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COMMENTARIES

EXPOSITION OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

HOSEA

by John Gill

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth*
— Psalm 60:4

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INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA

This book, in the Hebrew Bibles, at least in some copies, is called “Sopher Hosea”, the Book of Hoses; and, in the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, “the Prophecy of Hoses”: and, in the Syriac version, “the Prophecy of Hoses the Prophet”. It is the first of the twelve lesser prophets, so called, not because they were of less value, credit, and authority, than the other prophets; but because of their smallness in bulk; and which, as Kimchi says, upon the authority of their Rabbins, were put together in one book, that no one of them might be lost, because of their smallness; and Josephus^{f1} reckons them but as one book; and they are quoted in the New Testament under the name of the Book of the Prophets^{f2}. This prophet was one of them, and therefore placed here; though, as Kimchi, in his preface to this book, and R. David Ganz^{f3}, observe, his prophecy was before the prophecy of Isaiah; and yet he was not the first of these minor prophets, as to order of time; not only Jonah, but Joel and Amos, were before him; and so they are placed by some writers; according to Mr. Whiston^{f4}, he began to prophesy about the year of the world 3196 A.M. and 808 B.C. Mr. Bedford^{f5} places him in 804 B.C. His name is the same with Joshua and Jesus, and signifies a saviour; and he was not only, as all the true prophets of the Lord and faithful ministers of the word are, the means and instruments in the hand of God of saving people; but he was a type of Christ the Saviour, as well as prophesied concerning him, and salvation by him. Of his parentage, and the time of his prophesying, (see ~~<3000>~~Hosea 1:1), by which it appears that he lived in several reigns, and to a very great age. He chiefly prophesied against the ten tribes of Israel; reprov'd them for their sins; exhorted them to repentance; threatened them with destruction in case of impenitence; and comforted the truly godly with the promise of the Messiah, and of the happy state of the church in the latter day. His style, is short and concise; in some places sententious, and without connection, obscure and difficult of interpretation; and in others very pathetic and moving. Of the divine inspiration and authority of this book there is no room to doubt; since passages out of it are quoted and referred to by Christ and his apostles; by Christ himself, (~~<4013>~~Matthew 9:13 ~~<4027>~~12:7 ~~<4016>~~6:6 ~~<4025>~~2:15 ~~<4010>~~11:1 ~~<5025>~~Romans 9:25,26 ~~<5010>~~1:10 ~~<5023>~~2:23 ~~<4555>~~1 Corinthians 15:55 ~~<434>~~13:14) (~~<4020>~~1 Peter 2:10 ~~<4023>~~2:23) There are some things said of the descent, death, and burial of this prophet, not to be

depended on. Pseudo Epiphanius^{f6} and Isidorus^{f7} say he was of the tribe of Issachar, and born in Belomoth or Bethlemoth; and that he died in peace, and was buried in his own country; but, according to a tradition of the Jews^{f8}, he died in Babylon, and was buried in Tzapheth, a city in upper Galilee; but all this is uncertain, and not very probable, and is of no importance to be known.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 1

After the general inscription of the book, in which the author, penman, and time of this prophecy, are expressed, (~~2001~~Hosea 1:1), the people of Israel are reproved for their idolatry, under the representation of a harlot the prophet is bid to marry, which he is said to do, (~~2002~~Hosea 1:2,3), and their ruin and destruction are foretold in the names of the children he had by her, and by what is said on the occasion of the birth of each, (~~2004~~Hosea 1:4-6,8,9), but mercy and salvation are promised to Judah, (~~2007~~Hosea 1:7) and the chapter is concluded with a glorious prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles, and the calling of the Jews in the latter day; and of the union of Judah and Israel under one Head and Saviour, Christ; and of the greatness and glory of that day, (~~2010~~Hosea 1:10,11).

Ver. 1. *The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea*, etc.] Whose name is the same with Joshua and Jesus, and signifies a saviour; he was in some things a type of Christ the Saviour, and prophesied of him, and salvation by him; and was the instrument and means of saving men, as all true prophets were, and faithful ministers of the word are: to him the word of the Lord, revealing his mind and will, was brought by the Spirit of God, and impressed upon his mind; and it was committed to him to be delivered unto others. This is the general title of the whole book, showing the divine original and authority of it:

the son of Beeri; which is added to distinguish him from another of the same name; and perhaps his father's name was famous in Israel, and therefore mentioned. The Jews have a rule, that where a prophet's father's name is mentioned, it shows that he was the son of a prophet; but this is not to be depended upon; and some of them say that this is the same with Beerah, a prince of the Reubenites, who was carried captive by Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, (~~1386~~1 Chronicles 5:6), but the name is different; nor does the chronology seem so well to agree with him; and especially he cannot be the father of Hosea, if he was of the tribe of Issachar, as some have affirmed:

in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel; from whence it appears that Hosea prophesied long, and lived to a great age; for from the last year of Jeroboam, which was the fifteenth of Uzziah, to the first of Hezekiah, must be sixty nine years; for Jeroboam reigned forty one years, and in the twenty seventh of his reign began Uzziah or Azariah to reign over Judah, and he reigned fifty two years, (^{<12423>}2 Kings 14:23) (^{<12501>}2 Kings 15:1,2), so that Uzziah reigned thirty seven years after the death of Jeroboam, through which time Hosea prophesied; Jotham after him reigned sixteen years, and so many reigned Ahaz, (^{<12523>}2 Kings 15:23 ^{<12612>}16:2), so that without reckoning any part, either of Jeroboam's reign, or Hezekiah's, he must prophesy sixty nine years, and, no doubt, did upwards of seventy, very probably eighty, the Jews say ninety; and allowing him to be twenty four or five years of age when he begun to prophesy, or only twenty (for it is certain he was at an age fit to marry, as appears by the prophecy), he: must live to be upwards of a hundred years; and in all probability he lived to see not only part of Israel carried captive by Tiglathpileser, which is certain; but the entire destruction of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, which he prophesied of. Jeroboam king of Israel is mentioned last, though prior to these kings of Judah; because Hosea's prophecy is chiefly against Israel, and began in his reign, when they were in a flourishing condition. It appears from hence that Isaiah, Amos, and Micah, were contemporary with him; (see ^{<30101>}Isaiah 1:1 ^{<30101>}Amos 1:1 ^{<30101>}Micah 1:1), within this compass of time Hosea prophesied lived Lycurgus the famous lawgiver of the Lacedemonians, and Hesiod the Greek poet; and Rome began to be built.

Ver. 2. *The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea*, etc.] Or "in Hosea"¹⁹; which was internally revealed to him, and was inspired into him, by the Holy Ghost, who first spoke in him, and then by him; not that Hosea was the first of the prophets to whom the word of the Lord came; for there were Moses, Samuel, David, and others, before him; nor the first of the minor prophets, for Jonah, Joel, and Amos; are by some thought to be before him; nor the first of those contemporary with him, as the Jewish writers interpret it, which is not certain, at least not all of them; but the meaning is, that what follows is the first part of his prophecy, or what it began with; by which it appears he was put upon hard service at first, to prophesy against Israel, an idolatrous people, and to do it in such a manner as must be disagreeable to a young man:

and the Lord said to Hosea, go, take thee a wife of whoredoms and children of whoredoms; a woman given to whoredom, a notorious strumpet, one taken out of the stews, and children that were spurious and illegitimate, not born in lawful wedlock. Some think this was really done; that the prophet took a whore, and cohabited with her, or married her which, though forbidden a high priest, was not forbid to a prophet; and had it been against a law, yet the Lord commanding it made it lawful, as in the cases of Abraham's slaying his son, and the Israelites borrowing jewels of the Egyptians; but this seems not likely, since it would not only look like countenancing whoredom, which is contrary to the holy law of God; but must be very dishonourable to the prophet, and render him contemptible to the people; and, besides, would not answer the end proposed, to reprove the spiritual adultery or idolatry of Israel, but rather serve to confirm in it; for how should that appear criminal and abominable to them, which was commanded the prophet by the Lord? others think that the woman he is bid to marry, though before marriage a harlot, was afterwards reformed; but this is directly contrary to (²⁹¹⁰Hosea 3:1) and besides, the children born of her, whether reformed or not, yet in lawful wedlock could not be called children of whoredom; nor would the above end be answered by it, since such a person would be no fit representative of Israel committing spiritual adultery or idolatry, and continuing in it; and moreover, whether this or the former was the case, the prophecy must be many years delivering; it must be near a year before the first child was born, and the same space must be between the birth of each; so that here must be a long and frequent interruption of the prophecy, which does not seem likely: nor is it probable that he took his own wife, which is the opinion of others, and gave her the character of a whore, and his children with her, and called them children of whoredom, in order to represent and reprove the idolatry of Israel: what Maimonides^{f10}, and the Jewish writers in general, give into, is more agreeable, that this was all done in the vision of prophecy; that it so seemed to the prophet in vision to be really done, and so he related it to the people; but this is liable to objection, that such an impure scene of things should be represented to the mind of the prophet by the Holy Spirit of God; nor can the relation of it be thought to have any good effect upon the people, who would be ready to mock at him, and reproach him for it. It seems best therefore to understand the whole as a parable, and that the prophet, in a parabolical way, is bid to represent the treachery, unfaithfulness, and spiritual adultery of the people of Israel, under the feigned name of an unchaste woman, and of children begotten in fornication; and to show unto

them that their case was as if he had taken a woman out of the stews, and her bastards with her; or as if a wife married by him had defiled his bed, and brought him a spurious brood of children. So the Targum interprets it,

“go, prophesy a prophecy against the inhabitants of the idolatrous city, who add to sin:”

for the land hath committed great whoredom, departing from the Lord; or

“for the inhabitants of the land erring, erred from the worship of the Lord,”

as the Targum; that is, the inhabitants of the land of Israel have committed idolatry, which is often in Scripture signified by adultery and whoredom; as an adulterous woman deals treacherously with her husband, so these people had dealt with God, who stood in such a relation to them; (see ^{<3481>}Jeremiah 3:1,6,9 ^{<3567>}Ezekiel 16:17,26,28,29), this interprets the parable, and shows the reason of using the following symbols and emblems.

Ver. 3. *So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim,* etc.] In the course of prophesying he made mention of this person, who was a notorious common strumpet; and suggested hereby that they were just like her; or these were fictitious names he used to represent their case by Gomer signifies both “consummation” and “consumption”^{f11}; and this harlot is so called, because of her consummate beauty, and her being completely mistress of all the tricks of one; or, being consummately wicked, a perfect whore, common to all; and because her ruin and destruction, persisting in such practices, were inevitable, and so a fit emblem of the present and future condition of Israel. Diblaim may be considered either as the name of a man, a word of the same form with Ephraim; or of a woman, the mother of Gomer; or else of a place, the wilderness of Diblath, (^{<3564>}Ezekiel 6:14) and signifies “a cake of dried figs”^{f12}; which, in that country, was reckoned delicious eating; and so denotes, either that both the sin and ruin of this people were owing to their luxury, or indulging themselves in carnal pleasures, through the great affluence they were possessed of; or that their original was from a wilderness, and for their sins should be reduced to a desolate state again:

which conceived and bare him a son; whose name, and what he was an emblem of, are declared in the following verse. The Targum is,

“and he went and prophesied over them, that if they returned, it should be forgiven them: but, if not, as fig tree leaves drop off, so should they; but they added, and did evil works.”

Ver. 4. *And the Lord said unto him call his name Jezreel*, etc.] Which some interpret the “seed of God”, as Jerom; or “arm of God”, as others; and Kimchi applies it to Jeroboam the son of Joash, who was strong, and prospered in his kingdom; but it rather signifies “God will sow”, or “scatter”^{f13}; denoting either their dissension among themselves; or their dispersion among the nations, which afterwards came to pass; and so the Targum, “call their name scattered”; and alluding also to the city of Jezreel, where some of the idolatrous kings of Israel lived, and where much blood had been shed, which should be avenged, as follows:

for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu; not the blood of Naboth the Jezreelite, that was shed by Ahab; but the blood of Joram the son of Ahab, and seventy other sons of his, and all his great men, kinsfolks and priests, shed by Jehu in this place; and though this was done according to the will of God, and for which he received the kingdom, and it was continued in his family to the fourth generation; yet, inasmuch as this was not done by him from a pure and hearty zeal for the Lord and his worship, and with a sincere view to his glory, but in order to gain the kingdom, increase his power, and satiate his tyranny and lust; and because, though he destroyed one species of idolatry, the worship of Baal, yet he continued another, the worshipping of the calves at Daniel and Bethel, and regarded not the law of the Lord, and so his successors after him; and were the means of causing many to sin, and so consequently of the ruin of many souls, whose blood would be required of them, which some take to be the meaning here; this is threatened; (see ^{<1024>}2 Kings 9:24,25 ^{<1200>}10:1-7,11,16,28-31). It may be observed, that God sometimes punishes the instruments he makes use of in doing his work; they either over doing it, exercising too much cruelty; and not doing it upon right principles, and with right views, as the kings of Assyria and Babylon, (^{<2105>}Isaiah 10:5,7 ^{<3015>}Zechariah 1:15). It is here said to be but a little while ere this vengeance would be taken, it being at the latter end of Jeroboam’s reign when this prophecy was delivered out; and his son Zachariah, in whom the kingdom as in his family ceased, reigned but six months, being conspired against and slain by Shallum, who reigned in his stead, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 15:8-10). The Targum is,

“for yet a little while I will avenge the blood of those that worship idols which Jehu shed in Jezreel, whom he slew because they served Baal; but they turned to err after the calves which were in Bethel; therefore I will reckon that innocent blood upon the house of Jehu:”

and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel; that is, in the family of Jehu; Zachariah the son of the then reigning prince being the last, and his reign only the short reign of six months; unless this has reference to the utter cessation of this kingdom as such in the times of Hoshea by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, (^{<1276>}2 Kings 17:6-23).

