

prophet answers him in a voice which no breath of life accompanies, for his body is at Ramatha, mourned by all Israel: "To-morrow, thou and thy sons shall be with me: and the Lord will also deliver the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines!"

The Jews believed, then, that their saints knew the future.

In the fourth book of Kings, we see a dead man restored to life by touching the bones of Eliseus.

The saints of Israel, therefore, wrought miracles.

We read in the second book of Maccabees that the high-priest Onias and the prophet Jeremiah were seen, after their death, praying for the people; and we find in the Gemare that Caleb escaped from the hands of his pursuers, because he went to the tomb of his ancestors to ask them to intercede for him, that he might escape.*

Hence, the Jews believed that the intercession of the departed just was of some avail.

From the earliest times of their settlement in Palestine, the Israelites visited the tomb of Rachel, a primitive monument composed of twelve enormous stones, whereon every pilgrim inscribed his name; the tomb of Joseph, the saviour of his brethren,—*whose bones prophesied*,†—was also a place of prayer.

On the dispersion of the tribes, such immense crowds flocked to the sepulchral cave of Ezechiel, on the banks of the Chobar—the same place where he had his divine visions—that the Chaldeans, fearing lest these vast assemblages might conceal, under the cloak of religion, some political project, resolved to take the pilgrims by surprise, and disperse them at the point of the sword; a massacre would inevitably have followed, if the *dead* prophet had not wrought a miracle to save his people, by dividing the waters of the Chobar.‡ This sepulchre of a saint of Israel was surrounded by a superb edifice, and before it burned, day and night, a golden lamp, which the leaders of the captive people were charged to keep up;§ it is now once more a mere cavern; but still it is visited by all the Jews of

* Wagenseil, *Excerpta ex Gem.*

† *Eccles.*, ch. xlix., v. 18.

‡ Benjamin of Toledo, *Itinerary*, p. 70–80.

§ Epiphanius, *de Vitis Prophetarum*, v. ii, v. 241.