchi. He was indeed a great spirit---a man of character as well as a man of intellect---a man of conviction and yet a man of tolerance and peace.

NOTES ON CHAPTER ONE

- 1.....often abbreviated, פ"ק, transliterated ReDaK.
- 2.....Box, G.H.; "Introduction to Kimchi on the Psalms", p.xviii
Finkelstein, L.; "Introduction to Kimchi on Isa." p.xviii
Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2, p.157
- 3.....De-Rossi, G.B.; "Historisches Wörterbuch"; p. 164
- 4.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol. 2, p.157
הנה בכל ספרי המדקדקים והמפרשים אשר היו לפניו וברר
מהם אוכל ויעש מטעמים.
- 5.....Finkelstein, L.; "Introduction to Kimchi on Isa.", p.xviii
- 6.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 13
- 7.....Encyclopedia Judaica; vol. IX, p. 1234
- 8.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2; p.169
Cohen, H.; "Introduction to Kimchi on Hosea"; p. xi
- 9.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2; p.169
- 10.....Ibid.
- 11.....Ibid., p. 170
- 12.....Ibid.
- 13.....Ibid., p. 171
- 14.....Cohen, H.; "Introduction to Kimchi on Hosea"; p. xi
Kimchi made the trip in 1232.
- 15.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2; p.172
- 16.....Jewish Encyclopedia; vol. VI, p. 549
- 17.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2; p.172
- 18.....Ibid.
- 19.....Ibid.; p. 173
- 20.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 25

CHAPTER II

THE WORKS OF RABBI DAVID KIMCHI

David Kimchi's literary productions may be classified into four different types: 1) his exegetical works; 2) his grammatical and lexicographical writings; 3) his polemics against Christianity; and, 4) his philosophical writings. Of these four types, his exegetical works and especially his commentaries on the various books of the Bible are the best known. Nevertheless, his "Sepher Michlol", which includes his grammar and dictionary, is considered his magnum opus.¹

In the field of Biblical exegesis Kimchi was most prolific. He wrote commentaries on Genesis, Chronicles, Psalms, Ruth, the Former and the Later Prophets. In fact, according to מלך "שלמה", the only books that Kimchi did not comment on were the last four books of Moses, Proverbs, Job, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and the Song of Songs.² There is some question among scholars as to the chronological order of Kimchi's commentaries on the Bible. The fact that his commentary on Genesis is fragmentary and that there are no commentaries for the other four books of the Torah might lead some to think that these works did exist once but were lost. However, we learn that Kimchi began his exegesis at the end of the Bible and worked towards the beginning. According to Geiger, a certain "Maskil" from Gerona who was one of his father's pupils proposed that ReDaK compose a commentary on the Books of Chronicles.³ This proved so satisfactory that he soon produced a similar work on all the

books of the Hagiographa. When he had completed this, he devoted his literary prowess to the Prophets. It was only after he had finished the $\square \cdot \aleph \cdot \aleph$ and $\square \cdot \text{חזקיה}$ that he actually devoted his attention to a work on Genesis.⁴ Unfortunately, his exegetical work on the Five Books of Moses was interrupted by the Maimonidean controversy and before he could resume his work on Genesis he died at Avila.

The reason usually given for Kimchi's treatment of the Hagiographa and the Prophets prior to his work on the "Toras Moshe" is that for a long time the extreme popularity of Rashi's commentary made all other commentaries on the Pentateuch superfluous and unnecessary.

It is of special interest to note that Mercier, a Christian scholar, has traced a commentary on the Book of Ruth to Kimchi. Likewise, that de Rossi has discovered a commentary to "Pirke Abot" in Siddur Turin which he attributes to ReDaK. He found that it was composed in Trino in 1525.⁵

The characteristics of Kimchi's Biblical exegesis will be given in full in a later chapter of this work.⁶

The second important type of Kimchi's works, according to my classification, is his grammatical and lexicographical writings. These are combined in a single book known as the "Sepher Michlol" or "The Book of Completeness". ReDaK's purpose here was not to give a critical grammar but rather preliminary instruction for those who would study Torah.⁷ In the first part we find the treatment of grammar. He dealt with the formal structure of language as well as the meanings as found in their Bible contexts.⁸ "He combined

combined the paradigmatic method of his brother Moses with the procedure of the older scholars who devoted their attention to details.⁹ The second part of this book called "Sepher ha-Sherashim", "Book of Roots", is a dictionary. In it, "he recast the lexicological materials independently and enriched lexicography itself, especially by his numerous etymological explanations".¹⁰

Kimchi's grammar of the Hebrew language is treated under three headings; viz., noun, verb, and particle. Evidently, he took this three fold division from Dunash ibn Labrat's "Teshuboth Against Menachem".¹¹ ReDaK is chiefly concerned with verbs. He uses קָטַל as his model form.¹² Kimchi enumerates and discusses fully the various conjugations giving special attention to weak radicals and doubtful roots with double consonants. He is most punctilious in his explanations of pronominal suffixes.¹³

In his lexicon, Kimchi quotes many authorities including Maimonides and frequently contradicts and corrects Ibn Janach. He refers constantly to Arabic roots and cites them as external evidence as regards the meaning of unusual words. In places he even becomes critical of the prayer book.¹⁴

The Michlol is the first systematic survey and exhaustive critique of its time. Because of its completeness and accuracy it was considered as the canon of Hebrew Grammar for hundreds of years. Although many of Kimchi's predecessors had treated grammar thoroughly and scientifically, their works were obscured by his condensed citations of their most important points.¹⁵

Although the value of this work for us today cannot be denied and even though it represents the most comprehensive and systematic Hebrew Grammar of the Middle Ages, it is far from acces-

sible to modern students of philology and grammar. "The arrangement of the material is crude and antiquated. Digressions and excursions (probably a mistake for excursuses) abound throughout the book. There is evidently little attempt at selection and gradation." ¹⁶ It could well bear condensation and an appendix might be added containing an explanation of the grammatical terminology employed.

There is some faintness in the text, especially in the latter part of the paragraph.

Among Kimchi's other books are his anti-Christian polemics (found in his commentary on the book of Psalms) in which he refuted the Christian application of particular passages to Jesus. By these he attracted no small amount of attention. Yet the presence of these passages in his commentary seems in no way to have diminished his popularity among Christian scholars. Box tells us that these anti-Christian passages were deleted from later editions of his commentary by censors and that they were afterwards collected and published separately under the title

תשובה לנצרים

¹⁷

His "Refutation" is another

polemical work which can be found in מלחמת חורבן In addition to these other writings, Kimchi wrote a work of practical value called "Et Sopher" in which he gave the rules for the writing of Bible scrolls, punctuation, Massoretic notes and accents. ¹⁸

David Kimchi shows us an altogether different side of his nature in his philosophical works. Accustomed to his simple lucid style so characteristic of his commentaries on the Minor Prophets, we can hardly believe that it is the same Kimchi who indulges in the allegorical exegesis found in "The Exposition of the Mystic Chariot of God". In the latter, he demonstrates that he can be

esoteric as well as exoteric in his comments. The versatile Kimchi, undoubtedly, produced these works under the influence of Rambam, for they are composed in a clearly Maimonidean style.

LIST OF KIMCHI'S EXEGETICAL WORKS ON THE BIBLE¹⁹

1. Chronicles
2. Psalms
3. Joshua
4. Judges
5. Samuel I and II
6. Kings I and II
7. Isaiah
8. Jeremiah
9. Ezekiel
10. Hosea
11. Joel
12. Amos
13. Obadiah
14. Jonah
15. Micah
16. Nachum
17. Habbakuk
18. Zephaniah
19. Haggai
20. Zechariah
21. Malachi
22. Ruth
23. Genesis

LIST OF KIMCHI'S PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLEMICAL WRITINGS

I. PHILOSOPHICAL

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. פירוש מעשי בראשית | "Exposition of Creation" |
| 2. פירוש מרכבת יהוה | "Exposition of the Mystic Chariot of God" |
| 3. פירוש י"ג עקרין | "A Commentary on Maimonides Thirteen Principles of Faith" |
| 4. פירוש שמות הנביאה | "An Exposition of the Kinds of Prophecy". |

II POLEMICAL

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. השו"ב הנצח | "Polemic Against Christianity" ²⁰ |
| 2. ויכוח | "Refutation" ²¹ |

NOTES ON CHAPTER TWO

- 1.....Encyclopedia Britanica; vol. XIII, p. 383
Box, G.H.; Introduction to "Kimchi on the Psalms", p. xviii
- 2.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2, p. 164
- 3.....Ibid., p. 162
- 4.....Ibid., p. 163
והחל פתחובים ועלה אח"ך לנביאים ואחריהם נוש אל ספר
חורח משה.
- 5.....De-Rossi, G.B.; "Historisches Wörterbuch", p. 168
- 6.....cf. Chapter III
- 7.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p.10
- 8.....Ibid., p. 13
- 9.....Encyclopedia Britanica; vol. XIII, p. 383
- 10.....Ibid.
- 11.....Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar", p.10, foot-
note 3.
- 12.....Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur",
p. 202
- 13.....Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar", p.108-117
- 14.....Hirschfeld, H.; "Hebrew Grammarians and Lexicographers",
p. 86
- 15.....Tauber J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 9
- 16.....Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar"; p. 2
- 17.....Box, G.H.; Introduction to "Kimchi on Psalms", p. xx and
p. xxi, foot-note 32.
- 18.....Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur",
p. 205.
- 19.....All of these may be found in Rabbinic Bibles beginning
with 1518 editions.
- 20.....Originally contained in Kimchi's commentary on Psalms.
- 21.....Contained in מלחמת חובה.

CHAPTER III
THE CHARACTER OF HIS WRITINGS

To comprehend the commentaries of David Kimchi to the fullest extent, we must understand first their underlying purpose. There can be no doubt in our minds that ReDaK did definitely stand for something---that he had a goal---that he was reaching out---striving toward something. For certainly a man as profound and prolific as he was must have had a clear objective in mind. Otherwise, we find ourselves at a loss to explain why he went to the trouble of interpreting and re-interpreting many parts of the Bible.

If we examine his writings carefully, we find that he was a man steeped in Biblical and Rabbinic lore. He was indeed a versatile person. We shall soon see that he was every bit as familiar with the Targumim as he was with the Biblical text, as learned in Midrashic and Talmudic literatures as in Scriptures. It is not surprising that a man of his sagacity and erudition should have been motivated by a drive in the tremendous amount of work that he did. It is not strange that he should have been prompted to write in order to give true instruction for the proper use and comprehension of the Hebrew language. For such was his avowed purpose. In his modest manner he regarded his work, not as an end in itself, but rather as mere preliminary instruction to enable the reader to become a better student of the Bible.¹ His motive was to make the Bible intelligible to the masses that it might continue to be the guide for their lives. That he achieved a certain measure of success may be seen from the wide-

spread popularity of his commentaries not only in his own time, but down to the present day.

It is not difficult to see what has made Kimchi a popular commentator. He reveals in the pages of his works an inimitable² charm as an interpreter of the Bible. His comments reflect a depth of feeling and a mellowness which are unique. Kimchi treats not only the phenomena of language, but gets at the noumena of the text. His own interpretations are usually rational, plain and literal, and are outstanding because of their clarity and accuracy.² In addition to this, he quite often cites for your edification and amusement variant opinions and discussions of the authorities of his time. His commentaries, in reality, are a minature encyclopedia of the Bible and the maze of literature that has grown up around it. They reveal a genuine familiarity with the language and life of the Bible as well as a worldly knowledge of which few other scholars of his day can boast. It can be seen from his comments that he was a good student of history and possessed a wide knowledge of the geography and zoology of his time.³ He was aware that the Bible was an unfamiliar document to those who read it and he succeeds in his commentaries in giving the novice a delightful introduction to it. He was likewise cognizant of the many difficulties which the Bible presented and wherever possible tried to show by his superior knowledge how these apparent contradictions could be reconciled.

Kimchi's desire to be clear has often been misconstrued. Frequently, he is accused of being verbose. If we actually examine his work, we see that he comments only on those verses which he thinks in need of elucidation.⁴ However, from our study of

the Book of Micah we see that the difficulties of the text made it necessary for him to make a remark on nearly every verse.