Ver. 5. *And it shall come to pass at that day*, etc.] When the Lord shall take vengeance on the family of Jehu, and deprive them of the kingdom of Israel, and shall punish the idolatrous kings that succeed:

that I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel; of which valley (see ^{<1676>}Joshua 17:16 ^{<1063>}Judges 6:33). It is now called the plain of Esdraelon; as it is in the Apocrypha:

“And to those among the nations that were of Carmel, and Galaad, and the higher Galilee, and the great plain of Esdrelom,” (Judith 1:8)

the great plain of Esdraelon; according to Adrichomius,^{f14} it is two miles broad, and ten miles long; its soil exceeding rich and fruitful, and abounding with grain, wine, and oil; all travellers agree they never saw the like: one says^{f151} of this plain or valley, formerly the lot of the tribe of Issachar, this is the most fertile portion of the land of Canaan, where that tribe might well be supposed to have “rejoiced in their tents”, (^{<1538>}Deuteronomy 33:18), at present, indeed, it is not manured, as another traveller^{f16} observes, and yet very fruitful; who says, it is of a vast extent, and very fertile, but uncultivated, only serving the Arabs for pasturage; and, according to the same writer, the ancient river Kishon runs through the middle of it: from the largeness of it, it is frequently called by writers the great plain or valley; and sometimes, from the places near it, or on it, the great plain of Legio, the great plain of Samaria, the great plain or valley of Megiddo, (^{<1452>}2 Chronicles 35:22), and the great plain of Esdraelon, and here the valley of Jezreel; Jezreel or Esdraela being situated in this great plain or valley between Scythopolis and Legio, a very large village, as Jerom says^{f17} it was in his days; and also on this passage observes, that

Jezeel, from whence this valley had its name, is now near Maximianopolis, and was the metropolis of the kingdom of Samaria, near which were very large plains, and a valley of a very great length, extending more than ten miles: here Ahab had a palace in his days, near to which was Naboth's vineyard, and where God revenged his blood: this city is called by Josephus^{f18} Azare and Azarus, or Iزارus; and in the times of Gulielmus Tyrius^{f19} it went by the name of Little Gerinum. The "bow" is put for all instruments of war, and everything in which confidence was put, which was weakened or removed from them: this refers either to Menhchem's slaughter of Shallum, and wasting some parts of the land of Israel, (^{<12514>}2 Kings 15:14,16), or rather it may be to a battle fought between Hoshea king of Israel and Shalmaneser king of Assyria in this valley, which was not far from Samaria; in which the former was defeated, and the latter, having the victory, proceeded to Samaria, besieged and took it, (^{<12716>}2 Kings 17:6) though of the action the Scripture is silent; but it is not improbable. The Targum is,

"I will break the strength of the warriors of Israel in the valley of Jezeel;"

which seems to confirm the same conjecture. Some render it, "because of the valley of Jezeel"^{f20}; that is, because of the idolatry, bloodshed, and other sins, committed there.

Ver. 6. *And she conceived again, and bare a daughter*, etc.] One of the weaker sex; denoting the weaker state of the kingdom of Israel after Jeroboam, as Kimchi thinks; Zachariah his son reigning but six months, and Shallum the son of Jabesh, his successor, reigned but one month, (^{<1258>}2 Kings 15:8,13):

and God said unto him, call her name Loruhamah; which signifies, "she hath not obtained mercy": and what follows explains it to the same sense. The Targum is,

"and they added and did evil works; and he said unto him call their name, who obtained not mercy by their works:"

for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; as he had heretofore, sparing them time after time, though they continued to sin against him; but now he would spare them no longer, but deliver them up into the hands of their enemies, as he did a part of them, first into the hands of Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and then to Shalmaneser, (^{<1259>}2 Kings

15:29 ^{<2178>}17:3,6), otherwise, in the latter day, mercy will be shown them again, especially in a spiritual way, when they shall be converted, and believe in Christ, and all Israel shall be saved, as well as possess their own land again; (see ^{<2010>}Hosea 1:10,11 ^{<5125>}Romans 11:26):

but I will utterly take them away; out of their land, from being a kingdom and nation, which was done by Shalmaneser, another king of Assyria, (^{<2176>}2 Kings 17:6), or, “bringing I will bring into them”, or “against them”^{f21}; that is, an enemy, the same king of Assyria: or, “but forgetting I will forget them”^{f22}, as some render it, and remember them no more, till the fulness of time comes: or, “through pardoning I have pardoned”, or “spared them”^{f23}; that is, in times past. The Targum is,

“but if they return, pardoning I will pardon them;”

which will be done in the latter day.

Ver. 7. *But I will have mercy on the house of Judah*, etc.] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which retained the true worship of God among them; (see ^{<2812>}Hosea 11:12) and though they often sinned against the Lord, he showed them mercy, and spared them longer than the ten tribes; and though he suffered them to be carried captive into Babylon, he returned them again after seventy years: this is mentioned as an aggravation of the punishment of Israel, that Judah was spared, when they were not; and to show that God will have a people to seek and serve him, and, when he rejects some, he will make a reserve of others:

and will save them by the Lord their God; by his own arm and power, and not theirs, or any creature’s; nor by any warlike means or instruments whatever, as follows:

and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen: which may respect either the deliverance of the Jews from the invasion and siege of Sennacherib’s army; which was done without shooting an arrow, or drawing the sword, or engaging in a pitched battle, or by a cavalry rushing into his camp, discomfiting his army, and pursuing them; but by an angel sent from heaven, which in one night destroyed a hundred and fourscore and five thousand, (^{<2195>}2 Kings 19:35) or else refers to Cyrus being stirred up by the Lord to issue forth a proclamation, giving liberty to the Jewish captives to go free, without price or reward; and so was brought about, not by the might and power of man, but by the Spirit of the Lord; (see ^{<1500>}Ezra 1:1 ^{<2353>}Isaiah 45:13 ^{<3016>}Zechariah 4:6) though a

greater salvation is pointed at, or at least shadowed forth, by this, even the spiritual and eternal salvation of God's elect by Christ; which is the fruit of mercy, and not the effect of the merits of men; is obtained not by human power, or by man's righteousness; but by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Jehovah our righteousness, the Lord God of his people; who stands in a relation to them prior to his being the Saviour of them; to which work and office he is equal, being the eternal Jehovah, and the true and living God. So the Targum,

“and I will save them by the Word of the Lord their God;”

the eternal Word, that was with God, is God, and became incarnate, God in our nature.

Ver. 8. *Now when she had weaned Loruhamah*, etc.] That is, when Gomer had weaned her daughter of this name, (²⁸⁰⁶Hosea 1:6). This some interpret of the people of Israel being deprived of the word and ordinances, compared to milk and breasts, having a famine of them; and so were like children weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts; though others think this is expressive of the patience of God in bearing with this people, after he had before threatened them with the subversion of their kingdom and state; and even after the prophecy had took place in part, in causing the kingdom to cease in the house of Jehu, he bore with them about forty years before they were entirely carried captive; suckling and weaning, before the conception and birth of another child, denoting some stop and stay; but rather this intends the taking away some part of the land of Israel, as a child when weaning is taken away from its mother; and may respect the carrying captive many of the Israelites in divers parts, particularly out of Gilead, Galilee, and Naphtali, by Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, (¹²⁵³2 Kings 15:29). This cannot be understood of the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, as Cocceius; for this is a resumption and continuation of the prophecy concerning the ten tribes, after inserting a promise of the salvation of Judah, in the preceding verse:

she conceived and bare a son: according to Kimchi, as the weaning of Loruhamah points at the times of weakness, from Zachariah the son of Jeroboam to the times of Pekahiah, when the reigns were short and troublesome; so this son conceived and born represents the state of the nation in the times of Pekah; who reigned twenty years, and was too powerful for the kingdom of Judah, slew multitudes of them, and carried others captive, and assisted Rezin king of Syria against Ahaz king of

Judah: but, according to the series of the prophecy, it seems best to agree with the times of Hoshea king of Israel, who was not so bad as some of his predecessors; was a man of spirit and courage; cast off the Assyrian yoke, and neglected to give presents to the king of Assyria; and Samaria in his time held out a three years' siege against that king, (^{<270>}2 Kings 17:1-5). The Targum is,

“and the generation of them who are carried captive among the nations are found not to have obtained mercy by their works, but they added and did evil works.”

Ver. 9. *Then said God, call his name Loammi*, etc.] Which Aben Ezra interprets of the children of the ten tribes horn in captivity, who never returned; but it rather signifies the ten tribes themselves, who were carried captive and had this name given them for the reason following:

for ye are not my people; though he had chosen them to be his people above all people, and had distinguished them from others by various blessings and privileges; yet they did not behave as such to him; they did not serve, obey, and worship him, but the calves at Daniel and Bethel; and therefore did not deserve the name of his people: hence he says,

and I will not be your or “yours”^{f24}; that is, as we supply it, and so Aben Ezra, “your God”; will not behave toward you as such; will not take you under my care and protection, or continue you in your land, and in the enjoyment of the blessings of it; will not be your King, patron, and defender, but give you up into the hands of your enemies. This respects the captivity of the ten tribes by Shalmaneser, (^{<276>}2 Kings 17:6). The Targum is,

“for ye are not my people; because ye do not confirm the words of my law, my word shall not be your help.”

Ver. 10. *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered*, etc.] Though called Loammi, and rejected from being the people of God; yet there is a time when their number, according to the promise made to Abraham, shall be as the sand of the sea, and the stars of heaven; which, as the one cannot be measured, the other cannot be numbered; which was to be not at the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, when some of the ten tribes of Israel returned with them, as Theodoret and others think; for they were but few that then returned: but rather at the first times of the Gospel, when

multitudes that came from various parts of the world were converted at the day of Pentecost, and greater numbers; who were met with in the ministry of the word, in the various parts of the world, where they were dispersed, and the Gospel came, to whom Peter and James wrote their epistles; and not these only are meant, but the vast numbers of Gentiles, who were effectually called by grace everywhere, and were true Israelites, the spiritual seed of Abraham; and to whom the Apostle Paul applies these words, producing them as a testimony of the election and calling, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also, (~~4124~~ Romans 9:24-26), and which will have a further accomplishment in the latter day, when the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, the Jews will be converted, and all Israel saved, (~~4125~~ Romans 11:25), then the numbers of the Israel of God, both of Jews and Gentiles, will be as the sand of the sea indeed!

and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the sons of the living God; that is, in such places where it used to be said, here live Pagans, Turks, or Jews, who worship not the true God, or at least not aright, nor believe in Christ, and profess his name; “there it shall be said to them”, by the Lord himself, by his Spirit witnessing their relation to them, and by all good men, and even by the world in general; not only that they are “the people of God”, but have a superior privilege, a greater character, and a higher relation, the sons of the living God; the sons of God, not by nature, as Christ; nor by creation, as angels; nor by office, as civil magistrates; or by profession merely, as nominal Christians; but by adopting grace; which exceeds all other blessings, even of sanctification and justification; makes men honourable; is attended with various privileges, and always continues. The epithet “of the living God” is not without cause put; it stands in opposition to dead idols before worshipped by some who will now be the children of God; and who, as he has life in himself, gives it to others; to all natural life and breath, and to his children spiritual and eternal life; and, as he lives forever, so shall they his sons likewise. The Targum is,

“and it shall be in the place where they have been carried captive, when they transgressed the law; and it was said to them, ye are not my people; there they shall be converted and increased (or made great); and it shall be said to them, O ye people of the living God.”

