

**CYCLOPÆDIA**  
**OF**  
**BIBLICAL LITERATURE**

**EDITED BY**

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the south-eastern extremity, celebrated for the victory of Alexander over Darius Codomanus (B.C. 333), and not far from the passes of Amanus (τῶν Ἀμανῶν λεγομένων Πυλῶν. Polyb. xii. 8); *Sola*, originally a colony of Argives and Rhodians, the birth-place of Menander, the comic poet (B.C. 262); the stoic philosopher Chrysippus (B.C. 206), and of Aratus, author of the astronomical poem τὰ Φαινόμενα (B.C. 270); and *Tarsus*, the birth-place of the Apostle Paul [TARSUS]. Cilicia Trachea furnished an inexhaustible supply of cedars and firs for ship-building; it was also noted for a species of goat, of whose skins cloaks and tents were manufactured. Its breed of horses was so superior, that 360 (one for each day of the year) formed part of the annual tribute to the king of Persia (Herod. iii. 90). The neighbourhood of Corycus produced large quantities of saffron (*Crocum sylvestre optimum*. Prima nobilitas Cilicio, et ibi in Coryco monte, Plin. Nat. Hist. xxi. 17). Herodotus says that the first inhabitants of the country were called Hypachai, Τραχαιοί; and derives the name of Cilicia from Cilix, son of Agenor, a Phœnician settler (vii. 91). He also states that the Cilicians and Lycians were the only nations within the Halys who were not conquered by Croesus (i. 28). Though partially subjected to the Assyrians, Medes, Persians, Syrians, and Romans, the Eleuthero- (or free) Cilicians, as the inhabitants of the mountainous districts were called, were governed by their own kings (Reguli, Tacit. ii. 78), till the time of Vespasian. The sea-coast was for a long time occupied by pirates, who carried on the appropriate vocation of slave-merchants, and found ample encouragement for that nefarious traffic among the opulent Romans (Mannert, vi. 1; Strabo, xiv. 5); but at last their depredations became so formidable, that Pompey was invested with extraordinary powers for their suppression, which he accomplished in forty days. He settled the surviving freebooters at *Sola*, which he rebuilt and named Pompeiopolis. Cicero was proconsul of Cilicia (A.U.C. 702), and gained some successes over the mountaineers of Amanus, for which he was rewarded with a triumph (*Epist. ad Fam.* xv. 4). Many Jews were settled in Cilicia. (Acts vi. 9; Philo, *De legat. ad Caium*, § 36.)

According to the modern Turkish divisions of Asia Minor, Cilicia Proper belongs to the Pashalic of Adana; and Cilicia Trachea to the Liwah of Itchil in the Mouselimlik of Cyprus. (Malte-Brun's *Geography*, Edinb. 1822, vol. ii. p. 97.) A copious account of the ancient Geography of Cilicia is given in Mannert's *Geographie der Griechen und Römer*. vi. 2, pp. 32-113.—  
J. E. R.

## CINNAMON. [KINNEON.]

CINNERETH, or CINNEROTH (קִנְרֶת or קִנְרֹת), one of the 'fenced cities' of the tribe of Naphtali (Josh. xix. 35; Deut. iii. 17; Josh. xi. 2). In the last of the texts cited it seems to indicate a district. It is also the earlier name of the lake Gennesareth (which is supposed to be a corruption of Cinnereth), from which we may collect that the town lay on the western border of the lake, and was of sufficient consequence to give its own name to it. It is even supposed that Cinnereth, afterwards Gennesareth, was the earlier name of the town of Tiberias, and under the

latter change still extended its own denomination to the lake; nor is there anything improbable in this conjecture.