Naturally, the question arises: was Kimchi a traditionalist or a literalist? Did he follow the method of his predecessors or was he an individualist? In our study we found very few traces of Kimchi's originality. He is rather like Eliezer b. Hyrkanus of Mishnaic times of whom it was said: "He is comparable to הַמַּיִם הַבְּרִיזָה הַבְּרִיזָה הַבְּרִיזָה--a cemented cistern which does not lose a drop".⁵ ReDaK is a rich repository of three hundred years of traditional exegesis.⁶ In his commentaries and grammar may be found not only the traditions of his predecessors and his contemporaries in exegesis, but also the divergent records of the Massorah and Targum. A scholar such as Kimchi, who took great pains to preserve the thought and practice of his day, may be called a traditionalist without further justification. One who was so precise as to preserve every accent and vowel mark which the grammarians of previous generations had handed down is unmistakably a conserver of tradition.⁷ Kimchi recognizes and accepts as binding the authority of the rabbis of the Talmud in regard to religious commands. To be specific, he felt the supreme importance of the Biblical injunction of the propagation of the species and in his commentary on Micah he reveals the influence which this traditional command had upon him.⁸ Furthermore, he urged against the belief that the Temple at Zion would be actually rebuilt and rather chose to follow in the line of the prophets' tradition that Israel would gain a spiritual supremacy over the other nations rather than a material ascendancy.⁹ It will be shown in the section dealing with Kimchi's

knowledge of history that he is careful to follow tradition closely wherever possible. ¹⁰

However, the fact that Kimchi is a loyal conserver of tradition does not mean that we should infer that he was a slave to it. He frequently differs with the authorities that he quotes and often corrects their mistaken notions. ¹¹ This would tend to indicate that ReDaK accepted tradition only when it could be justified and proven authentic. His extensive knowledge and wide acquaintance in the Hebrew sources made it quite easy for him to find a traditional basis for his point of view. It is perhaps for this reason that he asserts very few original points of view in his commentaries. What may appear as a lack of originality is due partly to the conditions of his life and time as well as to the whole plan and purpose of his exegetical writings. ¹²

Kimchi's work is not a strictly scientific presentation, but rather one intended for popular usage. His writings express the indispensable inner needs of the people and may possibly be considered a scientific treatment of the forms of language only in as much as they are a complete and accurate exposition and explanation of the true state of facts of Biblical Hebrew. ¹³ Kimchi was surely aware of certain rudimentary principles and laws of language, yet his grammar was not what we should call a critical grammar. His contribution was hunting up individual phenomena of the Hebrew language and showing how they mutually explain and supplement one another.

We must remember that a strong scientific treatment of Hebrew was impossible in the France of Kimchi's age, which was un-

friendly to every scientific study with the exception of Talmud. In Kimchi's day, the study of grammar was unfavorably received. One who dared to treat this subject in a critical manner exposed himself to the danger of being persecuted as a heretic. We certainly could not expect the orthodox, peace-loving David Kimchi to risk being mistaken for such. Especially when his livelihood was gained from teaching Talmud to the children of people who held the above mentioned views. ¹⁴

The few evidences of the critical spirit that we do find in Kimchi are undoubtedly the result of his proximity to the Spanish exegetes. Narbonne is upon the Spanish border. In Spain, the Spanish-Moorish grammarians fared quite differently under the great Jewish minister Chisdai ibn Shaprut than did those of Northern and Southern France. This period in Spain is known as "the golden age". Here Science and even Grammar flourished and critical spirits like Jonah ibn Janach and Hayyuj found expression without being subjected to the persecution and public pressure which would have greeted them in Northern France. ¹⁵ It was the influence of these men through the intermediaries of his father, Joseph, and his older brother, Moses, which in a large measure is responsible for David Kimchi's semi-critical attitude, one that is practically unknown to the men of the North French School of Exegesis. Thus, we can see that in view of the conditions and circumstances of his time, Kimchi was surprisingly progressive and even liberal. Kimchi's grammatical writings are spoken of as "representing the evolution of Hebrew Grammar from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries". ¹⁶

Another example of his liberal views is to be found in the Maimuni incident. Kimchi, who is inherently and essentially

regarded as a traditionalist, was familiar with and in sympathy with the philosophy of his day. We know that most traditionalists of Kimchi's time did not look with favor upon Philosophy. It is indeed strange to observe David Kimchi, who was an out-and-out traditionalist, rising to the defence of the then regarded heretical Maimonides. Kimchi, the traditionalist, pleading tolerance for Maimonides, the proponent of reason, gives us a new insight into the former's character.

David Kimchi has often been accused of being a copyist and a plagiarist.¹⁷ Those who make this accusation show both their unacquaintance with the plan and purpose of his work as well as their ignorance of the general trend of the times. The men who read the Rabbinic Bible in Kimchi's day were interested not so much in the names of the authorities quoted as they were in the content of their statements. The majority of the readers were well-acquainted with Kimchi's quotations and their respective authors. Therefore, Kimchi presupposed that these sources were so well known that he felt it unnecessary to mention the authors' names alongside the citations.

What the accusers failed to realize was that Kimchi was a systematizer---somewhat of a compiler. Through his extensive reading and understanding of the Bible, the Targumim, the Rabbinical and midrashic writings as well as his familiarity with the works of his predecessors and contemporaries, he was able to arrange in a clear and methodical manner a sporadic mass of hitherto incomprehensible material---to clarify seemingly unsolvable difficulties and to bring a chaotic jumble of unorganized material into a systematic whole.¹⁸ Kimchi, like Maimonides, possessed

the rare faculty of arranging in systematic form seemingly heterogeneous thoughts through the binding power of an all embracing summarizing thought. ¹⁹ Yet, he is not a mere compiler, but a thorough scholar "who possessed in a high degree the power of lucid systematization and popular exposition". ²⁰ Kimchi digested and assimilated his material most thoroughly. "He frequently excerpted from his predecessors copiously and circumspectly, but arranged and remodeled his material with such comprehensiveness, clearness and lucidity of exposition that while he popularized the opinions of his illustrious forerunners, he at the same time made their works superfluous ^{as the saying is} (and helped to sink them) into an oblivion, which they were not rescued from until the nineteenth century." ²¹ The best proof we have that Kimchi had no intentions of plagiarism is in his introduction to his Michlol where he explicitly states that he only wished to collect, correct and supplement the statements of earlier recognized grammarians. ²² Furthermore, he modestly pays tribute to Judah ibn Hayyuj whom he calls "the founder of correct and scientific treatment of Hebrew Grammar" and to Jonah ibn Janach for his scholarly acumen and erudition. ²³

The question as to whether R. David Kimchi actually knew Arabic is one that has furnished scholars with a subject for much difference of opinion. De-Rossi felt that Kimchi's defective knowledge of Arabic was his great handicap. ²⁴ We know that ReDaK was sufficiently a scholar in Semitic languages to realize the vast importance of the inter-relation between Arabic, Aramaic and Hebrew. ²⁵ It is indeed difficult for us to say the extent of his knowledge in Arabic. Tauber thinks that he was "either not

at all or else in very little degree a master of Arabic". Geiger agrees.²⁶ The writings of Arab grammarians were known to Kimchi only through translations or secondary sources or by hearsay. We have sufficient evidence that he drew upon Arabic for the illustration and clarification of difficult Hebrew words.²⁷ Incidentally, these references offer rich material for Hebrew lexicography.

This matter of philology and its development through the cognate languages is worthy of our interest. Whereas the Arabs derived their entire science of philology only out of pre-Mohammedan fables which are in the Koran and its traditions and stood aloof in their supposed self-sufficiency from comparison with other languages, the Jewish-Arabic Grammarians, on the other hand, realized the value of the cognate languages and utilized them to great advantage. This is precisely why Arab philology came to an end soon after it reached its prime in the eighth and ninth centuries, whereas the Jewish-Arabic grammarians by their work prepared the way for further development and progress in Hebrew philology.²⁸ In this respect, we see Kimchi going far beyond his predecessors in the well beaten path of utilizing well established results for his explanations of Hebrew.²⁹ Scholars conclude that Kimchi while not a master of Arabic certainly shows a limited acquaintance with the language.³⁰

In a later section of this work (Section VI) we hope to speak at length of the influence of others on Rabbi David Kimchi. But, at this point, we wish to point out the influence of Rabbi David Kimchi on others. It has been said that: "What Maimon was to philosophy Kimchi was to Grammar and Lexicography." However, we are certain that the revolutionary discoveries of the Judean-

Arabic scholars would have long since been forgotten had it not been for the pen of a Kimchi and an Ibn Ezra.³¹ We may say without fear of questioning that the Maistre Petit was a lasting influence on Hebrew commentators, for it is evident that the grammarians and lexicographers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries utilized his work for their models and were frequently dependent upon him.³²

H. Cohen tells us that "Kimchi's works were the foundation of the Hebrew knowledge of the period of the Reformation..... Reuchlin may be considered his pupil....Münster's Lexicon and Grammar are derived from him; and Pagninius' 'Institutiones' and 'Thesaurus' are but elaborations of his Michlol." ³³ Extensive use of ReDaK's work was made by such later grammarians and lexicographers as Salomon b. Melech, Eliah Levita, Abraham Balmes, Koenig, Buxtorf and Gesenius.³⁴

G.H. Box reminds us that Kimchi's influence may be traced to almost every page of the Authorized Version of the English Bible.³⁵ In our study of the Book of Micah we found that Kimchi's commentary had in some cases, undoubtedly, help determine the Jewish Publication Society translation of the Hebrew text.³⁶

NOTES ON CHAPTER THREE

- 1.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 10
- 2.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p. xxxiv
Box, G.H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Psalms", p. xix
- 3.....Cf. Part IV; pp. 39-41.
- 4.....Where meaning is self-evident Kimchi says: כבודו הוא
- 5.....Pirke Abot, Chapter II, xi
- 6.....Richard Gottheil's Forward to Cohen's "Kimchi on Hosea".
- 7.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 22
- 8.....ReDaK interprets Mic. II:9 על עלליה תקח הררי לעולם
"From their young children, yet take away My glory" as
"And their creation, that is the glory of God".
- 9.....Cf. ReDaK on Mic. IV:1 for further reference.
- 10.....Cf. Part IV under Knowledge of History, pp. 37-39.
- 11.....ReDaK to Mic. II:4
ReDaK to Mic. II:7-----Here he differs with Ibn Ezra.
ReDaK to Mic. V:3-----Here he differs with Rashi.
ReDaK to Mic. V:5-----Here he differs with Rashi.
- 12.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 10
- 13.....Ibid., p. 6
- 14.....Ibid., p. 13
- 15.....Ibid.,
- 16.....Ibid., p. 25
- 17.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p. xvi
Cohen says that Rabbis Zerachiah b. Isaac and Isaac
Abarbanel make this accusation against ReDaK.
- 18.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 1
- 19.....Ibid.
- 20.....Box, G.H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Psalms", p. xix
- 21.....Jewish Encyclopedia; art. by Caspar Levias, p. 494, vol. ---
Bacher W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur",
p. 199
- 22.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 11
Bacher W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur",
p. 200, 203.
- 23.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 11-12
Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur",
p. 200, 203.
- 24.....De-Rossi, G.B.; "Historisches Wörterbuch", p. 165
- 25.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 7
- 26.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol. I, p. 118
אם ום הוא ום ר ששה אחיו לא ידעו את שפת ערב.
- 27.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p. xxxviii
- 28.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; pp. 19-20.
- 29.....Ibid.
- 30.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p. xix
Cohen quotes his teacher Israel Friedlander.
- 31.....Finkelstein, L.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Isaiah",
p. xxii
- 32.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 1
- 33.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p. x

NOTES ON CHAPTER THREE

- 34.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker", p.9 , footnote 1.
 35.....Box, G.H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Psalms", p.vii
 36.....Mic. I:13; J.P.S. translates לרכש as "swift steeds"
 ReDaK says: וְהָיָא נְהִמָּה קִלָּה.
 Mic. II:8 ; J.P.S. translates קִיָּם as an intransitive verb
 "is risen up" as Kimchi points out.
 Mic. V:13; J.P.S. follows Kimchi in translating עֲרֵם as
 "enemies" and not as "cities".

CHAPTER IV

HIS EXEGESIS

The earliest Hebrew word for exegesis is 'derash'. Its usage can be traced back to Ezra. כִּי עֲזָרָא הָכִין לִבּוֹ לְדַרֵּשׁ אֶת תּוֹרַת ה' .¹ "For Ezra had set his heart to seek the law of the Lord! We learn that exegesis came into existence because of the view that the Torah was divinely inspired law. Since it was regarded as divine revelation it had to be sufficient for Israel for all times. However, when it was discovered that the law was not complete and that modern conditions created many seemingly insurmountable difficulties not treated in the Torah, something had to be done to harmonize this inconsistency. Seeing that the Pentateuch, per se, could not meet all the needs of the people, the Rabbinic view gradually developed which held that in addition to the written law an oral one was given to Moses. This innovation was, in reality, the product of necessity; because the law was considered complete. Hence they had to find the new laws implied in the written law by means of exegesis. Naturally, there sprang up a process of re-interpretation which was to bring about a Massorah, a Mishna, a Talmud, and a whole Rabbinic literature.

Of course, these early attempts at exegesis were very crude and sketchy. As the centuries progressed and the students of the Bible felt more keenly their responsibility of interpreting the Bible in the light of their times, different types of exegesis flourished. There was the type which I have already mentioned known as 'derash' which was more or less the authentic traditional

interpretation handed down by word of mouth. This type was embodied in the earliest Halachic and Haggadic works and was careful to point out the moral teachings of the text by use of homiletical interpretation. There was very little attention paid to grammar or syntax.