Ver. 11. *Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together*, etc.] Not at the return from the Babylonish captivity; for, though some of the ten tribes might be mixed with the Jews when they went into captivity, and came out with them, and others might join them from the various nations where they had been dispersed; yet they did not gather together with them in a body, only the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, those were the chief; of the children of Israel, but few, (~~15005~~ Ezra 1:5). Some refer this to the first times of the Gospel, when the Galileans were gathered to Christ by his ministry, who inhabited the countries where some of the tribes of Israel dwelt; and who might, at least some of them, descend from them: and when those in Jerusalem and in Judea, who also believed in Christ, united with them in their profession of him, and in affection to one another; or to the time of Christ's death, by which the whole Israel of God, who were scattered abroad, were gathered together in one; and even Jews and Gentiles were made one body, and one new man in Christ, the partition wall being broken down: or to the times of the apostles, who were successful in the conversion and gathering of many of the Jewish nation, and also of the Samaritans; and of forming churches in Judea and Samaria under one head, in whom they agreed; and likewise of many others, both Jews and Israelites, in the various parts of the world, where they carried the Gospel; and who coalesced with the believing Gentiles in one church state, under Christ their head: though it seems best to interpret this of the latter day, when the children of Israel and Judah shall join together in seeking the Lord their God, and the true Messiah, and shall be turned, and gathered to him; when they shall be no more two kingdoms or two nations, but be one under the Messiah, who shall be their King and Prince; when all their animosities shall be laid aside, and they shall no more envy or vex one another; but shall meet together in the same church state, and worship the Lord with one shoulder and consent, being of one mind and sentiment in religious things, and when all Israel shall be saved, (~~3004~~ Jeremiah 1:4,5 ~~3579~~ Ezekiel 37:19-22) (~~3113~~ Isaiah 11:13 ~~3109~~ Zephaniah 3:9)

and appoint themselves one head; not Sennacherib, as Aben Ezra, very absurdly; nor Hezekiah, nor Josiah, as others; nor Elijah the prophet, as some in Kimchi; nor Zerubbabel, to which the Targum seems to incline, paraphrasing it,

“one head of the house of David;”

but better, as Jarchi, David their King; that is, the Messiah, as Kimchi and Ben Melech expressly interpret it; and so Abarbinel^{f25}, though he understands it of the Messiah the son of Joseph; and undoubtedly the same is meant by the one head, as David their King and Prince, (~~3185~~Hosea 3:5 ~~3574~~Ezekiel 37:24,25) even Christ, who is the Head of angels, yea, the Head of every man, but in a special and peculiar sense the head of the body, the church; he is the federal and representative Head of his people, both in eternity and in time; and in such sense a Head to them, as a king is head of his subjects, a husband of his wife, a father of his family, and a master of his servants; and also as a natural head is to its body, of the same nature with it; in union to it; lives the same life; is above it, and more excellent than it: a perfect Head Christ is, there being nothing wanting in him as such; he has his eyes set upon his people; his ears are open to their cries; he smells a sweet saviour of rest in their persons and services; he tastes and eats their pleasant fruits, and feels all their infirmities, troubles and afflictions; and has a tongue to speak a word in season for them: there are no vicious humours in this Head to affect the body; no deformity in it, and all fulness therein to supply its wants; he is an everliving and everlasting Head, and the one, and only one; there is no other, neither the pope of Rome, nor any other; nor will true Israelites acknowledge any other: and though this Head is of God the Father's appointing, who has given him to be the Head; set him as King over Sion; raised him up to be a Prince and a Saviour; yet he is also of the saints' choosing and appointing; they approve of him as such, embrace him, own him, and submit to him, as the Jews will at the last day, though their forefathers have rejected him:

and they shall come up out of the land; not of Israel, as Schmidt, who interprets this of the apostles going out from thence, and spreading the Gospel in the world; but out of each of the lands and countries where Israel and Judah have been dispersed, and return to their own land; (see ~~3488~~Jeremiah 3:18 ~~3543~~Ezekiel 34:13 ~~3572~~37:21). So the Targum,

“and they shall come up out of the land of their captivity:”

or it may be understood, figuratively and spiritually, of their coming up out of their captivity to sin, Satan, the law, and the world, as well as out of their present temporal captivity:

and out of the earth^{f26}, as it were, as it may be rendered; out of their earthly state, from the graves of sin, leaving their earthly affections, and becoming spiritual and heavenly minded; willing to quit all that is dear unto

them, even the country in which they were born and long lived, to follow Christ their Head and King:

for great shall be the day of Jezreel; or, though great has been or is the day of Jezreel^{f27}; though it has been a great and long day of trouble and affliction to them, signified by Jezreel; (see ~~3004~~Hosea 1:4,5), yet all these good things promised shall surely be accomplished: indeed the day of Jezreel may be taken in a good sense, not for a time of dispersion and distress, but of great comfort, joy, and happiness; the word signifying, according to some, the seed of God, or the arm of God: and Jerom applies it to Christ, the seed of God; and the whole Gospel dispensation may be called his day, the day of salvation, the joyful day the Lord has made: or rather by Jezreel, the seed of God, are meant his spiritual offspring, the children of Judah and Israel; who shall now be gathered, by the arm of God, his powerful and efficacious grace, and that in large numbers, so that great will be their day; so the Targum paraphrases it,

“for great will be the day of their gathering.”

It respects the latter day glory, when will be the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; when there will be great peace and prosperity; great love and unity; great holiness and purity; great light and knowledge; great enjoyment of God, and of the presence of the Redeemer great glory upon the churches, and upon that a defence: in short, all the great and glorious things spoken of will now be completed; perfect deliverance from all afflictions and troubles; an entire destruction of all enemies; and a full enjoyment of the word and ordinances, in the purity of them, and large conversions everywhere.

CHAPTER 2

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 2

This chapter is an explanation of the former, proceeding upon the same argument in more express words. The godly Israelites are here called upon to lay before the body of the people their idolatry, ingratitude, obstinacy, and ignorance of the God of their mercies; and to exhort them to repentance, lest they should be stripped of all their good things, and be brought into great distress and difficulties; all their joy and comfort cease, and be exposed to shame and contempt, (~~2011~~Hosea 2:1-13), yet, notwithstanding, many gracious promises are made unto them, of their having the alluring and comfortable word of the Gospel; of a door of hope; of salvation being opened to them; of faith in the Lord, and affection to him as their husband; of the removal of all idolatry from them; of safety from all enemies; of their open espousal to Christ; of his hearing of their prayers, and giving them plenty of all good things; and of their multiplication, conversion, and covenant relation to God, (~~2024~~Hosea 2:14-23).

Ver. 1. *Say ye unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah.]* These words are to be considered either in connection with the latter part of the preceding chapter, and as directed to the sons of the living God, who had not been, but now were, “Ammi”, the Lord’s people; and who had not, but now have, “Ruhamah”, obtained mercy; which grace and mercy shown them, it became them to speak of one to another, to affect their hearts mutually with it, and to glorify God for it, (~~3016~~Malachi 3:16) as also to speak of it to their carnal relations, that so, if it was the will of God, it might be of use to them, to show them the state they were in, the danger of it, their need of the grace and mercy of God, and the hope there was by their own instance and example of obtaining it; (see ~~501~~Romans 9:1-3 ~~511~~10:1), or as directed to the converted Jews that appointed Christ their Head, and believed in him; exhorting them to own the believing Gentiles as their brethren and sisters, since they were the spiritual seed of Abraham their father, and walked in the steps of his faith; and to call them Ammi and Ruhamah, since they, who were not the people of God, now were, and

who had not obtained mercy, now have obtained mercy, (^{<4020>}1 Peter 2:10), or else they may be considered as in connection with the following words,

plead with your mother; and that either as spoken to the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were the people of God, retained the pure worship of God, and obtained mercy of the Lord, (^{<3000>}Hosea 1:7 ^{<3112>}11:12),

“O ye Ammi and Ruhamah, that are the Lord’s people, and he has had mercy on; stir up and exhort your brethren and sisters of the ten tribes, for so they were, notwithstanding their separation, (^{<1120>}1 Kings 12:4), to contend with their mother, the body of the nation, about idolatry and departure from God;”

or as spoken to the godly among the ten tribes, who were the real people of God, and sharers in his grace and mercy; the remnant he reserved for himself, who had not bowed their knees to idols; or as the command of God by the prophet, to the people of Israel, to exhort one another to contend with their mother, who were, as yet, the Lord’s people, had mercy shown them, when this prophecy was delivered out; though, in case of obstinacy and impenitence, they were threatened with a “Loammi” and “Loruhamah”; so Schmidt, who thinks that “ammi” and “ruhamah” are put by way of “apposition [to] your brethren [and] sisters”, in which he seems to be right. Aben Ezra thinks the words are spoken ironically, like those in (^{<2110>}Ecclesiastes 11:9), and others, but without reason. The Targum is,

“O ye prophets, say to your brethren, and my people, and I will have mercy on your congregation;”

but whether the words are spoken to the Jewish converts who first believed in Christ, were his people, received grace and mercy from him, and stood in the relation of brethren and sisters to one another, both in a natural and spiritual sense, to stir up one another to reprove their mother, the Jewish church, for rejecting Christ, saying, as follows:

Ver. 2. *Plead with your mother, plead*, etc.] The congregation of Israel, as the Targum; the body of the Jewish nation, which, with respect to individuals, was as a mother to her children; (see ^{<4237>}Matthew 21:37), that is, lay before her, her sin in rejecting the Messiah, the Head and Husband of his true church and people; endeavour to convince her of it; reprove her for it; expostulate with her about it; argue the case with her, and show her

the danger of persisting in such an evil, as the apostles did, (~~4023~~ Acts 2:23,36 ~~4184~~ 3:14 ~~4475~~ 7:52 ~~4137~~ 13:27,40)

for she is not my wife, neither am I her husband; for though there had been such a relation between them, yet it was now dissolved; she had broken the marriage covenant and contract, and God had given her a bill of divorce, (~~2812~~ Jeremiah 31:32 ~~2001~~ Isaiah 1:1) or, however, as she behaved not as a wife towards him, showing love and affection, honour and reverence, and performing duty, and yielding obedience; so he would not carry it as a husband towards her, nourishing and cherishing her, providing for her, and protecting and defending her; but leave her to shift for herself, and to the insults and abuses of others; having been guilty of idolatry, which is spiritual adultery, as the Israelites before the captivity were; and as the Jews in Christ's time were guilty of rejecting the word of God, and preferring their own traditions to it: hence it follows,

let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, or "from her face"^{f28},

and her adulteries from between her breasts; alluding to the custom of harlots, who used to paint their faces, and to allure with their looks, words, and actions, and to make bare their breasts, or adorn them, or carry in them what were enticing and alluring. These adulteries and whoredoms, which are the same thing, may signify the many idolatries of the people of Israel before their captivity, and which were the cause of it; or the sins of the Jews before their dispersion; or their evil works, as the Targum, by which they departed from God and the true Messiah, and went a whoring after other lovers: thus they rejected, transgressed, and made of none effect the commandments of God by their traditions; paid tithe of mint, anise, and cummin, and neglected the weighty matters of the law; sought not the honour of God, but that which comes from men; and therefore confessed not the true Messiah, though under convictions of him, and went about to establish their own righteousness, and submitted not to his; these were the idols of their hearts, and the whoredoms and adulteries the Jewish converts, that truly believed in Christ, are ordered to exhort them to put away. The Septuagint and Arabic versions are, "I will take away her whoredoms etc."

Ver. 3. *Lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day that she was born*, etc.] Alluding to the case of an infant when born, which comes naked into the world; and referring to the state and condition of the Israelites in

Egypt, which was the time of their nativity, as a people and church; (see ^{<5104>}Ezekiel 16:4), and when they were in a state of servitude and bondage, and had no wealth and substance, and without possessions and lands, and had no country of their own to inhabit; and signifying that this should be their case again, if they persisted in their idolatry, impenitence, and unbelief; as has been the case of the ten tribes upon their captivity, when they were stripped of all their wealth and riches, carried away out of their own land, and scattered among the nations, and have never returned since; and as was the case of the Jews in their last destruction, for the rejection of Christ, they were stripped of their civil and religious privileges, of their temporal and spiritual mercies as a nation and church; what they feared is come upon them, that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation, (^{<6118>}John 11:48)

and make her as a wilderness, and set her like a dry land; having some respect to her former condition in the wilderness, where they had no food nor drink but what they had from God, as Abarbinel thinks; or else to the destruction and consumption of them in the wilderness, their carcasses falling there, who sinned against the Lord, as the Targum and Jarchi; and denoting the utter destruction of their commonwealth and church, when their land was laid waste, their city destroyed, their house and temple left desolate and burnt, and they deprived of all the necessaries of life, which was their case at their last destruction by the Romans; and to this day they are as they are described, (^{<3004>}Hosea 3:4):

and slay her with thirst; after their vainly expected Messiah, which has brought them to desperation; or with a thirst, not for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord, (^{<3081>}Amos 8:11), the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, being taken away from them, and the clouds ordered to drop down no rain upon them; that is, the ministers of the word not to preach the Gospel to them; and so are left destitute of the means of grace, and of spiritual life, and of escaping eternal death, (^{<4214>}Matthew 21:43 ^{<3066>}Isaiah 5:6). The Targum of the whole is,

“lest I remove my Shechinah from her, and take away her glory, and set her forsaken, as in the days of old, before she came to my worship; and my fury shall remain upon her, as it remained upon the people of that generation that transgressed my law in the wilderness; and I will set the land desolate, and kill her with thirst.”

Ver. 4. *And I will not have mercy upon her children*, etc.] The posterity of the Jews in succeeding ages, until the time of their conversion comes; they persisting in the sins of their forefathers, filling up the measure of their iniquities; remaining in their obstinate rejection of the Messiah, and in the same impenitence and unbelief, and having his blood imprecated upon them:

for they be the children of whoredoms; begotten and born in whoredom, spurious and illegitimate; or that commit whoredoms; imitate their parents; are guilty of the same vices; a generation of vipers. So the Targum,

“for they are children that commit idolatry;”

retain the traditions of the elders; go about to establish their own righteousness, and reject the Messiah.

Ver. 5. *For their mother hath played the harlot*, etc.] Or committed idolatry; which is the reason why she is to be pleaded with, and why the Lord will not own her as his wife, or be a husband to her; and why she is to be exhorted to put away her whoredoms from her; and was in danger of all the above evils coming upon her, continuing in the same practice; and why her children were children of whoredoms. Though the connection may be with the verse following, “for” or “because their mother hath played the harlot”, etc. “therefore I will hedge up her way”, etc.