CIRCUMCISION. The history of Jewish Circumcision lies on the surface of the Old Testament. Abraham received the rite from Jehovah, Moses established it as a national ordinance, and Joshua carried it into effect before the Israelites entered the land of Canaan. Males only were subjected to the operation, and it was to be performed on the eighth day of the child's life: foreign slaves also were forced to submit to it, on entering an Israelite's family. Those who are unacquainted with other sources of information on the subject besides the Scriptures might easily suppose that the rite was original with Abraham, characteristic of his seed, and practised among those nations only who had learned it from them. This, however, appears not to have been the case; and the principal object of the present article is to put together what is known on the *extra-Jewish* Circumcision.

The topic has been treated with much research by so many learned writers that it may seem improbable that any passages of ancient authors which bear upon it can have escaped notice. Michaelis (*Laws of Moses*, vol. iv.), to whom we are indebted for various references, has dedicated forty-one pages to the subject; nor does it appear that any important addition has been made by later inquirers. It remains, therefore, to form our own judgment upon the facts which have been ascertained.

First of all, *the Egyptians* were a circumcised people. Vonck, followed by Wesseling (*ad Herod.* ii. 37) and by numerous able writers, alleged that this was not true of the whole nation, but of the priests only; that at least the priests were circumcised is beyond controversy. No one can for a moment imagine that they adopted the rite from the despised shepherds of Goshen; and we are immediately forced to believe that Egyptian circumcision had an independent origin. A great preponderance of argument, however, appears to us to prove that the rite was universal among the old Egyptians, as long as their native institutions flourished; although there is no question that, under Persian and Greek rule, it gradually fell into disuse, and was retained chiefly by the priests and by those who desired to cultivate ancient wisdom (see Origen, quoted by Michaelis, § 185, p. 25).

Herodotus distinctly declares that the Egyptians practised circumcision; and that he meant to state this of the whole nation is manifest, not only since he always omits to add any restriction, but because, immediately following his first statement of the fact, he annexes this remark—'The priests moreover shave their whole body every day,' &c. (Herod. ii. 37). It is difficult to suppose that the historian could have been mistaken on this point, considering his personal acquaintance with Egypt. Further, he informs us that the Colchians were a colony from Egypt, consisting of soldiers from the army of Sesotris. With these he had conversed (ii. 104), and he positively declares that they practised circumcision. Yet if the rite had been confined to the priestly caste of Egypt, it could hardly have been found among the Colchians at all. The same remark will apply to the savage Troglodytes of Africa, every branch of whom, except one (the Kolobi), as Diodorus in-

forms us (iii. 31), was circumcised, having learnt the practice from the Egyptians. The Troglodytes appear to have been widely diffused through Libya, which argues a corresponding diffusion of the rite; yet, from the silence of Diodorus concerning the other savage nations whom he recounts as African Ethiopians, we may infer that it was not practised by them. The direct testimony of Diodorus, Philo, and Strabo is to the same effect as that of Herodotus respecting Egypt; yet this can hardly be called confirmatory, since in their days the rite was no longer universal. Josephus (*Contra Ap.* ii. 13) speaks of it as practised by the priests only; he however reproaches Apion for neglecting the institutions of his country in remaining uncircumcised. Origen, in the passage above referred to, confirms the statement of Josephus. In Kenrick's *Herodotus* (ii. 37) the French commissioners who examined some Egyptian mummies, are quoted, as establishing from them the fact of Egyptian circumcision.

Herodotus, moreover, tells us that the Ethiopians were also circumcised; and he was in doubt whether they had learned the rite from the Egyptians, or the Egyptians from them. By the Ethiopians we must understand him to mean the inhabitants of Meroë or Sennaar. In the present day the Coptic Church continues to practise it, according to C. Niebuhr (quoted by Michaelis); the Abyssinian Christians do the same (Ludolf. *Hist. Ethiop.* do. do.); and that it was not introduced among the latter with a Judaical Christianity appears from their performing it upon both sexes. (It is scarcely worth while to invent a new name, resection, or resection, for accuracy's sake.) Oldendorp describes the rite as widely spread through Western Africa—16° on each side of the Line,—even among natives that are not Mohammedan. In later times it has been ascertained that it is practised by the Kafir nations in South Africa, more properly called Knea, or Amakosa, whom Prichard supposes to form 'a great part of the native population of Africa to the southward of the Equator.' He remarks upon this:—'It is scarcely within probability that they borrowed the custom from nations who profess Islâm, or we should find among them other proofs of intercourse with people of that class. It is more probable that this practice is a relic of ancient African customs; of which the Egyptians, as it is well known, partook in remote ages' (Prichard, *Physical Hist. of Man*, 3rd ed. vol. ii. p. 287).