But in the tenth century we find a radical change in exegesis; i.e., the development of the 'peshat' type. The peshat was an attempt to get at the literal meaning of the text--that which the author really intended to convey--and not that which the commentator wished to attribute to the Bible. This scientific type of exegesis, which made an honest effort to evaluate the text for what it was worth, really began with Saadia although it had its rudiments as far back as the Talmudic age. Thus, it is with the peshat that we see the first effort to produce an orderly, organized and exact exegesis. This innovation was due to the contact of certain Hebrew scholars with the Arabic learning as well as to the rise of such movements as Karaism and Rationalism. Rashi became the outstanding commentator of all times chiefly because he was an exponent of these two popular types, derash and peshat.

With ReDaK the old type peshat, which had gained Ibn Ezra and Rashi so much popularity, was revived. But new types of exegesis as well came to the fore, namely, the mystical $\gamma\iota\delta$ and the allegorical $\iota\delta\gamma$. Nachmanides did most to pave the way for the popularizing of the mystical exegesis. David Kimchi indulged his fancy in this new type of exegesis too, but his fame came rather as a result of his handling the peshat, his systematic and terse arrangement of the simple thoughts of the Scripture plus his uncanny analysis of grammar and syntax. In him, grammatical and lexicographical

research found its fruitage and flower. His exegesis represented a synthesis between the methods of Ibn Ezra and Maimonides—a rare blending of the purely rational with the homiletical, the traditional and the philosophical. Kimchi may be said to have harmonized two currents of thought of the Middle Ages. He combined the scientific and philosophical studies of Spain with the traditional Talmudic-Biblical studies of Northern France. With him the *pesha t* exegesis reached the zenith of its development and with his death it fell into obscurity until its rediscovery in the last half of the eighteenth century by Moses Mendelssohn.²

David Kimchi employed largely what may be termed the inductive method in his writings. For the most part, he began with the Bible text itself rather than with any pre-conceived notions or principles which he wished to find in it. His colossal knowledge of the books of the Bible and his great familiarity with its oral tradition enabled him to bring together many particular instances of phenomena and classify them under one general heading or rule. Kimchi's reasoning was from particulars to generals. He seldom, if ever, accepted the interpretations and rules of others unless they actually applied to the text.³

Kimchi was most anxious to preserve the spirit of the Bible text as well as the meaning which it wished to convey. He shows a remarkable understanding of the Bible. From his comment on the Book of Micah we see that he is aware of the component parts of the Book of Micah,⁴ namely, that chapters one through three, which contain the prophet's denunciation of sin and prediction of punishment, are followed by chapters four and five, which are de-

voted almost exclusively to words of hope and cheer. ⁵ In short, ReDaK pointed out that the break in thought between chapters three and four is not an evidence of an omission or of different authorship, but rather a logical sequence, abrupt as the transition may seem. As proof for this, he cites the fact that this same tendency of having words of consolation follow almost immediately upon a prediction of doom occurs elsewhere in prophecy. ⁶

In many places, Kimchi has made the Micah text exceptionally clear by stressing its unity. He is invaluable in that he establishes the coherence of the prophet's utterances. In many instances he points out where the prophet goes back and resumes the trend of thought broken off in previous verses, e.g., Mic. III:1 resumes the thought of Mic. II:8. He is of inestimable aid in showing how one need not look further than the text itself for its explanation by simply showing the relation of the verse in question to that of another verse, e.g., Mic. III:5 can be explained by Mic. II:11b; Mic. III:12 in terms of Mic. III:10 and I:6; Mic. IV:4 by Mic. IV:3b gamma; Mic. I:10 by Mic. I:8; Mic. IV:9 by Mic. IV:11; Mic. V:12 'והכרת' with Mic. V:13 'ונחשת'; Mic. IV:11 by Mic. IV:13-14; Mic. V:3 'שכח' with Mic. IV:4; Mic. IV:6 by Mic. IV:7; Mic. VII:1 with Mic. VII:2; Mic. VII:4 with Mic. VII:3; Mic. VII:7 by Mic. VII:8; Mic. VII:8b by the words of Mic. VII:9b; and Mic. VII:16 by Mic. VII:15. Mic. VI:8 is the answer to the question asked in Mic. VI:6-7. ReDaK often indicates the logical connection between verses and emphasizes their continuity of thought, e.g., Mic. II:8 with Mic. II:9-10a. He shows Mic. III:3 to be a mere elaboration of the thought begun in Mic. III:1-2. Another of Kimchi's unmistakable characteristics

is his tendency to explain away seeming contradictions in the text. ⁷

We know that ReDaK was a great lover of the Bible as well as capable teacher of it. He seems to have absorbed the spirit of the Scriptures and he reveals his deeper understanding and appreciation of it on nearly every page of his commentary. For example, in his comment on Mic.I:8 he describes the prophet's heart felt anguish at beholding the destruction of Palestine and the gloomy prospect of the exile. He elucidates the extent of their degradation and abject humiliation in commenting on the finer implications of the word שולל here: וּפִירוּשׁ שׁוֹלֵל מִכּוֹדָיו שֶׁהַפְּשִׁטָּה הִיא אִם שׁוֹלֵל מִהֲדָעָה "And Israel will not only be stripped physically, but likewise she will be stripped of her mental powers because of her anguish!" ⁸ Kimchi seems to feel with the prophet that Israel will be overcome with sorrow, prostrate with grief. It was this Jewish consciousness of ReDaK's, his sympathetic and human understanding of a supposedly buried literature that made him the master exegete and popular idol.

Kimchi speaks of the stylistic peculiarities of Micah with the Hebrew phrase כִּי הִיא צִחָהּ. He mentions the fact that the prophet gives his denunciation and prediction in the form of the traditional הַקִּינָה "dirge". ⁹ Furthermore, he illustrates how the prophet, who customarily speaks the Divine message or else reveals his own innermost feelings, may at times mirror the sentiments of the nation as he sees them. ¹⁰ In one place Kimchi points out that there is a dialogue between Micah and God; first, the prophet speaks (Mic.VII:14) and then, he repeats what the deity says (Mic.VII:15). Wherever possible Kimchi indicates the use of paranomasia, i.e.,

alliteration and onomatopoetic expressions of the Hebrew text, Mic. I:10, I:11, I:13, I:14, and I:15. ¹¹ Another Biblical peculiarity explained by Kimchi is the presence of the oxymoron, namely, the tendency of Micah to use a word and its antonym simultaneously for the purpose of emphasis. In the words of ReDaK, the rule reads:
 . זה דרך צחיה לומר לשון על הפכו לענין אחד..... לחזק הענין
 It can be found in his commentary on Micah, I:12 and VII:3.

He likewise records that it is characteristic of the Bible to use a general term where it really means the specific, e.g., when the text says מלכי ישראל it really means מלכי יהודה because Israel is a general term including both Israel and Judah (Mic.I:14 ReDaK). In another place, it mentions the land (Jacob) where it means the inhabitants of the land. Similarly, it mentions the various cities when it has reference rather to the kings of those cities (Mic.I:5 ReDaK). Sometimes, we find the opposite tendency manifested in Scriptures, i.e., it mentions specific cities when the entire district or country is meant, e.g. 'Jacob' and 'Samaria' refer to all of the ten tribes of Israel (Mic.I:5).

It is clear that David Kimchi's sensitivity to the peculiarities of Biblical Hebrew style reveal his intimate knowledge and familiarity with the Bible and its composition.

ReDaK is especially punctilious in indicating parallel expressions in the Biblical text, showing that Micah even as the Psalms, Proverbs and other books of the Bible repeats the same thought in different words: כפל הענין במלות שונות. Many felt that there was nothing superfluous in the Bible and consequently maintained that if there was repetition in it, then it must be for a definite purpose. This point of view led them to apply the her-

meneutical principles to explain the tautology. Others accepted these repetitions as poetry and attributed no other special significance to them.

In many places, Kimchi merely notes that there is a parallelism,¹² but in others, he is careful to give a reason for it. Usually, it is for emphasis¹³; frequently to make the point clear¹⁴. Other explanations of tautology are to indicate two kinds of oppression, the physical and the monetary;¹⁵ two kinds of false prophets, dreamers and diviners;¹⁶ and to show the geographical and ethnic limits of the statement.¹⁷

Kimchi's indications of figurative passages are really of far more value than his notations of parallelisms. He renders a distinct service in pointing out that the Bible is not always to be taken literally, but that in many places the language is figurative and symbolic.¹⁸ For instance, in the opening verses when Micah addresses the ארץ he isn't speaking to the land, but rather "to the inhabitants thereof";¹⁹ when he says: וְהָרִים יִתְמָקוּ "And the mountains shall be molten under Him, and the valleys shall be cleft"²⁰ he refers to the impending destruction of the nation and the subsequent exile when "men will hunt one another as the hunter hunts the prey with the net".²¹ In another place, speaking of the destruction, he compares the nation to the summer fruits and vintage which are ripe for judgment. According to Kimchi, the prophet sees himself as the last of these summer fruits and grape gleanings. In other words, Micah will be among the few pious and upright men who will

survive.²² ReDaK bases his interpretation upon the following verse in the text: "The godly man is perished out of the earth, And the upright among men is no more;"²³ Kimchi explains all references to darkness לילה, חשכה, וקרר, חשך as figures of speech meaning the spiritual darkness of the people. To him, darkness is usually symbolic of trouble.²⁴ He points out how the prophet uses the figure of a woman in travail to symbolize the pain which Israel will undergo in exile and deliverance.²⁵ Similarly, he uses the expression שוט על הלח "rod against cheek" as a symbol of the indignities and degradation that Israel faced in the period of exile.²⁶

In Kimchi's commentary on chapter five of Micah, in which the prophet's prediction of doom is followed by words of comfort and consolation, he likens Israel's salvation to the dew which comes not from man but from God.²⁷ Likewise, he points out how the prophet uses the figure of "sheaves on the threshing floor" to indicate the destiny of the other nations of the world which oppress Israel. "Just as one gathers the sheaves of the fields unto the threshing floor to thresh them, so will the peoples be gathered at Jerusalem and Israel will thresh them there".²⁸ Other passages in Micah where Kimchi indicates the use of figurative language are Mic. I:3, I:5, I:7, III:2-3, IV:8, VI:1 and VI:9.

By his clear explanations of the figures of speech and analogies used, Kimchi has succeeded^{ed} in transforming the age old document, the Bible, into a living picture. He has made its subtleties and ambiguities concrete, vivid and intelligible to all peoples.

Kimchi has several eccentricities which are worthy of our consideration. When blended in with his compilations, these peculiarities of Kimchi add a pleasing color to his commentaries and give them an unusual charm.

The Maistre Petit possessed the rare knack of taking terse texts from the Bible and interpreting them so that their meaning became unmistakably clear. Examples of this type of exegesis may be found in his remarks on Mic.VI:5, VI:9, and VII:3. Often the prophet speaks concisely and although the verse may contain all the elements necessary for its understanding, it yet remains vague in the mind of the reader. Kimchi uses consummate skill in clearing up these nebulous passages. He is especially fine in this respect when it comes to portions of the text where sudden thought transitions occur. Here Kimchi is significantly valuable in supplying the missing trend of thought.²⁹ It is on such fine points that Kimchi reveals the genius of a master.

The next idiosyncrasy that is outstanding in ReDaK is what I have termed his "one-word exegesis". Frequently, he explains the meaning of a phrase or a verse by one or two Hebrew key words. By way of example, he clarifies the ambiguity in MIC.II:9³⁰ as to the identity of 'dy by his brief comment וְיָדָעְהוּ הָאֵלֹהִים. In still other places, he displays this same adroitness and dexterity. By simply inserting a single Hebrew word in the text, he makes perfectly obvious what before seemed obscure and difficult. He shows³¹ us that by וְיָדָעְהוּ הָאֵלֹהִים the text really means

Another characteristic of Kimchi is his harmonization of

belief and reason. This tendency is especially noticeable in his treatment of anthropomorphisms. In this respect he is much like Maimonides, but is probably more influenced by the Targumim. A definite instance of this is his interpretation of "to walk humbly with thy God".³² Kimchi says: "walking with God" means professing love of Him and His unity, following the ethical dictates of the heart. In reference to Mic. I:3, "For behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place, And will come down" the commentator says: "it is as if the deity will come down" meaning that God's decree will come down to earth.³³ In Micah VI:9, he interprets לִּפְנֵי ה' יִשָּׁע to mean לִּפְנֵי ה' יִשָּׁע, i.e., God's voice will not be heard directly, but He will speak through His intermediary, the prophet.³⁴

We have spoken of Kimchi's anti-Christian interpretations in our discussion of his works.³⁵ In examining his commentaries, we see that he is most emphatic in his polemical statements. However, in his treatment of Micah, we have only one such reference.³⁶ Here he refutes the christological belief that Christ was the Messiah mentioned. He shows conclusively that Christ could not be the messiah referred to in this passage because of the words in the concluding part of the verse which say: וְהַיְהוָה יִשְׁמַע "Whose goings forth are from eternity". Since Christ has not existed since eternity, this can only refer to God. The fact that this reference to Christ has been omitted from several editions of Kimchi's commentary shows that it was probably deleted by the censors.³⁷ It may well be that other anti-Christian references were purposely removed from the commentaries of David Kimchi. This may account for the fact that only one such reference is found in ReDaK's commentary on the Book of Micah.