She that conceived them hath done shamefully; all sin is shameful and scandalous, especially adultery; it brings a reproach and a blot upon a person, that will not be wiped off; and so idolatry, worshipping stocks and stones instead of the living God; and particularly the sin of the Jewish church, in rejecting the true Messiah and his righteousness, and setting up their own, and tenaciously adhering to the traditions of the elders; and so departing from the true God, and his word and worship, which is no other than spiritual adultery or idolatry. The Targum is,

“because their congregation hath erred after the false prophets, their teachers are confounded;”

and which Jarchi interprets of the wise men that teach doctrines, who are ashamed because of the people of the earth; to whom they say, ye shall not steal, and yet they steal themselves; (see ^{<f121>}Romans 2:21-24). Or, “she hath made ashamed”^{<f29>}; her husband, and her children: or, “she is confounded”^{<f30>}, and “ashamed” herself, for what she has done.

For she said, I will go after my lovers; her idols, as the ten tribes did after the calves at Daniel and Bethel. So Kimchi's father interprets it of the sun, moon, and stars, they worshipped: though he himself understands it of the Assyrians and Egyptians they were in alliance with, and trusted in. Some join together the Gentile nations and their gods. Or else it may be understood of the Jews seeking to the Romans, and courting their favour and friendship; desiring to be governed not by their own kings, but by the Romans^{f31}; declaring they had no king but Caesar, and rejecting Christ as such, (⁴⁸⁹²John 19:12,15 ⁴⁴⁷⁷Acts 17:7) or rather of their beloved tenets, concerning traditions, the rites and ceremonies of the law, self-righteousness, etc.: the words are expressive of impudence, obstinacy, and self-will; resolving to pursue their own fancies and have their own wills, be it as it would.

That give me my bread and any water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink; "or drinks"^{f32}; wine and other liquors, as Kimchi; these take in everything belonging to food and raiment, and all the necessaries, and even delights and pleasures, of life: bread and water; all sorts of food: wool and flax; all sorts of clothing, both woollen and linen, for outward or inward covering: and oil, and drinks, or liquors; everything for pleasure and delight; all which she ascribed not to God, from whence all good things come; but, which was an aggravation of her sin, to her lovers, her allies, or her idols; as the Jews did their plenty of victuals to the queen of heaven, and their worship of her, (²⁴⁴⁷Jeremiah 44:17,18) and as, in the times of Christ, they ascribed not only their enjoyment of temporal good things, but their righteousness, life, and salvation, to their observance of traditions, rites, and ceremonies, and the externals of religion.

Ver. 6. *Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns*, etc.] As fields and vineyards are fenced with thorn hedges to keep out beasts; or rather as closes and fields are fenced to keep cattle in, from going out and straying elsewhere; which may be expressive of afflictions, and particularly wars among them, that they could not stir out and go from place to place: and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths: to go to Daniel and Bethel, and worship the calves there, as some; or to go to the Egyptians and Assyrians for help, as Jarchi and Kimchi; though it was by the latter that they were hedged in, and walled and cooped up, when the city of Samaria was besieged three years: rather this respects the straits and difficulties the Jews have been reduced to by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the continuance of them ever since; so that they are not able to offer

their daily sacrifice, kill and eat their passover lamb, and perform other rites and ceremonies they used in their own land; which they would fain perform, though abolished by Christ, but are restrained by this hedge and wall, the destruction of their temple and altar, and not being suffered to possess their land; hence they are said to be without a sacrifice and an ephod. (^{<3906>}Hosea 3:4 ^{<2027>}Daniel 9:27).

Ver. 7. *And she shall follow after her lovers*, etc.] Before mentioned; that is, in her affections and desires, with great eagerness and earnestness, as men pursue what they are bent upon; otherwise, being hedged in and walled up, she could not go after them in a proper sense:

but she shall not overtake them; they fleeing from her, and she pent up:

she shall seek them, but shall not find them; shall not be able to enjoy them, or act according to her wishes and desires, with respect to the performance of sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies, as before observed:

then shall she say; in her heart, finding all endeavours fruitless, and that the things sought after were never to be had; the hedges and wall, the obstructions in the way, were never to be removed, while in such a pursuit; wherefore after a long time, many hundreds of years, even in the latter day, being convinced of her sin and folly in rejecting Christ, and pursuing after other objects, she will take up the following resolution:

I will go and return to my first husband; either the God of Israel, whom the ten tribes departed from by worshipping the calves Jeroboam set up; but in the latter day will seek the Lord their God again, who was a husband to them, and shall cleave to him again, and all Israel shall be saved: so the Targum,

“I will go and return to the service of my first master, for it was well with me when I served him; henceforth I will not serve idols:”

or Christ, who was promised and prophesied of as a husband to the Jewish church, (^{<2515>}Isaiah 54:5) and whom they believed in, and expected as such, but when he came rejected him; but now being convinced of their error shall seek David their King, appoint themselves one head, and embrace Christ as their husband, and adhere to him; (see ^{<3906>}Hosea 3:5):

for then was it better with me than now; while in the faith, and hope, and expectation of the true Messiah; having a spiritual apprehension of him,

true faith in him, and comfort from him, as held forth in the promise; being then possessed of the good land, in the enjoyment of the word and ordinances, and of all religious and civil privileges, but now deprived of them. This may be applied to the case of true believers in Christ, having partially departed from him, and being restored. Christ is a husband to them, who has betrothed them to himself, and they have given themselves to him, and have been loved, nourished, cherished, and provided for by him, and for a while had much nearness, familiarity, and communion with him; but unbelief prevailing, first love waxing cold, and being got into a carnal and sleepy frame, neglect both private and public worship, fall into sin, and removed from church communion, and so may be said to have departed from Christ their husband; but being recovered by divine grace, and sensible of their sins, resolve to return to him again by repentance and acknowledgment, by doing their first works, and by attendance on his word and ordinances; instigated hereunto very much by remembering how it has been with them when they kept close to him, and observing the difference between those times and the present; how they had then the presence of God and Christ, and communion with them, and the secret discoveries of the love of God; in what lively exercise the graces of the Spirit were; what delight and profit they had in ordinances, and what peace, joy, and comfort, in their souls; all which now they want; (see ^{<1831D>}Job 29:2-5).

Ver. 8. *For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, etc.]*

This is a reason, not of her resolution to return to her first husband, but to go after lovers, and of her ascribing these things to them, (^{<3016>}Hosea 2:5), and why the Lord would behave towards her as he determined to do, (^{<3016>}Hosea 2:6,7), this ignorance was wilful and affected, and therefore blameable; she might have known, but she would not; she did not set her mind to know; she did not consider who gave her these things, nor behave as if she knew, as Jarchi: or she did not own and acknowledge God to be the author and giver of them, as she should have done; which was ingratitude rather than ignorance, and is a heinous sin, and to be resented; since all good things, temporal and spiritual, as daily bread, all the necessaries of life, signified by these things, so the word, and ordinances, and spiritual gifts, which they may be emblems of, come from God, and should be acknowledged; but the Jews, as in the times of Isaiah, did not know him, and acknowledge his benefits, (^{<200D>}Isaiah 1:2,3), so, in the times of Christ, they did not know him to be the God of Israel, God over all, blessed for ever; from whom, and for whose sake, who was to be, and was

born of them, they enjoyed the privileges they did, (~~¶~~John 1:10,11
~~¶~~Romans 9:4,5).

And multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal; the relative “which” may refer to all that goes before; and the sense be, that these gifts of God, and which should have been owned as such, and employed in his service, and to his glory; some were made use of in meat and drink offerings to Baal; and others in decking themselves to appear in his worship to his honour; or in ornamenting the idol therewith, or in making it thereof, so the Targum and Syriac version: and all this may be said to be done, when these things are spent in the service of other lords than the Lord himself; when they are abused to sinful purposes, and consumed on the lusts of men, to gratify their sensuality, pride, and vanity, which the Jews did.

Ver. 9. *Therefore will I return, and take away*, etc.] Or, “take away again”^{f33}; an usual Hebraism:

my corn in the time thereof, and my wine in the season thereof; for though these are the gifts of God to men for their use, and to dispose of for the good of others; yet he retains his property in them, and can and will call them to an account for their stewardship; and, when he pleases, take away both their office, and the good things they were intrusted with, not making a right use of them; and this he does in his own appointed time and season, or at such a time when these are at the best, and the greatest good is expected from them, and which therefore is the more afflictive; as in the time of harvest and vintage, so Kimchi, when corn and grapes are fully ripe; or, as the Targum, in the time of the corn being on the floor, and of the pressure of the wine:

and will recover my wool, and my flax, given “to cover her nakedness”; or, “I will take away”; by force and violence, as out of the hands of thieves, and robbers, and usurpers, who have no right to them, being forfeited; these were given to cover her nakedness, but not to deck herself with for the honour of her idols, or to cherish pride and superstition; (see ~~¶~~Matthew 23:5) these were all taken away when the Romans came and took away their place and nation, (~~¶~~John 11:48). The Septuagint and Arabic versions give the sense as if these were taken,

that they might not cover her nakedness, or “shame”; but that it might be exposed, as follows:

Ver. 10. *And now will I discover her lewdness in the lovers*, etc.] The people, her lovers, as the Targum; which is by many understood of the Egyptians and Assyrians; but rather means the Romans, whom the Jews courted as their friends: though it seems best to interpret it in a more general way, that the sin and folly of the Jews in rejecting Christ, and adhering to their beloved tenets, should be discovered and made manifest to all in the most public manner by their punishment; by being scattered among the nations, and becoming a taunt, reproach, and a curse everywhere: and none shall deliver her out of my hand; none of her lovers, as Kimchi, nor any other: it denotes the utter, total, and final destruction of the Jews, wrath being come upon them to the uttermost; and which is irrecoverable by human help, has continued for many hundred years, and will until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, or till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, (^{<4224>}Luke 21:24 ^{<6125>}Romans 11:25).

Ver. 11. *I will also cause all her mirth to cease*, etc.] As it must in course, this being her case, as before described, whether considered in individuals, or as a body politic, or in their church state, as follows:

her feast days; which the Jews understand of the three feasts of tabernacles, passover, and pentecost; typical of Christ's tabernacling in human nature; of his being the passover sacrificed for us; and of the firstfruits of the Spirit; which being come, the shadows are gone and vanished, and these feasts are no more: her new moons, and her sabbaths; the first day of every month, and the seventh day of every week, observed for religious exercises; typical of the light the church receives from Christ, and the rest it has in him; and he, the body and substance of them, being come, these are no more, (^{<5026>}Colossians 2:16,17):

and all her solemn feasts; all others, whether of God's appointment or their own; all are made to cease of right, if not in fact; the law of commandments, contained in ordinances, being abolished by Christ, and the Jews without a priest, sacrifice, and ephod, (^{<4024>}Ephesians 2:14-16 ^{<2824>}Hosea 3:4).

Ver. 12. *And I will destroy her vines and her fig trees*, etc.] Which are mentioned for the rest, being the most fruitful and beneficial: this was done when Judea was invaded, overrun and wasted, by the Roman army; and when many were cut down, as Josephus observes, to build forts, and cast up mounts against Jerusalem; so that, he, says^{f34}, the appearance of the

earth was miserable, for what before was adorned with trees and gardens, looked now like a wilderness:

whereof she hath said, these are my rewards that my lovers have given me; alluding to the hire of harlots, given them by their gallants; these she ascribed, as she did before her bread, water, wool, flax; and oil, (³⁰¹⁵Hosea 2:5), not to God, the author and giver of them, but to the people her lovers, as the Targum; or to her idols, or to her beloved tenets, and doing according to them; and which is here mentioned as a reason of the divine resentment, and why he destroyed these fruitful trees:

and I will make them a forest, and the beasts of the field shall eat them; make the vines and fig trees like forest trees, barren and unfruitful; the fruitful land of Judea should be turned into a forest, or become like a desert or wilderness, and all the fruits of it should be eaten up by wild beasts; by their enemies, compared to the beasts of the field, particularly the Romans, the fourth beast; (see ²⁸⁴⁹Isaiah 56:9 ²⁷⁰⁷Daniel 7:7).

Ver. 13. *And, I will visit upon her the days of Baalim,* etc.] That is, punish them for all the idolatries committed by their forefathers, in the days that the several Baals, as Baalpeor, and Baalberith, and others, were worshipped by them; they their children, though not worshipping these Baalim, yet other lords, lusts and idols, they set up of themselves, and in their own hearts; (see ⁴¹³²Matthew 23:32-36):

wherein she burnt incense to them; to the Baalim; this one species of idolatrous worship being put for the rest:

and she decked herself with her earrings and her jewels; with her best and richest attire; the latter word signifying in the Arabic language, as Jarchi observes, the ornaments of women; this was done to grace the idolatrous worship, and for the honour of the idols:

and she went after her lovers; the traditions of the elders; the weak and beggarly elements of the ceremonial law now abolished, and their own legal righteousness:

and forgot me, saith the Lord: or, “left my worship”, as the Targum; forgot and rejected the true Messiah, his word and ordinances.