How far the rite was extended through the Syro-Arabian races is uncertain. In the 9th section of the Epistle of Barnabas (which, whether genuine or not, is very old), the writer comments as follows:—'But you will say, the Jews were circumcised for a sign. And so are all the Syrians and the Arabians, and the idolatrous priests; . . . . . and even the Egyptians themselves are circumcised.' This language is vague and popular; yet it shows how notorious was the wide diffusion of the custom. The Philistines, in the days of Saul, were however uncircumcised; so also, says Herodotus (ii. 104), were all the Phœnicians who had intercourse with the Greeks. That the Canaanites, in the days of Jacob, were not all circumcised, is plain from the affair of Dinah and Shechem. The story of Zipporah (*Exod.* iv. 25) who did not circumcise her son,

until fear came over her, that Jehovah would slay her husband Moses, proves that the family of Jethro, the Midianite, had no fixed rule about it, although the Midianites are generally regarded as children of Abraham by Keturah. On the other hand, we have the distinct testimony of Josephus (*Antiq.* i. 12, 2) that the Ishmaelite Arabs, inhabiting the district of Nabathæa, were circumcised after their 13th year: this must be connected with the tradition which no doubt existed among them, of the age at which their forefather Ishmael underwent the rite (*Gen.* xvii. 25). St. Jerome also (quoted by Michaelis) informs us that, to his day, 'usque hodie,' the tribes dwelling round Judæa and Palestine were circumcised, (especially all the Saracens who dwell in the desert.' Elsewhere he says that, 'except the Egyptians, Idumæans, Ammonites, Moabites, and Ishmaelites of the desert, of whom the greater part are circumcised, all other nations in the world are uncircumcised.' A negative argument is more or less dangerous: yet there is something striking in the fact, that the books of Moses, of Joshua, and of Judges, never bestow the epithet *uncircumcised* as a reproach on any of the seven nations of Canaan, any more than on the Moabites or Ammonites, the Amalekites, the Midianites, or other inland tribes with whom they came into conflict. On the contrary, as soon as the Philistines become prominent in the narrative, after the birth of Samson, this epithet is of rather common occurrence. The fact also of bringing back, as a trophy, the foreskins of slain enemies, never occurs except against the Philistines (1 Sam. xviii.). We may perhaps infer, at least until other proof or disproof is attained, that while the Philistines, like the Sidonians and the other maritime Syrian nations known to the Greeks, were wholly strangers to the practice, yet among the Canaanites, and all the more inland tribes, it was at least so far common that no general description could be given them from the omission.

It appears from Josephus (*Antiq.* xiii. 9), that when Hyrcanus subdued the Idumæans, he forced them to be circumcised on pain of expatriation. This shows that they had at least disused the rite. But that is not wonderful, if it was only a custom, and not a national religious ordinance; for, as Michaelis observes, the disuse of it may have dated from the edict of Antiochus Epiphanes, of which it is said (1 Macc. i. 41, 42), 'The King Antiochus wrote to all his kingdom, that all should be one people; and that all should keep the ordinances of his country: and all the nations acquiesced according to the word of the king.'