It may be deduced from what has already been said of David Kimchi that he was certainly, above all else, a thorough scholar. The study of comparative exegetes which was part of the preparatory work for this composition brought home this point to the author. In most cases, ReDaK excels the other commentators in his thoroughness and completeness. For example, he often quotes the actual reference, whereas Rashi only mentions where it may be found.³⁸ In another instance, Kimchi quotes the Biblical source (Zech. II:8) for his statement, whereas Ibn Ezra fails to do so.³⁹ Other evidences of his detailed treatment of the text are not lacking.⁴⁰ Often he is almost too meticulous, bringing out the import of every word in the verse. In still other places, he is most careful to record that the explanation of a word may be found within another part of the same verse.⁴¹ ReDaK constantly refers back to his comments on similar words and passages, thereby clarifying the difficulty and at the same time avoiding useless repetition as well as making the subject matter of the Book of Micah an inter-related and coherent whole.⁴²

Kimchi proves himself to be an exceptional etymologist. He is valuable for his explanations of rare Hebrew words. He often culls from his rich store-house of traditional knowledge the histories of words which have remained enigmas to his predecessors and contemporaries. He is especially helpful when it comes to 'hapax legomena'. He makes most enlightening remarks on words like $\gamma' \text{פ} \text{ש}$, not only giving several synonyms, but even accurate antonyms.⁴³ In the case of $\gamma \text{ן} \text{ש}$ which occurs but once in the entire Bible, he gives both the root and the construction, ^{the latter} by citing a more familiar word

used in the same way. ⁴⁴

Among the other rare words explained by Kimchi are אָנִישׁ (Mic.I:9), אָדָר (Mic.II:8), הִנְהִלָּאָה (Mic.IV:7), פִּפְתָּחִיהָ (Mic.V:5), וְהֵאֲחִיזָם (Mic.VI:2), and תּוֹשִׁיָה (Mic.VI:9). In the style of dictionaries and thesauri, Kimchi's commentary makes fine distinctions in the use and meanings of words, e.g., פָּרְשִׁי and פָּצָחִי. ⁴⁵

In the same verse, he shows that סִיר, דִּיר and קִלְחָה all mean essentially 'cooking vessels', but differ as to size and measure. Other subtle distinctions made by ReDaK are in the meanings of such words as שֶׁר, שִׁפּוֹט and וְדִל; ⁴⁶ פִּרְזוֹת עֵינֶיךָ and כֶּרֶךְ. ⁴⁷ He, likewise, records the different meanings and usages of the same Hebrew word, e.g., מִצֹּר may mean סִכָּל in certain contexts or it may refer to סִדָּרִים in others; ⁴⁸ עֲרִיָּם means "enemies" in one context, ⁴⁹ whereas עֲרִיָּה means "cities" elsewhere. ⁵⁰

It is clearly recognizable that Kimchi not only employed internal evidence in his comments on Scriptures, but where this did not suffice to prove his point, he also consulted external evidence such as comparison with the cognate languages. In reference to words whose origin and usage he could not ascertain from the Hebrew, he has recourse to the Aramaic idioms of the Targumim, ⁵¹ to the language of the Mishna and Talmud, to the neo-Hebrew and at times to the Greek. Thereby, he not only explains the etymology of difficult Hebrew words, but also offers excellent rules and suggestions for the understanding of Aramaic as well as the language of the Talmud. ⁵²

Kimchi has done more than any other single commentator since the time of Rashi to increase lexicographical material through his remarkably fine etymology of words. Furthermore, it may be said without further questioning that his explanations and conclusions are valid and to be trusted due to the fact that he does not venture upon the unsafe ground of conjecture, but rather relies

upon the empirical method for his results. 53

Rabbi David Kimchi displays a good knowledge of history in his commentary on the Book of Micah. From his brief remarks we can see that he had a clear view of the historical picture of the days when Micah, the Morashite, was a prophet in Israel. For one thing, he establishes the identity of the prophet. 54 For another, he establishes the historicity of Micah's prediction of doom and destruction at the hands of Assyria by quoting a passage from the Book of Kings which actually describes such an invasion by the king of Assyria. 55 He was equally familiar with the court prophets of Micah's time and knew that their functions were precisely divination and dream interpretation. 56

Kimchi was well posted on the political scene reflected in the Book of Micah. At opportune times, he gives us a summary of the historical events as they occurred. He explains the Assyrian invasion of Palestine and traces their military campaigns from Tiglath Pileser IV to Sennacherib, all of course based upon statements from the Bible. 57 He attributes the destruction of Samaria, the capitol of Israel, to Pul. 58 Furthermore, ReDaK indicates that Tiglath Pileser IV did not accomplish the march "unto the gate of Jerusalem". This was left for Sennacherib, a later Assyrian monarch, whom Kimchi calls כִּנְחָן 59

ReDaK propounded the theory expounded by the great prophets that God works through history. 60 He conceived of the Assyrian army as being God's instrument for a time and unconsciously working out the Divine purpose in reference to Israel and Judah, only to fall in turn a victim to YHWH's righteous wrath. In no uncertain terms, he points out that God has aroused Pul to march against Samaria

as the Divine agent. 61

Kimchi seems to associate these attacks by Syria with the mythical wars of Gog and Magog which were supposed to precede the coming of the Messianic Age. He frequently says that peace can come only ⁶² after Israel has suffered a terrible and crushing defeat at the hands of Gog and Magog. Ezekiel XXXVIII:2 and XXXIX:6 tell us that Magog is a northern people who had Gog as their military leader. Whether such a war between Israel and Gog ever took place is a questionable point. Kimchi's remarks on this score are not to be taken literally as descriptions of historical events, but rather as a record of the mystical Messianic predictions that have been attributed to Micah.

In the course of his commentary on Micah, Kimchi often makes historical allusions. He refers briefly to Israel's historical march from Shitim to Gilgal. ⁶³ He makes it a point to try to indicate where certain historical personalities are alluded to even though they may not be mentioned specifically in the Biblical narrative. For instance, he interprets ⁶⁴ as referring to King Zedekiah. By such an interpretation he reveals to us his knowledge of history as well as his scholarly inclinations which prompt him to apply his historical background to Scriptures. Kimchi also quotes the rabbis' interpretation (⁶⁵) who likewise tried to identify ⁶⁶ with ⁶⁷. Incidentally, Kimchi's interpretation of this particular point is substantiated by the Greek (cod. 91 in Holmes-Parsons) which has the word 'Zedekiah' above the word 'king'. ⁶⁵ But the International Critical Commentary tells us that the 'king' and YHWH are identical here, as in Jer.XXII:2;

Zeph. III:15; Is. XXXIII:22, XLI:21, XLIII:15, XLIV:6; and Ps. LXXXIX:18. Furthermore, to interpret 'king' as designating the Messianic ruler or the exiled monarch would involve a double leadership of the returning procession such as finds no parallel elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. ⁶⁶

Kimchi shows us that he knows that Israel was not always an 'am 'nation', but was at one time a שבטות, 'clan' or 'tribe'. ⁶⁷ He is historically correct when he makes the statement that calf worship was common among the Israelites in Micah's day and that this was one of Israel's gravest sins. ⁶⁸ These golden calves which were derived from the Canaanitish religion were set up in the days of Jeroboam (932-912) and continued in Micah's day despite the religious reformation of Hezekiah. ⁶⁹ Isaiah, Micah's contemporary, complained that "their land is full of idols; everyone worshippeth the work of his own hands". ⁷⁰ It was not until the Deuteronomic reformation of Josiah that the worship of idols and foreign deities was eliminated from Israel. ⁷¹ Undoubtedly, Micah's prophecies were instrumental in preparing the way for this Deuteronomic reformation. ⁷²

It would be interesting to know what maps and atlases Kimchi had access to in his day. When we realize how little the cartographers of Christopher Columbus' time knew of the actual world and its dimensions, then we are not surprised to learn that the mediaeval commentators were lacking in geographical knowledge. This point is all the more well taken when we consider how limited the opportunities were for travel in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Kimchi shows a definite familiarity with the topography of Palestine which is especially significant since, as far as we know, he never visited the Holy Land. First of all, he attempts to give us a picture of where the prophet Micah lived. He tells us that מוֹרֶשֶׁשׁ, Moreshesh, in Judah, is his native city. ⁷³ He also locates other cities in Judea such as אֲדֻלָּם, Adulam ⁷⁴, בֵּית לֶחֶם, Bethlehem ⁷⁵, and אַחְזִיב, Achzib ⁷⁶, the last of which he identifies with כִּזְיָב, Chezib, mentioned in Gen. XXXVIII:5. Kimchi also gives us a topographical description of hilly Samaria. ⁷⁷ He locates עֹפְרָה, Ophrah in Benjamin. ⁷⁸ The proverbial Gath, which is so often quoted, he identifies as a Philistine city. ⁷⁹ He recognizes Bashan and Gilead as Transjordanian centers, ⁸⁰ and speaks of the Euphrates river as being one of the borders of Canaan. ⁸¹

When it came to Palestine, Kimchi was more or less accurate, but otherwise his geographical knowledge was quite limited. For instance, he imagines Nimrod to be in Babylon, whereas in reality, it is in Assyria just below Nineveh. ⁸² No doubt, ReDaK's inaccuracies may be traced to the fact that he based his locations solely upon the traditions as reflected in the Bible. In many cases we know that the geographical boundaries and situations in general have changed since Biblical days.

It might be of interest to the reader to know that Kimchi had a certain familiarity with the animal kingdom. For example, he explains the technical difference between אֶרֶב, כַּפִּיר and לֵוִי. ReDaK says the אֶרֶב or lion is the king of the beasts who feeds upon other wild animals. The כַּפִּיר, on the other hand, is the type of lion which is weaker than the אֶרֶב but stronger than the לֵוִי and

which feeds upon herds of domestic animals. ⁸³ In addition to this, he knew that jackals and ostriches made mournful noises. ⁸⁴

The next question for our consideration is whether David Kimchi was a Biblical critic or not. It is recorded that Rabbi Joseph ibn Caspi and Profiat Duran criticized him for his radical views in regard to the Bible. ⁸⁵ But we must remember that Biblical Criticism is a comparatively new science which has developed among Jews only during the last hundred years due to the fact that excommunication could be imposed upon anyone who denied the Divine authorship of the Bible. Although we find evidences of the critical spirit in Ibn Ezra and David Kimchi, yet we know that their criticism was rudimentary and can be said to have consisted rather of hints and suggestions than of positive critical statements. Nevertheless, these two men were fore-runners of such a science in that they were well aware of certain irreconcilable difficulties which the Biblical text presented. Kimchi admitted certain discrepancies and suggested changes of genus and tense, that some words were elipses, and that the singular and plural were often interchanged for one another. And, yet, Kimchi, as a general rule, because of his great reverence for tradition and the opinions of Talmudic scholars abstained from just every textual criticism. ⁸⁶ Whatever emendations he felt were necessary were usually those which he found in the Massoretic text. The fact that he believed Solomon to be the author of the Book of Proverbs would tend to show that he knew nothing of what we today call Higher Criticism.

Notwithstanding, we do find certain evidences of Kimchi's

critical attitude toward the text. He is careful to note that when the Scriptures mention large numbers like 'thousands' and 'myriads', they are speaking *הפלות* *הרבה* in exaggerated terms. ⁸⁷ His keen powers of observation discover that the feminine suffix of *היה* refers to a masculine noun *היה* ⁸⁸. Likewise, his sharp eye detects when the servile letter, *ה"ה* *הש"ה*, is omitted or should be understood. ⁸⁹ He follows the context closely and is quick to note where the sense demands *ענבים* 'grapes' instead of *תירוש* 'wine'. ⁹⁰ Kimchi, as I have already indicated, makes an emendation on the basis of what the sense demands as well as by similar usages and passages found elsewhere. By way of example, he finds in Mic. I:12 that the 'lamed' of *לשערי ירושלים* should probably have been omitted to have read *שערי ירושלים* as it does in Mic. I:9.