Ver. 14. *Therefore, behold, I will allure her,* etc.] Since these rough ways will not do, I will take another, a more mild and gentle way; instead of

threatening, terrifying, and punishing, I will allure, persuade, and entice, giving loving words and winning language: or “nevertheless”, or “notwithstanding”^{f35}: so Noldius and others render the participle; though they have thus behaved themselves, and such methods have been taken with them to no purpose, yet I will do as follows: the words may be understood of the call and conversion of the people of God, the spiritual Israel of God, both Jews and Gentiles, in the first times of the Gospel, as (~~<4023>~~Hosea 2:23) is quoted and applied by the Apostle Paul, (~~<4024>~~Romans 9:24,25) and be understood also of the call of the believing Jews out of Jerusalem, before the destruction of it, (~~<4021>~~Luke 21:21), from whence they removed to Pella, as Eusebius^{f36} relates: and of the apostles out of the land of Judea into the wilderness of the people, the Gentile world, to preach the Gospel there; where vineyards or churches were planted; the door of faith and hope, were opened to the Gentiles, that had been without hope; and the conversions now made, both among Jews and Gentiles, opened a door of hope, or were a pledge of the conversion of the Jew, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles in the latter day; to which times also these words may be applied, when the Jews shall be allured and persuaded to seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and join Gospel churches in the wilderness of the people, and shall have abundance of spiritual consolation and joy; and they may also be applied to the conversion of sinners in common, and set forth the methods of God’s grace in dealing with them: there is throughout an allusion to Israel’s coming out of Egypt, from whence the Lord allured and persuaded them by Moses and Aaron; and then brought them into the wilderness, where he fed and supplied them, and spoke comfort to them, and gave them the lively oracles; and whence, from the borders of it, they had and entered into the vineyards in the land of Canaan; and in the valley of Achor ate of the grain of the land, which was a door of hope to them they should enjoy the whole land; and when they rejoiced exceedingly, particularly at the Red sea, at their first coming out. The word rendered “allure” signifies to persuade^{f37}, as in (~~<4027>~~Genesis 9:27) and in conversion the Lord persuades men, not merely by moral persuasion, or the outward ministry of the word, but by powerful and efficacious grace; opening the heart to attend to things spoken, and the eyes of the understanding to behold wondrous things in the word of God; working upon the heart, and removing the hardness and impenitence of it; quickening the soul, drawing it with the cords of love, and sweetly operating upon the will: and on a sudden and unawares making the soul like the chariots of Amminadib, or a willing people; persuading it to true

repentance for sin, to part with sins and sinful companions, and with its own righteousness, and to come to Christ, and to look to him, and lay hold on him as the Saviour, and to submit to his ordinances: moreover, the Lord persuades men at conversion of his love to them, and of their interest in Christ, and all the blessings of grace in him. Kimchi's note is,

“I will put into her heart to return by repentance;”

and compares with it (^{238b}Ezekiel 36:26). The Targum is,

“I will subject her to the law.”

And bring her into the wilderness: so in conversion the Lord calls and separates his people from the world, as the Israelites were from the Egyptians, when brought into the wilderness; and when they are solitary and alone, as they were, and so in a fit circumstance to be spoken unto, and to hear comfortable words, as follows; and when the Lord feeds them with the grain of heaven, with hidden manna, the food of the wilderness; and when they come into trouble and affliction for the sake of Christ and his Gospel. Some understand this of the church into which they are brought, because separate from the world, and attended with trouble; but this is rather a garden than a wilderness. Some, as Noldius and others, render it, “when” or “after I have brought her into the wilderness”^{f38}; so after the Lord has shown men their sin and danger, their wilderness, desolate, state and condition, and stripped them of all help elsewhere; or has brought them under afflictive dispensations of Providence; then he does what he said before, and follows after.

And speak comfortably unto her; or, “speak to her heart”^{f39}, as in (^{239b}Isaiah 40:2) as he does when he tells them their sins are forgiven; that he has loved them with an everlasting love; what exceeding great and precious promises he has made unto them; and when he speaks to them by the Spirit and Comforter, who takes his and the things of Christ, and shows them unto them; and in his word, written for their consolation; and by his ministers, who are “Barnabases”, sons of comfort; and in the ordinances, those breasts of consolation. The Targum is,

“and I will do for her wonders and great things, as I did for her in the wilderness; and by the hand of my servants the prophets I will speak comforts to her heart.”

The Jewish writers^{f40} interpret this of the Messiah's leading people into a wilderness in a literal sense; they ask where will he (the Messiah) lead them? the answer of some is, to the wilderness of Judea, (^{<400>}Matthew 3:1,13); and of others is, to the wilderness of Sihon and Og (the wilderness the Israelites passed through when they came out of Egypt): they, who are on the side of the first answer, urge in favour of it (^{<200>}Hosea 12:9) and they who are for the latter produce this passage.

Ver. 15. *And I will give her vineyards from thence*, etc.] Either from the wilderness into which she is brought; or from the time of her being brought there, allured and spoke comfortably to; which are put for all temporal blessings, and as emblems of spiritual ones: and so from the time that the Lord deals thus graciously, as before expressed, he gives more grace, larger measures, and continual supplies of it, and withholds nothing good, comfortable, and useful to them: the Vulgate Latin version renders it, "her vinedressers"; and the Targum, her governors:

and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; this valley was so named from Achan, who was stoned in it in the days of Joshua; who is by Josephus^{f41}, Theodoret^{f42}, and others, called Achar, and so in (^{<300>}1 Chronicles 2:7) and the signification of its name is the valley of trouble, because that he both troubled Israel by his evil actions, which brought them into distress; and because he was here troubled himself, being here punished for his sin, (^{<100>}Joshua 7:24-26). Jerome^{f43} says it lies to the north of Jericho, and is still called by its old name by the inhabitants of it. Some take it to be the same with the valley of Engedi, which it is certain was near Jericho. Now as the valley of Achor was at the entrance of the Israelites into the land of Canaan, and gave them hope of possessing the whole land; so what the people of God enjoy at first conversion lays a foundation for hope of eternal glory and happiness; as the Lord's being given them as their portion, Christ as their Saviour, and all things freely with him; the Spirit and his grace as the earnest and pledge of the eternal inheritance: grace and glory are so strictly connected, that the one is a door of hope to the other.

And she shall sing there; either in the wilderness, where the Lord speaks comfortably to her; or in the vineyards she has from thence; alluding to the songs of joy at the time of vintage, or pressing of the grapes: or in the valley of Achor, there rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, singing the songs of electing, redeeming, pardoning, and justifying grace:

as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt: as when the people of Israel were first brought into their civil and ecclesiastic state, which were the days of their youth as a people; and that was when they came out of Egypt, and had passed the Red sea, at the shore of which they sung; and to which is the allusion here; (see ^{<215>}Exodus 15:1 ^{<613>}Revelation 15:3) this passage is applied to the times of the Messiah in the Talmud^{f44}.

Ver. 16. *And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord,* etc.] The Gospel day, the times of the Gospel dispensation, the latter part of them; at the time of the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles; at the time when God will allure and persuade them to seek the Messiah, and they shall turn to him; when he shall speak comfortably to them, and give them a door of hope, and all spiritual blessings, and cause them to sing as when they came out of Egypt:

that thou shalt call me Ishi; or, “my husband”^{f45}; returning to Christ their first husband, and being received by him, shall have faith and interest in him, and full assurance of it; and shall not only be allowed to call him their husband, but in the strength of faith, and with great freedom of soul, shall call him so, and say as the church did, “my beloved is mine, and I am his”, (Song of Solomon 20:16): or, “my man”^{f46}; the man the Lord, the man Jehovah’s fellow, Immanuel God with us, God in human nature; and so more manifestly points at Christ, who, most properly speaking, stands in the relation of a husband to his people: or, “my strength”, as some interpret it; the husband being the strength, protection, and defence of the wife, the weaker vessel; so Christ is the strength of his saints, in whom they have righteousness and strength, and through whose strength they can do all things:

and shalt call me no more Baali; which signifies my husband too, and is used of God and Christ; he is called Baal, and the church is called Beulah, because married together, (^{<238>}Isaiah 45:5 ^{<239>}42:4,5 ^{<240>}Jeremiah 31:32) but it signifies a lordly and imperious husband; and the other word, “Ishi”, a loving one: so Jarchi observes that the sense is, that they should serve the Lord from love, and not fear; “Ishi” being a word expressive of marriage and love, and “Baali” of lordship and fear: hence some have thought this to be the reason why the one should be used, and the other not, under the Gospel dispensation; because saints now have not the spirit of bondage to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they call God their Father, and

Christ their husband: though rather the reason is, because the word “Baal”, as R. Marinns observes, is of doubtful signification, an ambiguous word, used for the idol Baal, as well as signifies lord and husband; and therefore to be laid aside, lest, when they mentioned it, it should be thought they spoke of Baal, and not of the Lord; or should be led to think of that idol, and remember him.

Ver. 17. *For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth,* etc.] Out of the mouth of Israel, as Saadiah; out of the mouth of the converted Jews, and even out of the mouth of the Gentiles, as Kimchi owns; the several Baals, as Baalpeor, Baalberith, and Baalzebub, and others: the names of them should be no more used, should not be spoken of, unless with detestation and abhorrence; not with honour and respect, with love and affection, or so as to yield worship and homage to them; or otherwise their names may be lawfully mentioned, as in (^{<6104>}Romans 11:4), there seems to be some reference to the law in (^{<02313>}Exodus 23:13), the sense is, that idolatry shall be utterly abolished, even of every kind; not the worship of Baalim only, but of all other idols: and so the Targum is,

“and I will take away the name of the idols of the people out of their mouth;”

and may design the idolatry of the church of Rome; their worship of images of gold and silver, wood, brass, and stone in whose communion are many of the Jews at this time; but when the time of their conversion comes, all this will be abolished among them, and among the Gentiles also:

and they shall no more be remembered by their name; or made mention of by name; the same thing as before, in other words, repeated for the confirmation of it.

Ver. 18. *And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field,* etc.] That is, so as to be at peace with them, as the Targum is; (see ^{<R623>}Job 5:23), the sense is, the Lord here promises this unto them, and that it shall be as sure and firm, and to be as much depended upon, as if it was established and settled by covenant, and should be enjoyed as a covenant mercy and blessing; and the creatures should as strictly observe it, and answer to it, as if bound by covenant: and this should reach not only to the beasts of the field, the wild beasts of prey, “but the fowls of heaven”; as the locusts and others, as Kimchi observes, which should not eat up the fruits and increase of the earth: “and the creeping things of the ground”: as

serpents and scorpions, as the same writer suggests. Some think this was fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel, when the apostles took up serpents, and trod on scorpions, without any hurt; but then nothing was more common than for the Christians to be thrown to the lions, and devoured by beasts of prey. Others refer it to the last days, the times of the restitution of all things, when they suppose all creatures will be restored to their paradisiacal estate, and be in entire subjection to men. Rather the sense is, that whereas noisome beasts, and other things, were one of God's sore judgments, with which he threatened his people, when they sinned against him, now they should no more be hurt by them in a way of judgment; and, indeed, should cease from being among them, so that they should be in no fear of them any more; (see ^{<1852>}Leviticus 26:22 ^{<3421>}Ezekiel 14:21 ^{<3825>}34:25,28). Though the words may be understood figuratively and mystically, either of deliverance from all spiritual enemies by Christ, as sin, Satan, and the world, and all others; or of freedom from all wicked men, cruel and crafty ones, open and secret persecutors of the saints: persecution will cease at the time of the Jews' conversion; antichrist, and all the antichristian states, will be destroyed; the beast and false prophet will be taken and cast into the furnace of fire; the old serpent, the devil, will be bound, during the Millennium; and there will be none to hurt in God's holy mountain, neither in the spiritual nor personal reign of Christ.

And I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth; all the instruments of war shall be no more, these mentioned being put for all the rest; and there shall be no more battles fought after that at Armageddon; swords shall be beat into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks; there shall be no more wars, nor rumours of wars, but perfect external peace from all enemies on all sides, as well as spiritual and internal peace in the breast of the saints; and of both there shall be abundance, and without end, (^{<1971>}Psalm 72:7 ^{<2104>}Isaiah 2:4 ^{<2107>}9:7):

and will make them to lie down safely; under the protection of the King Messiah, David their Prince, who shall be over them, and whom they shall own, acknowledge, and serve, and so dwell in the utmost safety and security, not fearing any enemy whatever; they may lie down on their couches at meals, or on their beds at night for rest, or as flocks of sheep in their folds and pastures, and none make them afraid; (see ^{<2416>}Jeremiah 23:5).

Ver. 19. *And I will betroth thee unto me for ever*, etc.] Which is taking them into a marriage relation with himself; and is to be understood not of the whole body of God's elect, who were secretly betrothed to in the everlasting covenant from eternity; for it respects what is yet to come; but of the people the Jews, when converted in the latter day, when will be the marriage of the Lamb with them, and with the fullness of the Gentiles then brought in; of which (see ^{<660U>}Revelation 19:7-9), who will then return to their first husband; and though the Jews have been divorced, they will be received again, and be afresh betrothed; a new covenant or contract will be made with them, and which shall last for ever, (^{<243B>}Jeremiah 31:31,32) and this may be applied to every particular soul at conversion, which is the day of their open espousals to Christ; and they are visibly brought into a marriage relation with him, than which nothing is more near; they become flesh of his flesh, bone of his bone, yea, one spirit with him, and are indulged with near communion with him; and hence is that sympathy he has with them in all their afflictions, temptations, and exercises, and takes that as done to him which is done to them, whether good or ill; hence all their debts or sins become his, and he satisfies for them, and his righteousness becomes theirs: this is a very endearing relation; there is a mutual delight and complacency they take in each other; and a most able one it is; hence they are called by his name, Christians, and partake of his honour; he is King, and they queen; and a very beneficial relation it is, for all that Christ is, and has, are theirs; and a most marvellous and wondrous thing it is that he should betroth them to himself, when he is the Son of the living God, himself the true God, God over all blessed for ever, the Maker and Governor of the world, and heir of all things; and though they in their secret betrothment were considered as sinless creatures, yet in their open espousals at conversion are fallen sinners, in a very low estate indeed; under sentence of condemnation and death; devoid of the image of God; depraved, polluted, and guilty creatures; in deep debt, and extreme poverty; it is as if a prince, heir apparent to the throne, should take a convict or condemned malefactor out of her cell, or a common strumpet out of the stews, or a bankrupt and beggar from the dunghill, and marry her: and this relation will continue "for ever": the marriage covenant or contract is an everlasting one; the bond of union, which is everlasting and unchangeable love, is indissoluble; death cannot take place in either party; both shall live forever; and this is a strong proof of the final perseverance of the saints.

Yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness; either in truth, in sincerity, heartily, and without any hypocrisy or dissimulation; or consistent with righteousness, with his love of righteousness and holiness, and hatred of sin: or rather in his own justifying righteousness; not in their own righteousness, which is as rags; for though he finds them in such rags, he strips them of them, and puts on the wedding garment, the robe of his own righteousness, and garment of salvation; when they become as a bride, adorned with ornaments, and so made ready for the nuptials, and in this he betroths them; (see ^{<2610>}Isaiah 61:10 ^{<4212>}Matthew 22:12 ^{<697>}Revelation 19:7,8):

and in judgment: in sanctification, according to some, the work being now begun by the Spirit of God, as a spirit of judgment; or in a judicious way, not rashly and precipitantly, but with mature deliberation, and of choice arising from judgment; or rather absolving them from the sentence of condemnation and death by his righteousness, and protecting and defending them from their enemies, for the sake of which, and other things, he takes them into this relation;

and in lovingkindness, and in mercies: denoting both the love, which is the spring and source of this relation, and not any merits of theirs; and the kind and tender manner in which he betroths them; as well as the numerous favours he bestows upon them; as pardon of sin; justification of life; spiritual peace; supplies of all grace, and eternal life; all the effects of free grace, unmerited love, and sovereign mercy.

Ver. 20. *I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness*, etc.] Which lies in keeping the marriage contract inviolable; Christ will never suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor break his covenant; as he is faithful to his Father that appointed him, so he is, and will be, to his church and people, and to every believer, to whom he is espoused; and it is he that makes them faithful unto him, and gives them faith to believe in him, receive, embrace, own, and acknowledge him as their husband: and in this sense some understand it, rendering it, “in faith”^{f47}; so the Targum and others. This is the third time the word “betroth” is used, or this promise made; which, according to Jerome, refers to them espousing of the Jews in Abraham, at Mount Sinai, and in the times of Christ; and, according to Kimchi, to the three captivities of the Jews, in Egypt, in Babylon, and that in which they now are: and some Christian writers think the mystery of the Trinity is here pointed at; and the sense to be, that all the three divine Persons, Father,

Son, and Spirit, would espouse them: but rather it is so often repeated to confirm it, and express the certainty of it, which might, on many accounts, seem a thing incredible.

And thou shalt know the Lord; that the Messiah is Jehovah, and that he is their husband; they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest; they shall have a saving knowledge of him, which will issue in eternal life; they shall own him, and acknowledge him, serve and obey him, as their Lord, Head, and Husband, as well as love him, and believe in him. The Targum is,

“and ye shall know to fear before the Lord;”

(see ²⁶¹³Jeremiah 31:34). Let it be observed, here are no conditions throughout, it is only “I will”, and “thou shalt”.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass in that day*, etc.] When these espousals shall be made, when the marriage of the Lamb will be come, and his bride will be betrothed to him; then the whole creation, the heavens and the earth, shall contribute of their riches and plenty to make a marriage feast for them; or then shall the spouse of Christ, in a very visible and plentiful manner, by virtue of the marriage union between them, partake of all his good things, both temporal and spiritual; and especially the latter, as signified by the former; but yet in the use of means, and as the effect of prayer, as follows:

I will hear, saith the Lord; the petitions of his new married bride, which he cannot deny her :or, “I will answer”^{f48}; men oftentimes hear, and answer not; but when the Lord hears his people, he answers them, and grants them their requests; he is a God hearing and answering prayer. So the Targum,

“I will receive your prayer, saith the Lord.”

I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth; in these and the following words is an elegant personification, a figure by which inanimate creatures are represented as persons speaking, praying, asking, and being heard and answered; and a beautiful climax, or a chain of second causes linked together, and as depending upon the first cause, the Lord himself; the heavens are represented as desiring the Lord of nature, the Maker and Supporter of them, having been like brass, and shut up, that they might have leave to let down their refreshing dews, and gentle showers of rain, upon the earth; and the earth as being dry and thirsty, as gaping, opening

its mouth, and imploring these benign influences of the heavens; and both as answered: for so it may be rendered, “I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth”^{f49}; the Lord promises to answer the desires of the heavens, and allow them to drop their dew, and distil their rain; and so they shall answer the cravings of the earth. The spiritual sense may be, according to Schmidt, Christ is he on whom all blessings depend; “heaven” may signify the Holy Spirit Christ gives, who intercedes with him for the saints; the “earth” the ministration of the word and ordinances, by which the Spirit is given, invoked by the ministers of them. Or, as Cocceius, the “heavens” may design the ministers of the church, who govern in it, and who pray and plead for help, assistance, and success; and the “earth” the audience, the common people, who also pray, and are heard and answered, when ministers let down the dew and rain of evangelical doctrine upon them, and water them, and refresh them with it; and such precious seasons as these, as the fruit of prayer, will the saints have in the latter day.

Ver. 22. *And the earth shall hear the corn, and the wine, and the oil,* etc.] Or “answer” here the corn, and vines, and olive trees, are represented as requesting the earth to be let into it, and receive moisture from it, that they may grow and increase, and bring forth fruit; by which may be meant the fruits and graces of the Spirit, and all spiritual gifts, communicated by means of the word and ordinances; or the fruits brought forth by the church, under the ministry of the word; which serves like “corn” to nourish and strengthen; like “wine” to comfort, cheer, and revive; and like “oil” to heal and soften, as well as make glad,

And they shall hear Jezreel; or “answer”; that is, these trees and fruits shall answer to the requests and desires of Jezreel, who shall be abundantly blessed with them. By “Jezreel” is not meant the name of a place, as Aben Ezra; but the people of Israel, who had before been signified by a son of the prophet of this name, (~~2004~~ Hosea 1:4), and which name is here continued, to show how unworthy they were of such favours in themselves, and the riches of God’s grace in bestowing them on them: or else the word here has a different signification; whereas before it signified their being scattered and dispersed, here their being the seed of God; and which is confirmed by the following words,

I will sow her unto me, etc.: the sum of the whole is, that at the prayers of the Lord’s people abundance of spiritual blessings shall be bestowed upon

them from Christ by the Spirit, under the ministration of the word and ordinances. The Targum of both verses is,

“I will command the heavens, and they shall let down rain upon the earth; and the earth shall produce corn, and wine, and oil, and they shall be sufficient for the captivity of the people.”

Kimchi says this belongs to the time of salvation; and Aben Ezra to time to come.

Ver. 23. *And I will sow her unto me in the earth*, etc.] That is, Jezreel, or the people of God, the church betrothed; this is another blessing following upon the marriage relation between Christ and his people, both Jews and Gentiles, in the latter day, a multiplication of a spiritual seed and offspring. So Kimchi and Aben Ezra observe, that the words signify that the people of Israel shall increase and be fruitful as the seed of the earth. These now are good seed which the Lord sows; such as are born not of corruptible but incorruptible seed; are quickened by the Spirit of God; have a good work of grace begun in them; and though they may lie for some time under the clods in darkness and obscurity, yet shall rise up in the green blade of a lively profession, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Seed for sowing is the choicest and most precious, and of greatest esteem and value, and is separated from the rest for that use, though but little and small in quantity in comparison of it; all which is applicable to the people of God. This is said to be sown “in the earth or land”; either in their own land, the land of Israel, into which they shall now be brought, (^{<322>}Ezekiel 21:22 ^{<105>}Amos 9:15) or in the field of the world, the nations and people of the earth, according to (^{<300>}Zechariah 10:9) or rather in the churches of Christ on earth, the churches in the Gentile world, into which the Jews, when converted, shall be brought, and increase and multiply; and this will be all the Lord’s doing.

I will sow her: he will quicken and convert them, and place and plant them in Gospel churches, though ministers may be instruments in his hands; and all their fruitfulness and increase will be “unto him”, for his service, the promotion of his interest, and for his honour and glory. The Targum is,

“I will establish you before me in the land of my Shechinah or majesty.”

And I will have mercy on her that had not obtained mercy; upon Loruhamah, or the people of Israel, signified by her, (^{<306>}Hosea 1:6) and

also the Gentiles, for to both Jews and Gentiles the apostle applies the words in (~~6124~~Romans 9:24,25) and they were fulfilled in part in his time, by the conversion of some of the Jews, and by the calling of the Gentiles; but will have a larger accomplishment in the latter day, when all Israel shall obtain mercy, and be saved; (see ~~6126~~Romans 11:26,30-32) and are applicable to the people of God at all times, when called by grace; for though before conversion there is mercy for them in the heart of God, which is from everlasting; and in his purpose and resolution to bestow; and which is displayed in his choice of them, considered in the decree of the means as fallen creatures, and so vessels of mercy; and which is laid up in covenant for them, which is full of the sure mercies of David; and appears in the mission of Christ, and their redemption by him; and in sparing and saving them before calling; as well as in their regeneration, which is the fruit of abundant mercy; yet is not manifested to them till converted, when they openly obtain it: the Lord has mercy on them, and brings them out of the horrible pit of the state of nature; plucks them as brands out of the burning; opens the prison doors, knocks off their fetters, and sets them free; feeds their hungry and clothes their naked souls; heals their diseases, and pardons their iniquities, and saves them with an everlasting salvation.

And I will say to them which were not my people, thou art my people; or to “Loammi”, the people of Israel, signified by the prophet’s child of that name, (~~3009~~Hosea 1:9), who should no more be called so, but “Ammi”, my people, (~~3011~~Hosea 2:1), which, as before observed, was in part fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel; but will be more fully accomplished at the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles; who though chosen to be the people of God, and are so federally, and were given in covenant to Christ as such, and so redeemed and saved by him from their sins; yet are not till conversion laid hold on by the Lord, and formed as his people for himself, and are without knowledge of him, and communion with him: nor are they called his people by themselves or others; but, when converted, they have the characters, and enjoy the privileges, of God’s people; they have the witness of the relation to themselves by the Spirit of God, and are known and acknowledged by others; the Lord says this unto them, and avouches them for his people:

and they shall say, thou art my God; in the strength of faith, under the testimony of the Spirit of God, they shall claim their interest in God, as their covenant God in Christ; which is made known in effectual calling by

the work of grace on their hearts; by the blessings of grace bestowed on them; and by the Lord's dwelling among them, and his protection of them.

CHAPTER 3

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 3

In this chapter is an order to the prophet to love an adulterous woman beloved of her friend, and by this parable to express the love of God to Israel, and their ingratitude to him, (~~XXII~~ Hosea 3:1), the prophet's execution of that order, making a purchase of her, and a covenant with her, which set forth the captive, servile, mean, and abject state of that people, (~~XXII~~ Hosea 3:2,3), which is explained of their being deprived for a long time of civil and ecclesiastic government, (~~XXII~~ Hosea 3:4), and the chapter is concluded with a prophecy and promise of their conversion to Christ in the latter day, (~~XXII~~ Hosea 3:5).

Ver. 1. *Then said the Lord unto me*, etc.] Or, as the Targum,

“the Lord said unto me again”;

for the word yet or again is to be joined to this, and not the following clause; and shows that this is a new vision, prophecy, or parable, though respecting the same persons and things:

go, love a woman beloved of her friend, yet an adulteress; not the prophet's wife, not Gomer, but some other feigned person; beloved either of her own husband, as the Targum and Jarchi, notwithstanding her unchastity and unfaithfulness to him; or of another man, as Aben Ezra, who had a very great respect for her, courted her, and perhaps had betrothed her, but had not yet consummated the marriage; and, though a harlot, loved her dearly, and could not get off his affections from her, but hankered after her; or of the prophet, as Kimchi, who paraphrases it,

“thou shall love her, and be to her a friend;”

to protect and defend her, as harlots used to have one in particular they called their friend, by whose name they were called, and was a cover to them. The sense is, that the prophet was to go to the people of Israel, and deliver this parable to them, setting forth their state and condition, and their behaviour towards God, and his great love to them, notwithstanding

all their baseness and ingratitude; it was as if a woman that was either married or betrothed, or that either had a husband or a suitor that so dearly loved her, that though she was guilty of uncleanness, and continued in it, yet would not leave her; and which is thus expressed by the Targum,

“go, deliver a prophecy against the house of Israel, who are like a woman dear to her husband; and though she commits fornication against him, yet he so loves her that he will not put her away:”

according to the love of the Lord toward the children of Israel; or such is the love of the Lord to them; for though they were guilty of idolatry, intemperance, and other immoralities, yet still he loved them, and formed designs of grace and goodness for them. And thus, though God does not love sinners as such; yet he loves them, though they are sinners, and when and while they are such; as appears by his choice of them, and covenant with them, by Christ’s dying for them while sinners, and by his quickening them when dead in trespasses and sins:

who look to other gods; or “though they look to other gods”^{f50}; look to them and worship them, pray unto them, put their trust in them, and expect good things from them:

and love flagons of wine, or “tubs of grapes”^{f51}; or of wine made of them; or lumps of raisins, cakes or junkets made of them and other things, as the Septuagint; and may respect either the drunkenness and intemperance of the ten tribes; (see ^{<2301>}Isaiah 28:1), they loved, as Kimchi says, the delights of the world, and not the law and commandments of God; or the feasts that were made in the temples of their idols they loved good eating and drinking, and that made them like idolatry the better for the sake of those things; (see ^{<1216>}Exodus 32:6), for the Heathens used to eat and drink to excess at their sacrifices: hence Diogenes^{f52} the philosopher was very angry with those who sacrificed to the gods for their health, yet in their sacrifices feasted to the prejudice of their health.