The rather obscure notices which are found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel of the circumcision of the nations who were in immediate contact with Israel, admit of a natural interpretation in conformity with what has been already adduced (*Jer.* ix. 25; *Ezek.* xxxi. 18; also xxxii. 19, *et passim*). The difficulty turns on the new *moral* use made of the term 'uncircumcised,' to mean simply *impure*. The passage in Jeremiah is thus translated by Ewald:—

'Behold, the days come, that I visit all the uncircumcised circumcised ones; Egypt and Judah, Edom and the children of Ammon and Moab; and all the dwellers in the wilderness that are shaven on the temples: for all the heathen are

uncircumcised, and so is all the house of Israel uncircumcised in heart.

The shaving of the temples appears to be a religious custom of the same kind: Herodotus (iii. 8) ascribes it to the Arabs generally, and Josephus rather strangely regards the epithet *τροχονούπιες*, in the ancient Greek poet Chærilus (c. *Ap.* i. 22), as a description of his own countrymen. Knowing that the Egyptians were circumcised, it no longer remains doubtful how the reproach of Egypt (*Josh.* v. 9) should be interpreted.

How far the rite of circumcision spread over the south-west of Arabia no definite record subsists. The silence of the Korân confirms the statement of Abulfedâ (*Hist. Ante-Islamica*, p. 180, ed. Fleischer, 1831), that the custom is older than Mohammed, who, it would appear, in no respect regarded it as a religious rite. Nevertheless it has extended itself with the Mohammedan faith, as though it were a positive ordinance. Pocock (*Specimen Hist. Arab.*, p. 309) cites a tradition, which ascribes to Mohammed the words—

الختان سنة الرجال مكرمة النساء

*Circumcision is an ordinance for men, and honourable in women.* This extension of the rite to the other sex might, in itself, satisfy us that it did not come to those nations from Abraham and Ishmael. We have already seen that Abyssinian circumcision has the same peculiarity: so that it is every way probable that Southern Arabia had the rite from the same source or influence as Ethiopia. In fact, the very closest relations are known to have subsisted between the nations on the opposite coasts of the Red Sea. Another passage of Abulfedâ (*Annales Mulemici*, vol. i. p. 92) gives specific information on this subject. In the battle of Ohod, in the third year of the Hegira, 'Hamza, the uncle of the prophet, committed great slaughter. When Sabba' ben' Abd ul Uzza, whose mother was a circumciser in Mecca, passed by him, Hamza called out, Come on, you son of a she-circumciser! [*resectricis nympharum!*] The form of the word proves that this was strictly the trade of the old woman, and that the custom, as applied to females, was no innovation of those days.

Pocock quotes the ecclesiastical historian Philostorgius, for the fact that the Himyarite Arabs circumcise their children on the eighth day. He adds a passage from Al Gazzâli, in which the writer says, that the Arabs differ from the Jews as to the time; for they postpone it until the child has teeth, which he thinks safer. Finally, he cites Ibn Athîr, who, writing of the times antecedent to Mohammed, says that the Arabs were accustomed to circumcise between the tenth and fifteenth years.

The statement of Philostorgius may receive light from the Arab historians, who relate (*Jost, Geschichte der Israeliten*, vol. v. p. 236, sqq.) that about a century before the Christian era, several Jewish sovereigns reigned in the region called Shebâ by the Jews, and Yemen by the moderns, where the Himyarites (or Homerites) dwelt. The few facts preserved show that they were not close observers of the Mosaic Law, and the suspicion might arise that they were called Jews chiefly from their having received Jewish

circumcision. We have, however, a collateral evidence of much importance, to prove that the influence acting on them had really come from Judæa; namely, it is well known that in Abyssinia a nation called the Falasha still exists, which has very thoroughly adopted the Jewish religion, inasmuch as to have invented legends that allege their descent from the Hebrews. They possess the Old Testament in the Gheez language and character, but their own language is said to be quite alien from the Hebrew; facts which prove that they were really proselyted by the Jews at some early period. [ABYSSINIA.] At that same time, it is credible, the Hebrew faith met with similar success on the opposite coast of the Red Sea. Jost believes that, during the war of the Maccæes, great numbers of Jews migrated into Arabia; and it is certain that in later times they were very numerous in Yemen, and their influence great. Wherever they were settled proselytes must have been made; and great zeal was doubtless used to induce them to circumcise their children duly according to the Mosaic rite. We can then quite understand Philostorgius's fact, if we are allowed to suppose that he spoke loosely of 'the Himyarites' doing that which was done by a great many of them. [Concerning the connection of the Jews with Yemen, see farther under SOLOMON.]