While we cannot call David Kimchi a Biblical critic in the modern sense of the term, yet we must recognize the fact that his thorough knowledge of the Hebrew language made it impossible for him to wholly ignore certain difficulties and discrepancies present in the Bible.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

- 1.....Ezra VII:10
- 2.....Source material from Dr. Englander's Commentaries II Notes
- 3.....When Kimchi differs with his father he cites him. Chapter VI gives an example, pp. 66-67.
- 4.....ReDaK to Mic.IV:1---וַיִּחַסְתָּהּ וְיִשְׁמְרֶהָ אֵין יָמֵי הַמִּשְׁיָהּ וְיִחַסְתָּהּ
- 5.....This same tendency occurs elsewhere, e.g. Mic.IV:11 is followed by Mic.IV:13-14. Also the strophe MIC.VII:1-6 is followed by Mic.VII:7 f.
- 6.....ReDaK refers to Isaiah.
- 7.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:10 on the phrase כָּבוֹד אֱלֹהֵי חֲכָמִים
- 8.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:8 on the word שִׁלָּל
- 9.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:10-16.
- 10.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. VII:7
Mic.III:11b quotes the words of the people even as does Jer.VII:4b.
- 11.....Kimchi's Hebrew expression for Paranomasia is לִשׁוֹן נִפְלָא עַל הַלִּשׁוֹן.
- 12.....Mic.V:6b alpha and V:6b beta;
Mic.VII:7
Mic.VI:7b---פָּרִי וְכִנּוֹר
- 13.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:8
- 14.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:8
Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:4---to indicate a great number.
Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:17a and VII:17b---indicates use of synonyms.
- 15.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. II:2
- 16.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:6
- 17.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:5---he indicates that it is not the sin of one section of the country, but of all 10 tribes.
- 18.....Kimchi's expression for figurative language is: זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הַמִּשְׁלָּה
- 19.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:2---he proves this by the word מִלָּאָה
- 20.....Cf. Mic.I:4
- 21.....Cf. Mic.VII:2
- 22.....Cf. ReDaK to VII:1
- 23.....Cf. Mic.VII:2
- 24.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. III:6 and VII:8.
- 25.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. IV:10 and V:2.
- 26.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. IV:14.
- 27.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. V:6.
- 28.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:12.
- 29.....Cf. Mic. II:2; II:5; II:11; III:9 and VI:10
- 30.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. II:10 for another example of this tendency---בִּלְוִיָּה clarified by adding לְכָא
- 31.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. VI:3
Other examples: ReDaK to Mic.I:5b alpha, by מִי לִפְשָׁע is meant לִפְשָׁע רָם ; ReDaK to Mic.I:5b beta, by הָלָא is meant הָלָא מִלֵּן שׁוֹמְרוֹן ;
ReDaK to Mic.IV:11, by שׁוֹמְרוֹן is meant הָאֲזוּסִים פִּלְגָם is meant הָאֲזוּסִים

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

- 31.....ReDaK to Mic.VI:12, by *סלאן פתיהם חסם* is meant *סלאן חסם*.
 ReDaK to Mic.VII:13, by *ארץ העמים* is meant *ארץ*.
- 32.....Cf. Mic.VI:8.
- 33.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:3
- 34.....Other examples of ReDaK's avoidance of anthropomorphism are:
 in reference to *ויהוה פראשם*, Mic.II:13, he says *נסתקלה כלומר כיון* as *הלא יהוה פקרבנו*; he interprets *סחם שכ'נה* *שכ'נהו בקרבנו*.
- 35.....Cf. Chapter III, p.10.
- 36.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. V:1.
וזהו אל should be inserted before *ואמר זה ישי המשיח*.
- 37.....Omitted from the Lemberg 1868 and the Warsaw 1874 editions.
- 38.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. V:4 beginning with *ל"ו*
- 39.....Cf. ReDaK & Ibn Ezra to Mic.V:10.
- 40.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:1 where he specifies which of the two Bethlehems is meant and who is meant by *משל פ'שראל*.
- 41.....Cf. Mic.V:10---- *סבצר'ך* explains *ארץ*;
 Cf. Mic.VI:2a---- *הר'ם* explains *זהאח'ם* found in Mic.VI:2b;
 Cf. Mic.VI:10a-- *רשע פנ'ה* explains Mic.VI:10b.
- 42.....In commenting on *קסמ'ן* of Mic.III:11 ReDaK refers you to his comment on the same root in Mic.III:6.
- 43.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:11.
- 44.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:14----he cites *שעך*
- 45.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:3
- 46.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:3.
- 47.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:12.
- 48.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:10.
- 49.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:13.
- 50.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:10.
- 51.....ReDaK explains *שפ'ר* Mic.I:11 on the basis of the Targum to Canticles I:16.
- 52.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; pp.16-17.
- 53.....Ibid.
- 54.....ReDaK identifies Micah with the same prophet mentioned in Jer.XXVI:18.
- 55.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:6 which quotes II Kings XVII:24.
- 56.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:6.
- 57.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:5, Mentions Samaria as capitol of Israel, from the time of Omri onward.
- 58.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic. I:6.
- 59.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:15.
- 60.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:12.
- 61.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:6.
- 62.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:5; IV:11; IV:14; V:9.
- 63.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:5.
- 64.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:13
- 65.....Margolis, M.L.; "Holy Scriptures with Commentary" (Micah), p. 35. Cf. note on Mic. II:13.
- 66.....Briggs, Driver & Plummer; I.C.C. to Micah, p. 69.
- 67.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:3
- 68.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

- 69.....II Kings XVIII:4.
According to ReDaK on Mic.I:13 Baal worship began in Israel and not in Judah. Then it spread from Israel to Lachish.
- 70.....Isa. II:8.
- 71.....Kent, C.H.; "The Divided Kingdom", p.179.
- 72.....Bewer, J.A.; "The Literature of the Old Testament", p.120.
- 73.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:1 and I:15.
- 74.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic;I:15
- 75.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic:V:1.
- 76.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:14.
- 77.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:6.
- 78.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:10.
- 79.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:14.
- 80.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:14.
- 81.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:12.
- 82.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:5.
- 83.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:7..
- 84.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:8---last comment.
- 85.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Hosea", p.xvii.
- 86.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 23.
- 87.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:7.
- 88.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:9.
- 89.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:10.
- 90.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI;15.

CHAPTER V

KIMCHI'S LINGUISTIC ABILITY

The science of grammar in the Hebrew language, as I have repeatedly said, is one of the achievements of the nineteenth century. We must be satisfied with Kimchi, the grammarian of the thirteenth century, if he took the then existing research into consideration as much as possible. We must consider Kimchi's progress remarkable in that he was one of the first Hebrew scholars to sift the confused mass of disordered material, discover in it important facts, compare them with analagous phenomena in sister languages, and describe them in detail.¹ Such a process of analysis, classification, comparison, and description may be found in his famous etymological and lexicographical work of Hebrew grammar, the *Michlol*.² Although no reference to this work is mentioned in Kimchi's commentary on the Book of Micah, yet upon close examination of the latter we discover that the same general grammatical points are discussed in it as are set forth in the former. The general characteristics of Kimchi's grammatical knowledge have been previously treated in an earlier section of this study.³ We may be compelled to repeat these from time to time in order to illustrate specific examples of his contributions to the study of Hebrew grammar.

Kimchi, in the course of his commentary on Micah, seems to emphasize three aspects of Hebrew grammar. He points to certain definite rules of syntax, analyzes and classifies nouns and verbs with respect to their grammar, and stresses the importance of accents,

vocalization, and cantillation marks. Wherever possible he cites parallels in other parts of the Bible to confirm his treatment of the matter under consideration.

As we have continually pointed out, David Kimchi was aware of certain difficulties in the text itself and in order to cope with these he sought out the general rules of syntax known in his time. Where these were not sufficient, he deduced his own explanations and harmonizations. In most cases his points are scientifically correct and well taken.

First of all, he noted certain stylistic peculiarities which required explanation for the critically minded. He saw that an interchange of persons was apparent in Scriptures. A discrepancy of this type appears in the opening verse of the Micah prophecy which reads $\text{לֹכֵחַ שְׁמָעִי עָטִים כָּלֵם}$.⁴ Here שְׁמָעִי , the verb, is second person, whereas כָּלֵם , the subject is third person. In another portion of the prophecy, we find the reverse true; in the first part of the verse וְיִחְסַן־יְהוָה and וְיִשָּׁבֵב are third person, whereas in the second part of the verse $\text{וְיִשְׁלַח־אֶת־יָדָיו}$ the second person occurs.⁵ This would seem to indicate that second and third persons are frequently interchanged for one another. It is likewise true of suffixes; in the first part of the verse we have וְיִחְסַן־יְהוָה first person suffix followed by וְיִשָּׁבֵב , third person suffix. Sometimes the first person is used when the subject is impersonal, e.g., in the case of הֲיָכִיחַ־יְהוָה , meaning: "Can anyone be pure?"⁶ ReDaK points out that the interchange of persons is not a lapsis lingua, but a common characteristic of Biblical literature.⁷

We see, through the eyes of Kimchi, that we have an interchange of number as well as of person in the Bible. Often the singular is used when the plural must have been meant. The sense of Mic.I:10 would seem to demand לעפרה פנה instead of פניה לעפרה.⁸ Sometimes a word is used in the singular in the collective sense, e.g., by שומרון is meant ערי שומרון the cities surrounding Samaria.⁹ Yet, in other places, we find the plural used where we would expect the singular¹⁰, e.g. וזה הפיה לבמה יער should rather be הפיה לבמה יער.¹¹

Frequently, the prepositions and conjunctions are used interchangeably in the Biblical text, e.g., על is used in the sense of אל in one place¹² and in the sense of ו in others.¹³ Likewise, את, the sign of the accusative, is used in the sense of אל¹⁴. Sometimes כ is written where the sense demands the ש.¹⁵ Sometimes ו is written where the sense demands the ו.¹⁶ Certain similar consonants are often used indiscriminately, one in place of the other, for instance, ד and ט.¹⁷ We also find ו used interchangeably with ו, e.g. ו and ו.¹⁸

Kimchi contributes richly to the understanding of Biblical syntax with his careful distinctions between transitive and intransitive verbs. When he writes that a verb is פעל וזה he means that it is intransitive, וזה פעל transitive.¹⁹ He is likewise valuable for his explanations of the word order of the text. He says that the force of the word order is for emphasis.²⁰ Assyria is mentioned first of the countries which will receive their due, because Assyria was the first country to which Israel went in exile.²¹ He tells us that the subject of a sentence while not always stated in the text may be implied or understood, e.g., מלך המשיח is

the implied subject of וְשָׁמַר. 22

Similarly, a preposition may be understood, e.g., the servile beth in Mic.VI:10. 23 Kimchi recognized poetic forms of words used in the Bible, e.g., לִמְיָ for יָמֵי 24 and שָׁכַן for שָׁכֵן. 25

Kimchi concerns himself frequently with the variant uses of the Hebrew letter ה"ה. He speaks of the ה"ה השאלה, the ה"ה הידיעה, and the ה"ה הסמיכות. In places where the interrogative particle, ה"ה השאלה, is not apparent, Kimchi points to it. 26 He also makes the comment that the ה"ה הידיעה, definite article, may be used with a vocative sense, ה"ה לקריאה. 27 ReDaK claims that the phrase עַרְיָה נֶשֶׁת is used in the construct state and that the ה"ה of עַרְיָה is a ה"ה הסמיכות. He means to say here that although the construct in this case is עַרְיָה, it retains the ה"ה, whereas עַרְיָה would normally be expected. 28 Kimchi points out that a noun cannot take both the definite article and a suffix simultaneously; e.g., in the case of Micah II:12 we find the word הַדְּבָרִים which is doubly definite. 29

In reference to pronouns, Kimchi makes a few pertinent remarks. He explains that the interrogative pronoun מִי can be used only when the noun refers to a person, כֹּל שֶׁל, and is not to be used when the antecedent is an animal. 30 In addition to this, wherever there is ambiguity, he points out the correct antecedents of pronouns. 31

Kimchi sometimes quoted the Massorah in solving syntactical difficulties. 32 However, in one particular case in which he attempts to explain the existence of the dagesh in the form תִּרְאֶנָּה His solution creates as due to the suffix, he is incorrect. 33 If תִּרְאֶנָּה is the third two further difficulties ignored by him.

rectly as the niphal of קָבַח and thus showed that he knew the Ayin-Ayin verbs. ³⁸ He also recognizes קָבַח to be the niphal of the double weak letter radicals and points out significantly enough that ordinarily you would expect this form to be vocalized with a 'cholem' but with this verb it requires a 'kubitz'. ³⁹ We have comparatively few examples which illustrate Kimchi's knowledge of Lamed-Heh verbs. However, we see that he is well acquainted with this class when he tells us that קָבַח is like קָבַח and קָבַח and that derived noun forms show the weakness of the last root letter, e.g., קָבַח and קָבַח . ⁴⁰ Kimchi proves to us that he was even aware of the existence of a rare class of verbs like the Pe-Aleph, e.g., קָבַח . ⁴¹ In reference to this particular verb, he points out that in the first person imperfect Kal you would expect קָבַח instead of קָבַח as is written. He shows that the omission of the 'aleph' at the beginning of a root is quite common by quoting an example from II Sam. VI:1 to prove his point. ⁴² He also tries to include קָבַח in this Pe-Aleph class of verbs, but undoubtedly, he meant to say that it was a Lamed-Aleph or a Pe-Yod verb. ⁴³ However, he does cite a correct example of the Pe-Yod class, telling us that the root of קָבַח is קָבַח . ⁴⁴ Kimchi informs us that קָבַח in the Micah text is written defectively for קָבַח , because Lamed-Aleph verbs in the hiphil are prone to drop the 'aleph'. ⁴⁵ This verb is not, strictly speaking, a Lamed-Aleph verb, but is rather a combination of the Lamed-Aleph and Ayin-Yod class. ReDaK offers examples of the Ayin-Yod verbs as well. ⁴⁶ He likewise calls our attention to an example of a "Middle A" verb and its distinguishing characteristic of 'tzere' under the middle letter of the word. ⁴⁷

Kimchi excelled in revealing the fine grammatical points

of the Hebrew text, especially as regards verbs. In his commentary on Micah, he usually points out the basic form of the root, i.e. the infinitive; mentions the use of the prophetic perfects and apocopated forms. He classifies מקום and הרע as infinitives.⁴⁸ He makes the statement that perfects like נאספני⁴⁹ and קמתי are typical of the prophetic writings: עבר במקום עתיד בדרך הנביאית⁵⁰. They refer to what the prophet believes will happen in the future rather than what has happened in the past. Kimchi recognized apocopated forms and recorded their presence for his readers. In Mic.VII:10 we have וחרא which is an apocopated form of וחראה and in Mic.IV:11 we find וחתה which is a shortened form of וחתה. Furthermore, Kimchi perceived ילע to be a shortened form of the hiphil of ילע⁵¹.

