bbi Rashi Simon

born: Toledo, Spain, 1089 or 1090 died: location uncertain, 11641

Popularly referred to as Ibn Ezra. Bible commentator.

grammarian, philosopher, poet.

Ibn Ezra spent his youth in Cordova, Spain, where he received his Torah education. His entire life was one of poverty and misfortune. Commenting on his tragic life, he once said, "If I were a candle maker, the sun would shine day and night; if I sold shrouds for the dead, no one would die." He established a close friendship with Rabbi Yehudah Halevi, the famous poet and philosopher. In 1135 Ibn Ezra was forced to flee to Rome. There he composed his Bible commentary. Later he traveled to Provence, London, back to Provence, and to many other places. Some say that he journeyed to Eretz Yisrael and that he died there.

His Bible commentary, which appears in all editions of Mikra' ot Gedolot, 2 is one of the foremost classics of Torah exegesis.

In his commentary Ibn Ezra follows the peshat, the interpretation according to the plain meaning, in preference to the aggadic, homiletic, allegoric approach. Many of his comments deal with problems of grammar and syntax. They are written in a style that is extremely terse and often interspersed with obscure allusions. A great number of supercommentaries have been written on Ibn Ezra's work, each attempting to shed light on the many obscure phrases. He fought valiantly for the purity of the Hebrew language and did not hesitate to criticize harshly any infraction of the rules of grammar or style he encountered. His caustic wit is apparent in many sarcastic comments with which he demolishes interpretations he considers incorrect. His commentary is studied by all serious students of Tanach (Bible).

And Joseph's master had him arrested and placed him in the dungeon, the place where the king's prisoners were kept. He remained there in the dungeon.

(Genesis 29:20).

RABBI ABRAHAM IBN EZRA רבי אברהם אבן עזרא



תוקלא ותרחל סאלקה אנא יין: פי לא מעברון שכר בסרר דינא לא הסבין אפין לססקנא ולא הייקרון אפי לבא בקושמא תרונון תבריכון: מו לא תהוון מועם בית שראל לא תהוו בכר ליפנא הליתיא של הבריכון אולין בתר לישן הליתאי דהוא קשי הי בחרבא וְרָא הִשְּׁתּוֹק אִיִּדְטָא דְתָּבְרָהְ בִוֹמָוֹרְאֵתְ יְדַעְ כְשׁוֹשׁ בְּרִינָא בְּרַיִי דקטייל מן הַרין חוּרְפוּי לְמִיכוּל קוּרְצִין לְסְעִיקּא

רמב"ן

אבל רובה אינה הבינה בנכרים במקור (מול) לא המר השנים במקור (מול) בכרים במקור (מול) במקור (מול) בכרים במקור (מול) ב אור החיים

ברוכן הוב אולים הבא רעישה לחל מה דישר רי אם מ" מישטרו רל לפשר בישור ביש

Text of commentary by Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra. His comments follow the peshat approach to exegesis, stressing the simple meaning of the verse, with emphasis on grammatical structure. From Mikra' ot Gedolot.

Ibn Ezra: Beit haso'ar, dungeon—I do not know if this is a Hebrew or Egyptian term, because it is followed by its definition, by which the verse tells us what it is. This is analogous to achashteranim, a Persian word, which the text then explains as benei haramachim, (swift steeds) bred of a mare (Esther 8:10).5



5. The verse states that Joseph was placed in beit haso'ar. Other than in this chapter, this term does not occur in the Bible. (It may be called a hapax legomenon, the term used for a word that occurs only once in Scripture.) The first time it occurs, in the present verse, it is followed by the clause, "the place where the king's prisoners were kept." This leads Ibn Ezra to think that beit haso'ar may be an Egyptian term, which is then translated as "the place where the prisoners were kept." He observes that a similar case of a foreign term being translated into Hebrew is found in Esther 8:10, where the word achashteranim, clearly a Persian word, is followed by its Hebrew definition: benei haramachim, [meaning] swift steeds bred of a mare. The commentary exemplifies Ibn Ezra's terse style of writing.

It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.

(Isaiah 40:22)

Ibn Ezra: Chug, circle-Compare mechugah, compass, the instrument that is used to draw a circle. Here it says that the earth is round 11 and not square, although no verse is needed for the support of this statement, for it is known by convincing proofs. He who sits above the circle of the earth-He whose glory fills the entire earth.

The elders of Moab and Midian, with magical devices in hand, went to Balaam, and they came to Balaam and spoke to him the words of Balak. (Numbers 22:7)

Ibn Ezra: With magical devices in hand-Rabbi Shmuel Hanagid⁶ from Spain renders this phrase "with fees for magic," finding proof for his translation in the word beyadam, "in their hand," but what he says is of no consequence. We must follow the literal sense of the words. Thus, the verse is telling us that Balak sent men to Balaam the magician, men who were versed in the occult, 8 as was he. An additional reason for sending them was so that Balaam would not be able to cause a delay by saying, "I cannot find a propitious day or hour to go and curse them," for these men were his professional equals (and thus he would not to able to deceive them).