Ver. 2. *So I bought her to me for fifteen pieces of silver*, etc.] Or, “fifteen shekels”, which was about one pound seventeen shillings and six pence of our money, reckoning a shekel at two shillings and six pence; though some make it to be but two shillings and four pence; this was but half the price of a servant, (^{<1212>}Exodus 21:32), and alludes to the dowry which men used to give to women at their marriage; (see ^{<1225>}1 Samuel 18:25). The word here used has the signification of digging; hence the Vulgate Latin version

renders it, “I dug her”; and the abettors and defenders of it think it refers to the digging, or boring the ears of a servant that chose to continue with his master, (^{<0216>}Exodus 21:6), but the word is used in the sense of buying, (^{<0016>}Genesis 1:5 ^{<0816>}Deuteronomy 2:6), and so Jarchi says it has the sense of merchandise or bargaining; and in the sea coasts he observes, that they call **hrykm**, a purchase, **hryk**. Perhaps the word is better rendered by the Septuagint and Arabic versions, “hired”; and ^{<Arabic>} “cara” in the Arabic language signifies “to hire”; so it is used in (^{<4230>}Acts 28:30). So with the Turks, as Monsieur Thevenot^{f53} observes, a letter out of beasts to hire is called “moucre” or “moukir”, which comes from the Arabic word “kira”, he says, which signifies to let or hire; and is here fitly used of a harlot. The Jews have many whims and fancies about these fifteen pieces of silver. The Targum, and Pesikta in Jarchi, take them to respect the fifteenth day of Nisan, on which the Israelites were redeemed out of Egypt; according to Aben Ezra, they design the fifteen kings of Judah, from Rehoboam to the captivity, reckoning the sons of Josiah as one, being brethren; according to others, in Kimchi, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the twelve tribes; and, according to Abarbinel, the fifteen prophets that prophesied of the redemption:

and for an homer of barley, and an half homer of barley; a “homer” held ten “ephahs”, and a “lethec”, or “half homer”, five “ephahs”, or so many bushels, these making the number fifteen: again, according to Saadiah, they design Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and the twelve tribes; and, according to Aben Ezra, the number of the high priests in the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem, a homer making thirty sheahs, and a half homer fifteen, in all forty five; but according to others, in Kimchi, these design the forty five days between the coming of the Israelites out of Egypt and their receiving the law: but, leaving these fancies, as the number of shekels given for her was but a low price, and shows what an estimate was made of her; and barley being the coarsest of grain, and bread made of it, that of the worst sort, which the poorer people eat; may be expressive of the captive, servile, mean, and abject state of the people of Israel, from the time of their captivity to their conversion to Christ, as is after more fully explained.

Ver. 3. *And I said unto her*, etc.] Having bought or hired her; this was the covenant or agreement he made with her,

thou shall abide for me many days; dwell alone in some solitary and separate place, and have no conversation with any, especially with men;

live like a widow that has lost her husband, and so wait for a long time till the prophet should think fit to take her to his house and bed:

thou shall not play the harlot, and thou shall not be for another man; neither prostitute herself, as she had done to her lovers; nor marry another, but keep herself chaste and single:

so will I also be for thee; wait for thee, and not take another wife; or will be thy husband, after having made proper trial and full proof of thy conduct and behaviour: the Targum paraphrases it thus;

“say, O prophet, to her, O congregation of Israel, your sins are the cause that you are carried captive many days; ye shall give yourselves to my worship and not err, nor serve idols, and even I will have mercy on you.”

The whole is explained in the following words:

Ver. 4. *For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince,* etc.] Without any form of civil government, either regal or without any civil magistrate, either superior or subordinate, of their own; being subject to the kings and princes of other nations, as the ten tribes were from their captivity by Shalmaneser, to the coming of Christ, which was about seven hundred years; and from that time the tribes of Judah and Benjamin have had no kings and princes among them, for the space of nineteen hundred years, which may very well be called “many days”. This answers to the harlot’s abiding for the prophet many days, in the parable:

and without a sacrifice; the daily sacrifice, which has ceased as long as before observed; and any other sacrifice of slain beasts, as the passover lamb, etc.; the Jews not thinking it lawful to offer sacrifice in a strange land, or any where but upon the altar in Jerusalem; and to this day have no such sacrifices among them, though they have no notion of the abrogation of them, as the Christians have; but so it is ordered in Providence, that they should be without them, being kept out of their own land, that this and other prophecies might be fulfilled:

and without an image, or “statue”: such as were made for Baal, or as were the calves at Daniel and Bethel; and though the people of Israel were very subject to idolatry, and set up images and statues for worship before their

captivities, yet since have nothing of image worship among them, but strictly observe the command.

And without an ephod; a linen garment wore by the high priests under the law, to which the breastplate was fastened, which had in it the Urim and Thummim; and which were wanting in the second temple, and have been ever since; so that these people have been so long without this way and means of inquiry of God about future things, (see ^{<1506>}Ezra 2:63), this may be put for the whole priesthood, now ceased in a proper sense; and so the Septuagint render it, “without a priesthood”; so that the Jews are without any form of government, civil or ecclesiastical; they have neither princely nor priestly power: “and without teraphim”; which some understand to be the same with the Urim and Thummim; and so the Septuagint render it, “without manifestations”; by which they are thought to mean the Urim, which according to them so signifies: but the word is generally thought to design some little images or idols, like the penates or household gods of the Romans, which were consulted about future things; and so the Jews commonly understand it, and some describe them thus^{f54},

“what are the “teraphim?” they slay the firstborn of a man, cut off his head, and pickle it with salt and oil, and inscribe on a plate of gold the name of an unclean spirit, and put that under his tongue; then they place it in a wall, and light candles before it, and pray unto it, and it talks with them.”

But now, according to this prophecy, the Jews in their captivity should have no way and means of knowing future things, either in a lawful or unlawful manner; (see ^{<1574>}Psalms 74:9). How the whole of this prophecy is now fulfilled in them, hear what they themselves say, particularly Kimchi;

“these are the days of the captivity in which we now are at this day; we have no king nor prince out of Israel; for we are in the power of the nations, and of their kings and princes; and have no sacrifice for God, nor image for idols; no “ephod” for God, that declares future things; and no “teraphim” for idolatry, which show things to come, according to the mind of those that believe in them;”

and so Jarchi

“without a sacrifice in the sanctuary in Judah; without an image of Baal in Samaria, for the kings of Israel; without an ephod of Urim

and Thummim, that declares hidden things; and “teraphim” made for a time to speak of, and show things that are secret;”

and to the same purpose Aben Ezra. The Targum is,

“without a king of the house of David, and without a ruler over Israel; without sacrifice for acceptance in Jerusalem; and without a high place in Samaria; and without an ephod, and him that shows;”

i.e. what shall come to pass. The Syriac version renders the last clause, “without one that offers incense”; and the Arabic version, “without one that teaches”.

Ver. 5. *Afterward shall the children of Israel return*, etc.] The ten tribes of Israel, and also the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, which are included in the name of Israel, as Aben Ezra interprets it; and these are joined together in parallel places; (see ^{<281B>}Jeremiah 30:3,9 ^{<281B>}50:4,5) for though they did not go into captivity together, yet their return and conversion will be at the same time; and they are all spoken of under the name of Israel by the Apostle Paul, when he foretells their conversion and salvation, (^{<512B>}Romans 11:26). The “return” of them, here prophesied of, does not barely mean their return to their own land, which will be at this time; (see ^{<281B>}Jeremiah 30:3 ^{<3721>}Ezekiel 37:21,22 ^{<1095>}Amos 9:15), but their return to the Lord by repentance; when they shall repent of, and turn from, their sinful course of life, and particularly of their unbelief and rejection of the true Messiah, and embrace him; and of their traditions and false ways of worship, which they shall discard; and of their own righteousness they shall now renounce; and shall turn to the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe in him for righteousness, life, and salvation:

and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; these may be considered either as two distinct persons, Jehovah the Father, and the Messiah, as in (^{<3723>}Ezekiel 34:23,24) and so the Targum,

“and seek the worship of the Lord their God, and obey Messiah the Son of David their King;”

who will be both equally sought after, and unto, by them; and which is a proof of the divinity of the Messiah, and of his equality with God his Father; as well as points out the right way in which Jehovah is to be sought, namely, with Christ, or in him, in whom he is a God gracious and merciful; and to seek and know both the one and the other is eternal life,

(^{<817B>}John 17:3) or else all this is to be understood of the Messiah, rendering the words, “and seek the Lord their God, even David their King” as also (^{<2810>}Jeremiah 30:9, ^{<610B>}Jude 1:3), may be rendered; and so these are all epithets, titles, and characters of him: he is Jehovah, the everlasting I AM; the true God, and eternal life; Immanuel, God with us; God in our nature, manifest in the flesh; the Son of David, and his antitype, often called David in Scripture. (^{<880B>}Psalm 89:3,4 ^{<2624>}Ezekiel 34:24 37:24), King of kings, King of the saints, of his church, and will be owned as such by the Jews at the time of their conversion, though they have rejected him; but now they will receive him, and be subject to him; they will seek to him for salvation, for the pardon of their sins, for righteousness, for rest, for food, for protection and safety, and to serve and obey him: and this seeking will not be out of curiosity, or in a carnal way, or for selfish ends; nor hypocritically; but with their whole hearts, and diligently, and in earnest. Not only the Targum interprets this of Messiah the Son of David, but Aben Ezra on the place says, this is the Messiah; and it is applied to him, and his times, by other Jewish writers, both ancient and modern. In an ancient book^{f55} of theirs, speaking of David, it is said, the holy blessed God is well pleased with him in this world, and in the world to come; in this world, as it is written, “and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake”, (^{<1216>}2 Kings 20:6), and in the world to come, as it is written,

they shall seek the Lord their God, and David their King, etc.; David was King in this world, and David shall be King in the time to come. And in both Talmuds the words are applied to the Messiah; in one of them^{f56}, after quoting this text, it is added, the Rabbins say this is the King Messiah; if of the living, David is his name; if of the dead, David is his name. And in the other^{f57}, it is said, when Jerusalem is built, David comes; that is, the Son of David, the Messiah; which is proved by this passage, “afterwards the children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King”; that is, as the gloss interprets it, after they shall return to the house of the sanctuary, or the temple: so Abarbinel, both in his commentary upon this place, and elsewhere^{f58}, as he interprets the “one head” in (^{<2011B>}Hosea 1:11), of Messiah ben Ephraim, whom he, with the rest of his tribe, feign shall perish in war; so he observes, that then Israel shall seek David their King, the rod out of the root of Jesse, whom the Lord shall choose, and cause to reign over them. And another of their later writers^{f59} interprets the passage of the Messiah, and produces it to prove against the Christians that

he should come in the end of days, or in the latter days; as it is plain and certain that our Jesus, the true Messiah, came at the end of the Jewish world, in the last days of their civil and church state; (see ^{<S000>}Hebrews 1:1,2 ^{<S026>}9:26),

and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter day; not man, but the Lord; not his wrath and vengeance, but his goodness; not with a servile, but with a godly filial fear; a fear influenced by the blessings of goodness they shall now be partakers of, particularly pardoning grace and mercy, (^{<S013>}Psalm 130:3,4), they shall fear the Lord, who is good, and goodness itself, and Christ, in whom the goodness of God is displayed, and who is prevented with the blessings of goodness for his people: it may be rendered, they “shall fear”, or “come fearing to the Lord, and his goodness”,^{f60} being sensible of their sin, danger, and misery; they shall flee to the Lord as to their city of refuge, and to the blessings of his goodness they see their need of; and this they shall do in haste, as Aben Ezra interprets it, comparing it with (^{<S011>}Hosea 11:11). The Septuagint version is, “they shall be amazed at the Lord, and his good things”; the Syriac version, “they shall know the Lord, and his goodness”: the Arabic version, they shall confess the Lord, and his benefits; the Targum,

“they shall give themselves to the service of the Lord, and his goodness shall be multiplied, which shall come to them in the end of days;”

or, as Aben Ezra, in the end of the prophecy of the prophets, in future time, in the times of the Messiah; which, as Kimchi serves, are always meant by the last days; and here it signifies the latter day of the last days, or of the Gospel dispensation.