An interesting story is told by Josephus—the date so late as the reign of the Emperor Claudius (*Antiq.* xx. 2)—how Izates, the young king of Adiabene, and his mother Helena, were converted by Jewish teachers to a belief in the one true God, the God of the Hebrews: and how, when Izates was desirous of being circumcised, and his mother dreaded that it would alienate his subjects, his Jewish instructor Ananias warmly seconded her views, with a heart like that of Paul; telling him that if he was resolved to imitate Jewish institutions, he could, without being circumcised, adore the true divinity; and that this was far more important than circumcision. At the time he satisfied the young monarch; but afterwards, another Jew, named Eleazar, came from Galilee, and inveighed so strongly on the impiety of his disobedience, that, without more delay, Izates submitted to the rite. It is evident that, in a controversy of this sort, the more narrow-minded teacher had the advantage: and, in consequence, it appears that 'proselytes of righteousness' were always circumcised (*Judith* xiv. 10, and *Tacit. Hist.* v. 5). The facility with which whole nations have adopted the practice from the Mohammedans proves that it is not so serious an obstacle to the spread of a religion as some have thought it.

The moral meaning of the word 'uncircumcised' was a natural result of its having been made legally essential to Hebrew faith. 'Uncircumcised in heart and ears' was a metaphor to which a Christian teacher would be carried, as necessarily as a Christian teacher to such phrases as 'unbaptized in soul,' or 'washed by regeneration.' If, however, we try to take a step farther back still, and ask why this ordinance in particular was selected, as so eminently essential to the seed of Abraham, we probably find that we have reached a point at which we must be satisfied with knowing the fact without the reason. Every external ordinance, as for instance baptism, must have

tore or less that is arbitrary in it. It is, however, abundantly plain that circumcision was not intended to separate the Jews from other nations generally, for it could not do so: and, least of all, from the Egyptians, as the words in Joshua v. 9 show. Rather, it was a well known and already understood symbol of purity.

A great deal of speculation and argument has been employed on the utility and origin of the rite to the Egyptians and others. Herodotus, long ago, declared that it was adopted for cleanliness, καθαρότητος ελενα: and a slight acquaintance with the ideas of the Turks, concerning personal defilement, will make it easy to believe that an idea of cleanliness continued the practice among nations which had once become habituated to it. In the ancient Egyptians this Turkish spirit was carried to a great height; nor is it wonderful that in hot climates detailed precepts of cleanliness form a very large part of primitive religion. But we can hardly rest in this as a sufficient account of the origin of the rite. A sort of circumcision has been found in various parts of the Indian Seas and Pacific Ocean; many notices of which have been collected in the *Penny Cyclopædia* (art. *Circumcision*); but nothing would be gained by reproducing them here. It is more important to state that an adequate physical reason for performing the operation on females of several African races has been fully substantiated. The curious reader will find in Laurence's *Lectures* (chap. v.), the decisive testimony of Mr. Barrow and Dr. Somerville on this point; with an allusion to the efforts of the Romish missionaries to forbid the practice in Abyssinia, and the unexpected consequences which thwarted them. No positive evidence has yet been obtained, that the operation is equally expedient for the males in any of the same races: yet the analogy of the two cases forces us to believe that in both the custom has a physical or medical ground; especially when it is remarked to predominate so much in Africa, where alone (as far as yet appears) such physical peculiarities of structure exist. It was practised, moreover, by the males of African tribes so savage and so little addicted to religious ceremonialism, that a broader ground must be sought for it than simple cleanliness. We have already named the Troglodytes. Strabo mentions two other tribes of Africa, whom he calls Kreophagi and Kolobi (xvi. 4; pp. 387-390, 392. ed. Tauch.), who practised on themselves a yet more shocking mutilation (κολοβολ τὰς βελάνους), ascribed to the Kolobi by Diodorus also. The fact, also, that most of these nations performed whatever operation it was, not on infants, but on those who were advancing towards marriageable age, conspires to indicate that some physical inconvenience gradually showed itself (as with the Bushmen females), of which they desired to get rid. Jost looks upon infant circumcision as the distinguishing mark of Judaism; and this may be nearly correct, though we have seen that, according to Abulfeidâ, some Arabs delayed it only till after teething. In fact Diodorus (iii. 31), when speaking of that branch of the Troglodyte nations, which was called Kolobi, declares that they were subjected to the operation in infancy (ἐκ ἠθηίου). Their unnatural and cruel custom is possibly to be referred to superstition. Some indeed have looked on circum-