Kimchi's treatment of nouns and noun forms is simple, yet adequate. His Hebrew term for noun is שם.⁵² ReDaK generally deals with nouns in two ways; 1) classifies them according to construction, and 2) mentions other nouns derived from a common root.

- 1) קלון and חרון is in the same class of nouns as חרון⁵³

ישעך	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
ישה	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
חמה	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
חמה	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
- 2) עמד is from the same root as עמד; root--- עמד⁵⁶

נה	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
נה	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
שלם	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"
שלם	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"

He also singles out unusual noun forms and gives their root, e.g., חושה⁵⁹ e.g., חושה is from the root חוה meaning "to raise a shout"; חושה which is a substantive is from the root חוה which meant originally "that which existed first" and then came to mean "wisdom".⁶⁰

Kimchi's treatment of adjectives is brief. He dealt with them in practically the same way as he did with nouns. His term for adjective is תואר. He describes תואר as an adjective in the same class as שוה and ענין.⁶¹ The only other examples he enumerates are those of שלל in Mic.I:8 and ענין נשח in Mic:I:11.⁶²

One other point that should not be overlooked in determining the extent of Kimchi's grammatical knowledge is his recognition of silent letters (קטנים). In his commentary on Micah, he indicates that the "yod" and the "aleph" are often silent and unwritten. In Mic.IV:3, the word מלח is written with a dagesh in the "toff" to show that the "yod" is silent and omitted. The singular of this word is מלח. In Mic.IV:8, the verb form מלח has no vocalization under the "aleph" because the "aleph" is silent. However, we see that here the "aleph" is written.

Although little stress is laid upon accents in the teaching of the Hebrew language today, they are nevertheless of great importance for the accurate and scientific understanding of the language. A good example of their relative importance is the fact that the accent alone in certain conjugations enables you to distinguish the third person singular perfect from the participle. Kimchi makes reference to this fact in his Michlol as well as in his commentaries.⁶³ However, in his commentary on the Book of Micha, as far as accents are concerned, he is content merely to indicate when they are עלול i.e. occur on the ultima; and when they are עלול occur on the penultima. For example, he mentions that the interjection ווא takes the accent on the penultima.⁶⁴

The same is true of the word 'אִכְתָּהּ' 65 But in an apocopated form like אִכְתָּהּ the accent is shifted from the penultima to the ultima. 66

ReDaK makes one other important point regarding accents in his commentary on Micah. He indicates the use of the 'מֶתִיג' or "methig". In reference to the word הִדְבֵּר the 'daled' takes a methig. 67 This is another evidence of Kimchi's tendency toward Massoretic accuracy.

Kimchi seems to have taken even more pains with regard to the correct vocalization of the text. He insists on the correct vocalization and pronunciation of all letters. He shows his preciseness in his recording the exact pronunciation of חִלְאֵהָ. 68

The same is true with regard to the word מַעְצוּלָה. 69 Wherever it is possible to make sense out of the text vocalization, ReDaK retains it. He is not guilty of vocalizing freely as does Rashī.

Rashi vocalizes וְשָׁנָה as וְשָׁנָה. 70 Yet in some cases he quotes the vocalization of Ben Asher and Ben Naphtali texts, e.g., Ben Asher's vocalization is identical with that of the 'kethib', i.e., חִדְרָן with a 'cholem', whereas Ben Naphtali's text has חִדְרָן with a 'patach'. 71 ReDaK sometimes quotes other vocalizations when there is a basis for them in the Targum. For example, the Biblical text reads קִנְצָה with a 'chirik' under the 'koff'. The other exegetes 72 read it קִנְצָה with a 'shuruk' instead of a 'chirik'. There is justification for this reading in the light of the Targum which reads אֲחִכְנִשָּׁה. 73 Kimchi points to other slight variations in the vocalization of the Hebrew text. He shows that a 'kubitz' and a 'cholem' are often interchangeable, e.g., the אֲחִכְנִשָּׁה with a 'kubitz' has the same meaning as אֲחִכְנִשָּׁה with a 'cholem'. 74

He makes one other point of vocalization which is of minor importance, i.e., that יו'ט' is vocalized with two successive 'yods', first, because of the 'tzere' under them; and, secondly, because יו' is a weak root.

There is only one reference to cantillation marks in ReDaK's commentary on the Book of Micah. This is in reference to the word יְנַחֵם which Kimchi records as having two pashtas.⁷⁵

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

- 1.....Tauber, J.; "Kimchi als Grammatiker"; p. 7-8.
- 2.....Cf. Michlol arranged by Chomsky.
- 3.....Cf. Chapter II: pp. 8-10.
- 4.....Cf. Mic.I:2---the first verse is the title verse.
- 5.....Cf. Mic.VII:19.
- 6.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:11---ReDaK's comment based on Targum.
- 7.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:19---לֹכֶת רַבִּים מִמְּקוֹמוֹת רַבִּים לֹכֶת
- 8.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:12 וְשָׁלַח לִנְכַח פִּסְטִיק אַחֵר
- Also ReDaK to Mic.VI:16 נִקְחָה: שְׁתֵּטֶר would read better
 נִקְחָה...שְׁתֵּטֶר.
- Also ReDaK to Mic.I:11 עָבַר would read better עָבְרָה .
 The Targum has עָבְרָה .
- 9.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:6.
- 10.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:5---last comment.
- 11.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:12.
- 12.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:14.
- 13.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:2; V:4; VII:13
- 14.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:1.
- 15.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:5---ReDaK probably derived this inter-
 pretation from the Targum which reads: אֵלָּא .
- 16.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:8.
- 17.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:6 and VI:14 in the words נִשְׁלַח and נִסַּח .
 Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:4---מִסְכֵּיכָה
- 18.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:12.
- 19.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:8.
- 20.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:13.
- 21.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:12.
- 22.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:3.
- 23.....The sense of the verse demands.... עוֹד הָאֵשׁ בְּנִיהַר רָשַׁע
- 24.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:12.
- 25.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:14.
- 26.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:10.
- 27.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:7.
- 28.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:11....The construction עָרִיָּה פֶשֶׁת is
 like יִבְמָה מִלֶּה הִדְבְּרוּ פֶשֶׁתִּי הִי'רִיעוּת Ruth II:17.
 אִפֹּה שְׁעוֹרִים
- 29.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:12...אֲשׁוּר עָלָיו refers to אֲשׁוּר .
- 30.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:5.
- 31.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.V:4....the suffix of עָלָיו
- 32.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:10.
- 33.....Ibid.
- 34.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:1-----last comment.
- 35.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:1-----last comment.
- 36.....Cf. Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar", p.73.
 Kimchi also knew quadrilaterals, e.g., הִנְהִילָה, niph'al
 of the root הִלָּא. ReDaK to Mic.IV:7.
 פֶּעַל עָבַר, Kal-בְּקָצֵר, Niph'al.
 הִנְהִילָה, Hiph'il.
- 37.....Cf. Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar", pp.54-72.
 Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:7 הִקְצֵר
- Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:7 הִנְהִילָה
- Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:8 הִלָּכָה
- 38.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:6.
- 39.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:4....He also recognizes וָרַעַי to be an
 Ayin-Ayin form, Mic.V:5.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

- 40.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:4.
 41.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:6.
 42.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:8.....
 43.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:17. belongs to Pe-Aleph class.
 Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:7...he tries to identify יִסְכִּי as a
 Pe-Aleph. It is a Pe-Yod.
 44.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:9.
 45.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:15.
 46.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:9... הִרְעִי, hiphil of רוּעַ.
 47.....Cf. Mic.IV:6--- צִלְעָה
 48.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.III:6 and VII:3.
 49.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:11.
 50.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:8.
 51.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:9....He cites this from יֵשׁ סִפְרָשִׁים
 52.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:10.
 53.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:10.
 54.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:14.
 55.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:11.
 56.....Ibid.
 57.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:4.
 58.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:3.
 59.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.IV:9.
 60.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:9.
 61.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:12.
 62.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.I:11--He says עֲרִיָּה may be either שֵׁם or
 חֵזָק. He probably means that it is a substantive.
 63.....Cf. Chomsky, W.; "David Kimchi's Hebrew Grammar", p.27, 8-d.
 64.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:1.
 65.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:8
 Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:10.
 66.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:10.
 67.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:12.
 68.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:3... הֲלֹא יִתֵּן הָאֱלֹהִים פֶּסֶן לְוִהָאֵל"ף פֶּצִיר
 69.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:19...Specifies that it should be voc-
 alized with a 'shuruk'.
 70.....Cf. ReDaK & Rashi to Mic.V:3.
 71.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VI:15.
 72.....יֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים כִּי חִירָק הָקוּף מְקוֹם שִׁירָק
 73.....Cf. Mic.I:7.
 74.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.II:8.
 75.....Cf. ReDaK to Mic.VII:10.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RELATION OF DAVID KIMCHI TO HIS SOURCES

The relation of David Kimchi to his sources comprised a very interesting part of this study. Some are of the opinion that he was almost wholly dependent upon his sources and followed them slavishly in his comments.¹ In an earlier section of this work, we have more or less refuted the charges of plagiarism held against him.² And yet we cannot ignore the fact that some of the Maistre Petit's remarks, comments and interpretations are taken from other scholars without due acknowledgement. "These views are, as a rule, given in an amplified form, in accordance with the Kimchi characteristic of assimilation and amplification."³ The reason (they are not quoted) seems to be that he had assimilated their comments and interpretations, and they had become part of his own views."⁴ We must remember that this was the tendency of his time. As we have said before, people were not so much interested in the name of the authorities as they were in their content---what they had to say. Kimchi seems to apply the same criteria of value in his quotations and paraphrases of his predecessors and contemporaries. He quotes other authorities only where their views differ from his own,⁵ or are of special interest,⁶ or to point out where they have erred.⁷

It is perhaps easier to say whom Kimchi did not quote. From his writings we see that with the exception of Rashi he failed to show a definite acquaintance and actual use of the exegetes of

the North French School. ⁸ He was also unfamiliar with the Italian commentators. Rabbi Nathan Baal Aruch is the only one of this school mentioned by him. ⁹ Nowhere does Kimchi make reference to the Karaitic literature and if he was acquainted with it through the writings of Ibn Ezra, he conceals the fact from us. ¹⁰

Of course, the primary source of David Kimchi was the Bible. In almost every verse of his commentary on Micah, he makes cross-references to the other books of the Bible. His quotations and references are far too numerous to list in this study. In fact, a complete discussion and evaluation of them would require a book in itself. Here it will suffice to say that Kimchi was a thorough student of the Bible and that in many cases we owe the preservation of our Biblical text to him. Yet, in spite of his great knowledge, he was not infallible and occasionally erred. Frequently, he relied upon his memory in making quotations with the result that he sometimes confused verses and made other minor inaccuracies. ¹¹ To illustrate what is meant, he quotes Numbers I:35 as *למטה מנשה* when it really reads *ועליו מטה מנשה*. ¹² Similarly, he erroneously cites Hosea II:8 as *סך את דרכך* when, in reality, it reads *שך את דרכך*. ¹³ In quoting Zechariah XIII:9 he omits *אח*, the sign of the accusative. ¹⁴ One additional mistake in the Micah commentary is found in his quotation of Ezekiel XXXIV:25, where he reads *וישכנו* instead of *וישכנו*. ¹⁵ The last mentioned is an error in non-observation. The others are errors of mal-observation. It is quite possible that some of these errors are due to the carelessness of later scribes in copying the ReDaK text. ¹⁶

A brief examination of Kimchi's works reveals that he used the Massorah extensively and was largely dependent upon it. Furthermore, we see that the Massorah was instrumental in his establishing the correct text of the Hebrew Bible. ReDaK collected variants of the Massoretic texts, many of which are extant. His commentary on the Book of Micah shows a certain familiarity with the text of Aaron b. Moses b. Asher (the Tiberian) and with Jacob b. Naphtali (the Babylonian). ¹⁷ Bacher tells us that ReDaK makes many references to the Massorah in his dictionary. ¹⁸ In fact, Kimchi's remarks on the Massorah are so many and so detailed that a 'small' Massorah could be compiled from his works alone. ¹⁹ ReDaK felt that there could be no deviation from the Massoretic text. ²⁰ He accepts it as his authority for vowels as well as for letters and words; and he shows how important it is in determining the proper accents. ²¹ ReDaK often rejects the interpretations of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, his father Joseph and others because their vocalization differs from that of the Massorah.

Cohen has an interesting theory as to Kimchi's view of the origin of the Massorah. It seems that due to the confusion of texts which arose during the Babylonian exile, the Men of the Great Assembly came together to determine the proper text. Since they were unable to decide which was the correct one, they adopted one reading and placed the other in the margin. ²²

Kimchi had great respect for the Massorah and even quoted it by name. ²³ We have specific examples of his upholding the מסורה in preference to the כתוב. ²⁴ Not only does he indicate his preference, but he often cites both and comments on them as well. ²⁵

We may say that Kimchi utilized a critical approach to the Massorah. At times, he found the $\cdot\gamma\bar{\tau}$ to be incorrect and upheld the $\cdot\kappa\bar{\eta}\bar{\iota}$.²⁶ But frequently, he agrees with the Massorah on the basis of what the Targum has to say; e.g., he interprets $\psi\aleph\eta$ as $\psi\bar{\eta}$.²⁷ This shows thorough and sound scholarship. Undoubtedly, the Massorah was a great help to Kimchi in that it often indicated to him the difficulty of the verse and in addition provoked him to thought concerning it.²⁸

The next most important source for David Kimchi was the Targum. From his commentaries, we learn that he cited the Targum more frequently and copiously than any other Biblical commentator. In his commentary to the Micah text alone he quoted the Targum thirty-eight times and referred to it twice.²⁹ In addition to this he cited the Targum to other parts of the Bible at least five times.³⁰ From our study, it is evident that beginning with the 1517 Venice edition Kimchi's citations of the Targum were shortened and at times even omitted.³¹ As a rule, his Targum references occur at the end of his comment.³² Furthermore, he did not always make acknowledgement to the Targum for its help.³³

We might well wonder what purpose Kimchi had in quoting and alluding to the Targum so much. As far as we can determine, his motive seemed to be a double one. He seemed to be interested in the philological aspect of exegesis as well as in the preservation of the traditional interpretation. There is no doubt about it that Kimchi made a distinct contribution to Hebrew philology by pointing out how several Hebrew words were formed from the Aramaic;

e.g., p^{h} from the Aramaic sp^{h} . 34 In several places he compared the Hebrew with the Aramaic and showed how the Aramaic gave meaning to the text. 35

This leads me to Kimchi's use of the Targum as an aid to understanding the correct and original Hebrew interpretation. Again and again ReDaK looks to the Targum as a basis for his interpretation of Scriptures. For instance, he explains אַנְיָשָׁה in terms of Jonathan's comment, מַסְרָעָא מִחַתָּהָ "a grievous blow" 36; in the light of יִחַפְּלִשׁוּן 37; עֲבָרִי on the basis of עֲבָרִי 38; by וְאִנִּים } וְנִשְׁאָר "and they took by force" 39; פְּקוּמָה as meaning פְּקוּמָה; עֲדָנָא meaning הַיּוֹם; "upright in posture or stature" 40; הַיּוֹם meaning "the time" 41; פְּדוּמָה פְּדוּמָה as meaning פְּדוּמָה פְּדוּמָה; "who build their houses by blood (with the bribes they have accepted from murderers)." 42; וְדַחַבְתָּאשׁ לְהוֹן as meaning וְדַחַבְתָּאשׁ לְהוֹן; 43; according to לְיִנּוּרִין; 44; מִן קִדְּם חוֹבִי עָמִי; 45; לְאַחֲמִנָּה as meaning לְאַחֲמִנָּה; 46; וְנִמְנִי עֲלֵנָּה as meaning וְנִמְנִי עֲלֵנָּה; 47; "his name shall be great" 48; וְיִשְׁנִינָנָא מֵאַחֲרֵי as meaning וְיִשְׁנִינָנָא מֵאַחֲרֵי; 49; "we shall appoint over us" 50; פְּעִלֵי אֶעְרִים as meaning פְּעִלֵי אֶעְרִים; 51; דְּלֵא on the basis of דְּלֵא; 52; "he will deliver us" 53; וְהוּא as meaning וְהוּא; 54; "enemies" and not "cities"; 55; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 56; avoiding the anthropomorphism 57; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 58; impersonally according to 59; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 60; on the basis of 61; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 62; on the basis of 63; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 64; on the basis of 65; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 66; on the basis of 67; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 68; on the basis of 69; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 70; on the basis of 71; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 72; on the basis of 73; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 74; on the basis of 75; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 76; on the basis of 77; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 78; on the basis of 79; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 80; on the basis of 81; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 82; on the basis of 83; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 84; on the basis of 85; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 86; on the basis of 87; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 88; on the basis of 89; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 90; on the basis of 91; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 92; on the basis of 93; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 94; on the basis of 95; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 96; on the basis of 97; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 98; on the basis of 99; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 100; on the basis of 101; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 102; on the basis of 103; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 104; on the basis of 105; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 106; on the basis of 107; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 108; on the basis of 109; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 110; on the basis of 111; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 112; on the basis of 113; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 114; on the basis of 115; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 116; on the basis of 117; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 118; on the basis of 119; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 120; on the basis of 121; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 122; on the basis of 123; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 124; on the basis of 125; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 126; on the basis of 127; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 128; on the basis of 129; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 130; on the basis of 131; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 132; on the basis of 133; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 134; on the basis of 135; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 136; on the basis of 137; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 138; on the basis of 139; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 140; on the basis of 141; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 142; on the basis of 143; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 144; on the basis of 145; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 146; on the basis of 147; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 148; on the basis of 149; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 150; on the basis of 151; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 152; on the basis of 153; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 154; on the basis of 155; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 156; on the basis of 157; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 158; on the basis of 159; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 160; on the basis of 161; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 162; on the basis of 163; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 164; on the basis of 165; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 166; on the basis of 167; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 168; on the basis of 169; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 170; on the basis of 171; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 172; on the basis of 173; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 174; on the basis of 175; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 176; on the basis of 177; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 178; on the basis of 179; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 180; on the basis of 181; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 182; on the basis of 183; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 184; on the basis of 185; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 186; on the basis of 187; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 188; on the basis of 189; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 190; on the basis of 191; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 192; on the basis of 193; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 194; on the basis of 195; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 196; on the basis of 197; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 198; on the basis of 199; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 200; on the basis of 201; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 202; on the basis of 203; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 204; on the basis of 205; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 206; on the basis of 207; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 208; on the basis of 209; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 210; on the basis of 211; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 212; on the basis of 213; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 214; on the basis of 215; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 216; on the basis of 217; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 218; on the basis of 219; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 220; on the basis of 221; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 222; on the basis of 223; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 224; on the basis of 225; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 226; on the basis of 227; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 228; on the basis of 229; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 230; on the basis of 231; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 232; on the basis of 233; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 234; on the basis of 235; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 236; on the basis of 237; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 238; on the basis of 239; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 240; on the basis of 241; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 242; on the basis of 243; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 244; on the basis of 245; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 246; on the basis of 247; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 248; on the basis of 249; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 250; on the basis of 251; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 252; on the basis of 253; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 254; on the basis of 255; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 256; on the basis of 257; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 258; on the basis of 259; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 260; on the basis of 261; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 262; on the basis of 263; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 264; on the basis of 265; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 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308; on the basis of 309; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 310; on the basis of 311; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 312; on the basis of 313; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 314; on the basis of 315; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 316; on the basis of 317; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 318; on the basis of 319; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 320; on the basis of 321; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 322; on the basis of 323; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 324; on the basis of 325; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 326; on the basis of 327; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד; 328; on the basis of 329; עֵיד as meaning עֵיד

57

The positive results of Kimchi's comparative study of the

Jonathan to Micah with the text are significant to the science of exegesis. In the first place, his manifold references and quotations of the Targum were instrumental in fixing what came to be known more or less as a standard version of the Targum text. It was through ReDaK that the correct text of the Targum was established.⁵⁸ We are sure that he had a different Targum Jonathan text than that which we have today in our rabbinic Bibles.⁵⁹ Other passages that show us that he had access to variant texts are Mic.I:10 which reads *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* where ours reads *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ*; Mic.IV:6 *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* for *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ*; Mic.V:4; Mic.V:9 which has *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ*, the sign of the accusative which is omitted from our text; Mic.VI:2; Mic.VI:7; Mic.VI:13 which has *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* for *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* and *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* instead of *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ*; Mic.II:13 which has *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* for *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ*; and Mic.VII:8. In the second place, he has enriched Hebrew lexicography with the vast amount of etymological material which he has amassed in his comparisons with the Aramaic. A third result of Kimchi's detailed study of the Targum is that by means of this he was able to give a clear and concise interpretation of the terse and otherwise cryptic Biblical text.⁶⁰

We might say that Kimchi's use of the Targum Jonathan is critical and independent. In many of his comments and paraphrases on the Targum, he shows a fine critical sense. He often points out the difficulty that exists between the Targum and the Bible text, e.g., he asks how the *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* of the Targum can mean the *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* of the Bible text?⁶¹ He attempts to reconcile this difficulty by translating the *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* as *וְיִשְׁכְּבוּ* "with". Otherwise, how could you appoint seven or eight princes over the Messiah? Evidences of this critical spirit are enough to reassure us that Kimchi did not follow the Targum blindly, but rather was eclectic in his use of it.

Kimchi made an extensive use of Rabbinic literature. We find much evidence of this in his commentary on the Book of Micah. There he is quite careful to separate the homiletical rabbinic interpretations from the exegetical and grammatical remarks. The rabbinic statements quoted are usually prefixed by some such form as ⁶² *ל"ו פ"ט בן*, but seldom are the sources or authorities mentioned specifically by name. In these statements are to be found many rules and hints for the language of the Talmud whose correct text Kimchi was interested in establishing. Often, however, Kimchi does not go directly to the Talmud and Midrashim for these statements, but prefers to rely on secondary sources such as Rashi. This dependence on Rashi becomes evident "when the slight changes made by Rashi in his habit of quoting Midrashic passages are freely transcribed by Kimchi." ⁶³ Frequently, ReDaK's quotations from Talmudic literature are loose. ⁶⁴ In these cases, he relied on his memory with the result that he usually mixed up the passage, e.g., he reversed the order of names quoted from a passage in Masechta Succah. ⁶⁵

Kimchi's attitude toward rabbinical literature is a strange one to understand—it is a blending of reverence and criticism, a respect for tradition combined with a certain independence of judgment. ⁶⁶ He is often fascinated by the clever, pithy Aggadic statements in the Midrash and Talmud; e.g. Talmud Succah 32b. On the basis of this Aggadic remark that "a rope is a fusion of three strands" Kimchi drew the analogy that a perversion of justice is a similar fusion of three types of unjust ministers, the *ג'ו*, the *בב"ש* and *ל"ו*. ⁶⁷ ReDaK demonstrates his great reverence

for rabbinical knowledge when he says that God wreaked vengeance upon the nations of the world because they hearkened not to His teachings in the Torah. 68

Our commentator often seeks analogues and explanations of the Hebrew text from rabbinical statements in the Talmud, Mishna, and Midrash. He uses them quite extensively in explaining the difficult words of the Targum as well as those of the Bible itself.⁶⁹ In explaining the word וְהָיָה , he quotes Sanhedrin 102a.⁷⁰ Similarly, in regard to the Biblical word וְהָיָה and the Targum's וְהָיָה he cites a statement from Moed Katan III:8.⁷¹ In reference to the famous passage regarding humility, he quotes the rabbis inference afortiori.⁷² Where the text normally would be construed as unfavorable to Israel, ReDaK reinterprets with the aid of Talmudic dialectic. For example, he explains the prophetic pronouncement "I will cut off the cities of thy land" as referring to the 'walled cities'. In other words, he interprets the prophet's prediction not as a curse or misfortune, but as a blessing, "for it is much healthier to dwell in unwalled towns than in walled cities."⁷³ In recording the etymology of the word וְהָיָה among others ReDaK cites the definition of the rabbis which says that the וְהָיָה were 'hypnotists'. He likewise presents Akiba's dissenting definition that these men were 'weather prophets.'⁷⁴

These comments of Kimchi that contain elements of the Midrash and Talmud were not only of value in preserving these literatures and making possible etymological records, but in addition to this they lent a certain flavor to the work which assured its popularity with those who read the writings of the mediaeval commentators.