cision itself as a softened form of the barbarous rite by which the Galli, or priests of Cybæa, were qualified for their office. The Kolobite custom might, on the contrary, be a carrying out of that barbarity to the extreme point possible, short of exterminating the population of a tribe. In Winer's *Realwörterbuch* (art. Beschneidung) will be found details of the mode in which the Jews carry their law into effect; and of the still more singular and painful process by which a circumcised person was in some sort restored to his natural condition (see 1 Macc. i. 15; Joseph. *Antiq.* xii. 8. 1; and Paul, 1 Cor. vii. 18, ἐπισκίθου).

If an independent and human origin has been discovered for Egyptian circumcision, the thought of necessity arises that the Israelites must have had it from the same sources as the nations around them; and it has been discussed (Spencer, *De Leg. Heb.*) whether they even borrowed it from the Egyptians. The idea has naturally given much offence: but in truth the question involves no peculiar difficulty; it is only part of another far wider inquiry. It is notorious that many other ancient nations had various ceremonies and institutions in common with the Jews, and that the Hebrew law is by no means in all points original. That sacrifice pre-existed, is on the surface of the Bible History. The same, however, is true of temples, tabernacles, priests, ever-burning fire, oracles, &c. The fact has been often denoted by saying that the Jewish institutions are a selection, revision and re-enactment of an older patriarchal religion.—F. W. N.

**CISTERN.** In a country which has scarcely more than one perennial stream, where fountains are not abundant, and where the months of summer pass without rain, the preservation of the rain-water in cisterns must always have been a matter of vast importance, not only in the pasture-grounds, but in gardens, and, above all, in towns. Hence the frequent mention of cisterns in Scripture, and more especially of those which are found in the open country. These were, it seems, the property of those by whom they were formed (Num. xxi. 22). They are usually little more than large pits, but sometimes take the character of extensive subterranean vaults, open only by a small mouth, like that of a well. They are filled with rain water, and (where the climate allows) with snow during winter, and are then closed at the mouth with large flat stones, over which sand is spread in such a way as to prevent their being easily discovered. If by any chance the waters which the shepherd has thus treasured up are lost by means of an earthquake or some other casualty, or are stolen, both he and his flocks are exposed to great and imminent danger; as are also travellers who hasten to a cistern and find its waters gone. For this reason a failure of water is used as the image of any great calamity (Isa. xli. 17, 18; xlv. 3). There is usually a large deposit of mud at the bottom of these cisterns, so that he who falls into them, even when they are without water, is liable to perish miserably (Gen. xxxvii. 22, sq.; Jer. xxxviii. 6; Lam. iii. 53; Ps. xl. 2; lxix. 15). Cisterns were sometimes used, when empty, as prisons, and indeed prisons which were constructed underground received the same name, גַּב (Gen. xxxix. 20; xl. 15).

In cities the cisterns were works of much