But Kimchi had more recent sources than the Bible, the Massorah, the Targum, the Midrash and the Talmud. Among the men whose writings and teachings he contacted were his father Joseph Kimchi, his brother Moses Kimchi, Ibn Ezra and Rashi. Besides these, there frequently appear in his works anonymous commentators such as *יש מפרשים*, *ויש אחרים*, *המפרש*, and *קצת המפרשים*.⁷⁵ In some instances, Kimchi cites these exegetes by name, but more often he merely quotes or paraphrases their comments.⁷⁶

Although we have comparatively few references to Joseph Kimchi in ReDaK's commentary to Micah, it seems that David Kimchi was largely dependent upon his father's pioneer work and quoted him frequently.⁷⁷ In fact, according to Cohen, he quoted him more frequently than any other author.⁷⁸ This showed his respect and reverence for his father and his scholarship. We know that Joseph Kimchi was an Arabic scholar as well as a Hebrew erudite. He had contacted the Spanish school of exegetes and grammarians and had taken his explanation of Arabic words from Abulwalid Merwan ibn Janach.⁷⁹ And so it was that Joseph's son, David, was almost completely dependent upon his father's writings for his knowledge of the Arabic language. In some cases, it is evident that he took over his father's explanations of the etymologies of rare words, e.g., the word *הנהלטה*.⁸⁰

Yet, despite David Kimchi's great reverence and respect for his father, he differed with him at times. His father explained the repetitions, parallels and synonymous expressions of the Bible as of special significance, whereas David, after a careful examin-

ation of the text and the spirit back of it, disagreed with him and developed the theory כפל הענין במלות שונים...
 'The Scriptures often make use of parallels and repetitions merely for the sake of emphasis'. He realized, too, that parallelisms were a stylistic peculiarity of Biblical Hebrew.

Although we know that Rabbi Moses Kimchi, the older son of Joseph, was David Kimchi's teacher, we find surprisingly few references to him in ReDaK's commentary to Micah.⁸¹ Moses appears to have influenced his younger brother as an intermediary, as a teacher of the works of others rather than by his own works.⁸² As far as we know, ReDaK quotes his brother only where he differs in interpretation from him; e.g., Moses explains the meaning of 'ללך as ללך', whereas David explains it as 'לך'.⁸³

In the case of his own family Kimchi does not appear to be reluctant to mention their names along with the citations, but in citing other commentators he often fails to make the proper acknowledgements. In his commentary on Micah he does not mention the names of Ibn Ezra or Rashi once. But undoubtedly, Ibn Ezra had a great influence upon the son David as well as upon his father Joseph whom he once met. ReDaK quotes him verbatim at least four times in his commentary on Micah.⁸⁴ He cites his comments sixteen times with slight modifications and additions.⁸⁵ Kimchi paraphrases the essence of Ibn Ezra in eighteen passages,⁸⁶ elaborating on his comments,⁸⁷ and sometimes explaining in a clearer way exactly what is meant.⁸⁸ He finds Ibn Ezra especially helpful in reference to grammatical explanations.⁸⁹ We see that Ibn Ezra, in turn, was largely dependent upon such pioneers as Ibn

Janach and Yefes b. Ali for many of his points.⁹⁰ ReDaK seems to have been influenced by these men too, but does not acknowledge the source of his remarks as does Ibn Ezra.⁹¹ It is quite likely that Kimchi came to a knowledge of them through the medium of Ibn Ezra.

Rashi seems to have been the only member of the North French School of exegesis who was cited by REDAK.⁹² Kimchi quotes him at least five times in his commentary on Micah without giving him credit.⁹³ In most of these cases ReDaK agreed with the Parshon Datha. However, in regard to the vocalization of וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ and the meaning of the unusual word וְיִשְׁכְּנוּ ReDaK differs radically from him.⁹⁴ As a rule, Kimchi is inclined to reproduce Rashi's comments almost verbatim, sometimes paraphrasing with slight additions here and there in order to clarify a point, othertimes illustrating with a rabbinic quotation.⁹⁵ Kimchi, in these cases too, depended frequently upon Rashi's memory in quoting his source with the result that he often copied his errors mechanically.⁹⁶

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

- 1.....Cf. Chapter III, p. 19, footnote 17.
- 2.....Cf. Chapter III, p. 19-20.
- 3.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p.xvii.
- 4.....Ibid., p. xxxiii.
- 5.....ReDaK to Mic.V:13---last comment. He quotes Rabbi מרן Ibn Janach, but differs with him on the interpretation of ל'ל.
- 6.....ReDaK to Mic.V:2....Quotes ל'ל interpretation where they specify the length of the period of exile as being equal to the time required for a woman to bear a child.
ReDaK to Mic.V:9.
- 7.....ReDaK to Mic.II:4...Kimchi corrects Ibn Ezra's incorrect quotation of Dan.VIII:27.
- 8.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p.xxxv.
Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2, p. 158.
- 9.....Geiger, A.; in Blumenfeld's "Ozar Nechmad"; vol.2, p.158.
לא זכר ב' א' ר' נתן בעל הערוך
- 10.....Ibid.
- 11.....Finkelstein, L.; Introduction to "Kimchi on Isa.", p.xxix.
- 12.....ReDaK to Mic.V:4.
- 13.....ReDaK to Mic.VII:4.
- 14.....ReDaK to Mic.V:6.
- 15.....ReDaK to Mic.VII:14.
- 16.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p.xxx.
- 17.....ReDaK to Mic.VI:15...He quotes them on a matter of vocal-
ization. בחולם לקריאת פ' אשר ובהטף קמץ לקריאת פ' נפתל
- 18.....Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur", p. 205.
- 19.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p.xxvii.
- 20.....Ibid., p.XXVIII.
- 21.....ReDaK to Mic.VII:1; Mic.VII:8; Mic.VII:10.
- 22.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p.xxviii.
- 23.....ReDaK to Mic.VI:10.
- 24.....ReDaK to Mic.I:7 ש'לל in preference to ש'לל;
ReDaK to Mic.I:10 התפלש' in preference to התפלש' on the basis of the Targum.
- 25.....ReDaK to Mic.III:2....ל'ל in preference to ל'ל.
- 26.....Mic.V:5.
- 27.....ReDaK to Mic.I:10.
ReDaK to Mic.VI:10.
- 28.....ReDaK to Mic.VII:10.
- 29.....ReDaK quotes the Targum in his comment on:
Mic.I:1; I:4; I:6; I:7; I:9; I:10; I:11; I:13;
II:2; II:3; II:4; II:13;
III:6; III:10; III:12;
IV:6; IV:7; IV:8;
V:1; V:5; V:10; V:13; V:14;
VI:1; VI:4; VI:5; VI:8; VI:10; VI:13; VI:14;
VII:3; VII:4; VII:8; VII:9; VII:11; VII:12; VII:17.
ReDaK refers to the Targum in his comment on:
Mic.III:5 and VII:10.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

- 30.....ReDaK to Mic.I:6 quotes the Targum to Jer.LI:37
 " " " I:11 " " " Cant.I:16
 " " " IV:8 " " " II Kings V:24
 " " " VII:12 " " " Jer.LI:27
 " " " III:12 " " " Mic.I:6.
- 31.....ReDaK to Mic.III:5;
 " " " V:1;
 " " " II:12;
- 32.....ReDaK to Mic. V:1;
 " " " V:3;
 " " " VI:5;
 " " " VI:13;
 " " " VII:9.
- 33.....ReDaK to Mic. III:7.
 34.....ReDaK to Mic.VII:4. For other examples see
 ReDaK to Mic. IV:8---חנה from the Aramaic חנה .
 ReDaK to Mic. V:5---רע from the Aramaic loanward רע .
 35.....ReDaK to Mic. IV:7---חנה explained by חנה
 ReDaK to Mic. I:13---רמ explained by רמ meaning "to
 arrange or set in order".
- 36.....ReDaK to Mic. I:9.
 37.....ReDaK to Mic. I:10.
 38.....ReDaK to Mic. I:11.
 39.....ReDaK to Mic.II:2.
 40.....ReDaK to Mic.II:3.
 41.....ReDaK to Mic.III:6.
 42.....ReDaK to Mic.III:10.
 43.....ReDaK to Mic.III:12.
 44.....ReDaK to Mic. IV:6.
 45.....ReDaK to Mic. V:1---has לה' וסנה .
 46.....ReDaK to Mic. V:3.
 47.....ReDaK to Mic. V:4.
 48.....ReDaK to Mic. V:5.
 49.....Ibid.
 50.....ReDaK to Mic. V:13.
 51.....ReDaK to Mic. VI:8.
 52.....ReDaK to Mic. VI:10.
 53.....ReDaK to Mic. VI:11---says כלומר אחד ואחד כל
 54.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:1.
 55.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:3.
 56.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:8.
 57.....ReDaK to Mic. I:7.
 58.....ReDaK to Mic. V:2---he tells us that the correct text
 is ל' דתא and not ל' דתא .
 ReDaK to Mic. V:9.
 ReDaK to Mic. VII:4---not אמא .
 59.....ReDaK to Mic. VI:1 has אמא referring to הר' and אמא
 referring to הובע' .

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

- 60.....An example of this may be found in ReDaK's comment on Mic. III:5.
- 61.....ReDaK to Mic. V:4.
- 62.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:3.
- 63.....Finkelstein, L.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Isaiah", p. xxxii.
- 64.....Ibid., p. xxx.
- 65.....ReDaK to Mic. V:4.
- 66.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxi.
- 67.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:3---commenting on the word וְעִנְיָנוּ
- 68.....ReDaK to Mic. V:14.
- 69.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxii.
ReDaK to Mic. VII:3 in which he quotes Succah 32b.
- 70.....ReDaK to Mic. I:14.
- 71.....ReDaK to Mic. II:4.
- 72.....ReDaK to Mic. VI:8 וְכַמּוֹד דְּבָרִים שֶׁאֵין דְּרֹכָן לַעֲשׂוֹתָם פְּנִיעָה
אִמְרָה חֹרָה וְהַצָּנֵעַ לֵבָה, דְּבָרִים שְׂדֵרְכָן לַעֲשׂוֹתָם פְּנִיעָה עַל אַחַת
כְּמֹה וְכְמֹה.

"Just as those acts which are not ordinarily done with humility the Torah enjoins you to do them humbly, how much the more with those duties which one does ordinarily in humility".

- 73.....ReDaK to Mic. V:10---quoting Kethuboth 110b.
- 74.....ReDaK to Mic. V:11.
- 75.....ReDaK to Mic. III:5---here we find וְיֵשׁ סִפְרָשִׁים
ReDaK to Mic. I:7---here we find וְיֵשׁ אֲזֻסָּרִים
Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", pp. xxxvii-xxxviii.
- 76.....ReDaK to Mic. II:1 paraphrases Rashi.
- 77.....Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur", pp. 192-3.
- 78.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxvii.
The only references in Kimchi's commentary on Micah where Joseph Kimchi is quoted by name are:
ReDaK to Mic. I:11; II:8; II:13; IV:7; VII:3.
- 79.....Bacher, W.; in Winter & Wünsche's "Jüdische Litteratur", p. 205.
- 80.....ReDaK to Mic. IV:7---- הִנֵּה לֹאֶה
ReDaK to Mic. II:8---- אֶדָּר
ReDaK to Mic. VII:1---- רַבִּי אֲחִי רַבִּי מִשֶּׁה פִּירְשׁ
- 81.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:1----
- 82.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxviii.
- 83.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:1.
- 84.....ReDaK to Mic. VII:15; VII:4 on חֶרֶם on VII:2; VII:2 on חֶרֶם;
IV:8 on עָפָל.
- 85.....ReDaK to Mic. I:2; I:9; II:4; IV:7; IV:8; IV:10; IV:11;
V:5; VI:3; VI:14; VII:7; VII:8; and VII:13.
- 86.....ReDaK to Mic. II:1; II:7; II:9; II:10; II:11;
III:1; III:3; III:8; III:10; III:11;
V:3; V:4; V:9; V:10;
VI:3; VI:6;
VII:9 and VII:14.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

- 87.....ReDaK to Mic.III:10.
 " " " V:10.
 " " " VII:14.
- 88.....ReDaK to Mic. V:10.
- 89.....ReDaK to Mic.VI:6.
- 90.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxiii.
- 91.....ReDaK & Ibn Ezra to Mic. IV:8----Yefes b. Ali.
 " " " " " V:13---Ibn Janach.
- 92.....Cohen, H.; Introduction to "Kimchi's Hosea", p. xxxv.
- 93.....ReDaK to Mic. I:4; II:6; IV:11; VI:9; VI:10.
- 94.....ReDaK to Mic. V:3----- וְשִׁי
 ReDaK to Mic. V:5----- פִּתְחָהּ
- 95.....ReDaK to Mic. II:1; II:7; II:10; II:11; IV:10; VII:4.
- 96.....Finkelstein, L.; Introduction to his "Kimchi on Isaiah",
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