CHAPTER 4

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 4

This chapter contains a new sermon or prophecy, delivered in proper and express words, without types and figures, as before; in which the people of Israel are summoned to appear at the tribunal of God, to hear the charge brought against them, and the sentence to be pronounced upon them, and which would be executed. They are charged with sins of omission and commission; with want of truth and mercy to men, and with ignorance of God; with swearing, lying, murder, theft, and adultery, (^{<3001>}Hosea 4:1,2), the punishment threatened is the sword, famine, and pestilence; which should affect the whole land, and all creatures in it, men, beasts, fowls, and fishes, (^{<3003>}Hosea 4:3), then the priests and false prophets are threatened with falling into calamities along with the people, and with rejection from their office, and forgetfulness of their posterity, and a taking away their glory from them, because of their striving with the true prophets; their rejection of knowledge; forgetfulness of the law of God; covetousness, adultery, and drunkenness, (^{<3004>}Hosea 4:4-11), then the discourse is turned to the people again, who are charged with divination and idolatry, which is spiritual adultery; and therefore, by way of retaliation, their wives and daughters would be left to commit adultery and fornication, (^{<3012>}Hosea 4:12-14), and the chapter is concluded with advice to Israel not to tempt Judah to sin; or to Judah not to do the like, after the example of Israel, who were backsliders, idolaters, left of God and alone; guilty of bribery, and the like shameful things, and would be suddenly filled with shame, (^{<3015>}Hosea 4:15-19).

Ver. 1. *Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel*, etc.] The people of the ten tribes, as distinct from Judah, (^{<3015>}Hosea 4:15), the prophet having finished his parables he was ordered to take up and deliver, and his explanations of them, and concluded with a gracious promise of the conversion of the Jews in the latter day, enters upon a new discourse, which begins with reproof for various sins; since what had been delivered in parables and types had had no effect upon them, they are called upon to

hear what the Lord would say to them by the prophet, in more clear and express terms; silence is ordered, and attention required to what follows:

for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land; the land of Israel; against him they had sinned, before him they stood guilty; he had something, yea, many things, against them; a charge is brought into open court, the indictment is read, an answer must be made: God is the antagonist, that moves and brings on the controversy in a judicial way, and who can answer him for one of a thousand? or stand before him, or in court with him, when he marks iniquity? the charge is as follows,

because there is no truth; none that do or speak truth; that are true and faithful men, true to their word, and faithful to their trust; no truth of grace in them, nor truth of doctrine held and received by them; truth failed from among them, and none were valiant for it; no truth or civil faith with respect to men, nor any truth of word or worship with respect to God:

nor mercy: to poor and indigent creatures; no compassion shown them; no offices of humanity or acts of beneficence exercised towards them; though these are more desirable by the Lord than, and are preferred by him to, all ceremonial sacrifices, (^{צדק}Hosea 6:6), or no piety, religion, godliness, powerful godliness, which has the promise of this life, and that to come:

nor knowledge of God in the land; in the land of Israel, where God was used to be known; where he had been worshipped; where his word had been dispensed, and his prophets had been sent, and his saints that knew him, and his mind and will, formerly had dwelt; but now a company of atheists, at least that lived as such, and had no true spiritual saving knowledge of God, and communion with him; they had not true love to him, nor a godly reverence of him, which this implies; and that was the source of all the wickedness committed by them, afterwards expressed. The Targum is,

“there are none that do truth, nor dispense mercy, nor walk in the fear of the Lord, in the land.”

Ver. 2. *By swearing, and lying*, etc.] Which some join together, and make but one sin of it, false swearing, so Jarchi and Kimchi; but that swearing itself signifies, as the Targum interprets it; for it not only takes in all cursing and imprecations, profane oaths, and taking the name of God in vain, and swearing by the creatures, but may chiefly design perjury; which, though one kind of “lying”, may be distinguished from it here; the latter intending “lying” in common, which the devil is the father of, mankind are

incident unto, and which is abominable to God, whether in civil or in religious things: “and killing, and stealing and committing adultery”; murders, thefts, and adulteries, were very common with them; sins against the sixth, eighth, and seventh commandments:

they break out; through all the restraints of the laws of God and man, like an unruly horse that breaks his bridle and runs away; or like wild beasts, that break down the fences and enclosures about them, and break out, and get away; or like a torrent of water, that breaks down its dams and banks, and overflows the meadows and plains; such a flood and deluge of sin abounded in the nation. Some render it, “they thief”^{f61}; or act the part of thieves and robbers: and the Targum,

“they beget sons of their neighbours’ wives;”

and so Abarbinel interprets it of breaking through the hedge of another man’s wife; but these sins are observed before:

and blood toucheth blood; which some understand of sins in general, so called, because filthy and abominable; and of the addition and multiplication of them, there being as it were heaps of them, or rather a chain of them linked together. So the Targum,

“and they add sins to sins.”

Others interpret it of impure mixtures, of incestuous lusts, or marriages contrary to the ties of blood, and laws of consanguinity, (^{<1816>}Leviticus 18:6 ^{<321>}Ezekiel 22:11), or rather it is to be understood of the great effusion of blood, and frequency of murders; so that there was scarce any interval between them, but a continued series of them. Some think respect is had to the frequent slaughter of their kings; Zachariah the son of Jeroboam was slain by Shallum, when he had reigned but six months; and Shallum was slain by Menahem when he had reigned but one month; and this Menahem was a murderer of many, smote many places, and ripped up the women with child; Pekahiah his son was killed by Pekah the son of Remaliah, and he again by Hoshea, (^{<1218>}2 Kings 15:8,10,13,14,16,25,30).

Ver. 3. *Therefore shall the land mourn*, etc.] Because of the calamities on it, the devastations made in it; nothing growing upon it, through a violent drought; or the grass and corn being trodden down, or eaten up, by a foreign army:

and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish; that is, every man, an inhabitant thereof, shall become weak, languish away, and die through wounds received by the enemy; or for want of food, or being infected with the wasting and destroying pestilence:

with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; the one shall die in the field for want of grass to eat, and the other shall drop to the earth through the infection of the air:

yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away; or “gathered”^{f62}; to some other place, so as to disappear; or they shall be consumed and die, as Kimchi interprets it; and as all these creatures are for the good of men, for sustenance, comfort, and delight, when they are taken away, it is by way of punishment for their sins. So the Targum,

“the fishes of the sea shall be lessened for their sins.”

Ver. 4. *Yet, let no man strive, nor reprove another*, etc.] Or rather, “let no man strive, nor any man reprove us”^{f63}; and are either the words of the people, forbidding the prophet, or any other man, to contend with them, or reprove them for their sins, though guilty of so many, and their land in so much danger on that account: so the Targum,

“but yet they say, let not the scribe teach, nor the prophet reprove:”

or else they are the words of God to the prophet, restraining him from striving with and reproofing such a people, that were incorrigible, and despised all reproof; (see ^{<418>}Ezekiel 3:26) or of the prophet to other good men, to forbear anything of this kind, since it was all to no purpose; it was but casting pearls before swine; it was all labour lost, and in vain:

for thy people are as they that strive with the priest; they are so far from receiving correction and reproof kindly from any good men that they will rise up against, and strive with the priests, to whom not to hearken was a capital crime, (^{<457>}Deuteronomy 17:12). Abarbinel interprets it, and some in Abendana, like the company of Korah, that contended with Aaron; suggesting that this people were as impudent and wicked as they, and there was no dealing with them. So the Targum,

“but thy people contend with their teachers;”

and will submit to no correction, and therefore it is in vain to give it them. Though some think the sense is, that all sorts of men were so corrupt, that

there were none fit to be reprovers; the people were like the priests, and the priests like the people, (~~2049~~Hosea 4:9), so that when the priests reproved them, they contended with them, and said, physician, heal thyself; take the beam out of your own eye; look to yourselves, and your own sins, and do not reprove us.

Ver. 5. *Therefore shall thou fall in the day*, etc.] Either, O ye people, everyone of you, being so refractory and incorrigible; or, O thou priest, being as bad as the people; for both, on account of their sins, should fall from their present prosperity and happiness into great evils and calamities; particularly into the hands of their enemies, and be carried captive into another land: and this should be “in the day”, or “today”,^{f64}; immediately, quickly, in a very short time; or in the daytime, openly, publicly, in the sight of all, of all the nations round about, who shall rejoice at it; or in the day of prosperity, while things go well, amidst great plenty of all good things, and when such a fall was least expected:

and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night: or the false prophets that are with you, as the Targum, and so Jarchi; either with you, O people, that dwell with you, teach you, and cause you to err; or with thee, O priest, being of the same family, as the prophets, many of them, were priests; now these should fall likewise into the same calamities, as it was but just they should, being the occasion of them: and this should be in the night; in the night of adversity and affliction, in the common calamity; or in the night of darkness, when they could not see at what they stumbled and fell, and so the more uncomfortable to them; or as the one falls in the day, the other falls in the night; as certainly as the one falls, so shall the other, and that very quickly, immediately, as the night follows the day:

and I will destroy thy mother; either Samaria, the metropolis of the nation; or the whole body of the people, the congregation, as the Targum, and Kimchi, and Ben Melech, being as a mother with respect to individuals; and are threatened with destruction because the corruption was general among prophets, priests, and people, and therefore none could hope to escape.

Ver. 6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*, etc.] This is not to be understood of those who are the Lord’s people by special grace; for they cannot be destroyed, at least with everlasting destruction; God’s love to them, his choice of them, covenant with them, the redemption of them by Christ, and the grace of God in them, secure them from such destruction: nor can they perish through want of knowledge; for though

they are by nature as ignorant as others, yet it is the determinate will of God to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, in order to salvation; and that same decree which fixes salvation as the end, secures the belief of the truth as the means; and the covenant of grace provides for their knowledge of spiritual things, as well as other spiritual blessings; in consequence of which their minds are enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and they have the knowledge of God and Christ given them, which is life eternal. But this is to be understood of the people of the ten tribes of Israel, who were nationally and nominally the people of God, were so by profession; they called themselves the people of God; and though they were idolaters, yet they professed to worship God in their idols; and as yet God's "loammi" had not taken place upon them; he still sent his prophets among them, to reprove and reform them, and they were not as yet finally rejected by him, and cast out of their land. These may be said to be "destroyed", because they were threatened with destruction, and it was near at hand, they were just upon the brink of it; and because of the certainty of it, and this "through the lack of knowledge": either in the people, who were ignorant of God, his mind, and will, and worship, and without fear and reverence of him, which was the cause of all the abominations they ran into, for which they were threatened with ruin; or in the priests, whose business it was to teach and instruct the people; but instead of teaching them true doctrine, and the true, manner of worship, taught them false doctrine, and led them into superstition and idolatry; and so they perished through the default of the priests in performing their office; which sense is confirmed by what follows:

because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shall be no priest to me; the priests that Jeroboam made were of the lowest of the people, ignorant and illiterate men, (~~1123~~1 Kings 12:31 ~~1133~~13:33) and they chose to continue such; they rejected with contempt and abhorrence, as the word signifies, the knowledge of God, and of all divine things; of the law of God, concerning what was to be done, or not to be done, by the people; and of all statutes and ordinances relating to divine worship, and the performance of the priestly office: and though there might be some of Aaron's line that continued in the land of Israel, and in their office; yet these affected the same ignorance, and therefore the Lord threatens them with a rejection from the priesthood; or, however, that they should be no priests to him, or in his account, but should be had in the utmost abhorrence and contempt, The word here used has a letter in it more than

usual^{f65}, which may signify the utter rejection of them, and the great contempt they were had in by the Lord; this was to take place, and did, at the captivity by Shalmaneser.

Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God: which he had given them, who was their God by profession; and which they had forgot as if they never had read or learnt it; and so as not to observe and keep it themselves, nor teach and instruct others in it:

I will also forget thy children; have no regard to them, take no notice and care of them, as if they were never known by him; meaning either the people in general, their disciples and spiritual children; or else their natural children, who should be cut off, and not succeed them in the priesthood. The words are very emphatic, “I will forget them, even I”^{f66}; which expresses the certainty of it more fully, as well as more clearly points at the justness of the retaliation.

Ver. 7. *As they were increased, so they sinned against me,* etc.] As the children of the priests increased and grew up, they sinned against the Lord, imitating their parents; they were as many sinners as they were persons, not one to be excepted: this expresses their universal depravity and corruption. Some understand it of their increase, as in number, so in riches, wealth, honour, dignity, and authority, and yet they sinned more and more; which shows their ingratitude. So the Targum,

“as I have multiplied fruits unto them, etc.”

Therefore will I change their glory into shame, take away their priesthood from them, so that they shall be no more priests, and as if they never had been; and reduce them to a state of poverty, meanness, and disgrace; and cause them to go into captivity with the meanest of the people; and be in no more honour, but subject to as much scorn and contempt as they.

Ver. 8. *They eat up the sin of my people,* etc.] That is, the priests did so, as the Targum, the priests of Jeroboam; they ate up the sacrifices which the people brought for their sins: and their fault was, either that they ate that which belonged to the true priests of the Lord, so Jarchi; or they did that, and had no concern to instruct the people in the right way; all that they regarded were good eating and drinking, and living voluptuously; and were altogether careless about instructing the people in the nature of sacrifices, and in the way of their duty: or this may regard the Bacchanalian feasts, as some think, which the people made in the temples of idols, and so sinned;

and of which the priests greatly partook, and encouraged them in, and so were partakers not only of their banquets, but of their sins.

They set their heart on their iniquity: either their offerings for their iniquity, or their iniquity itself: or, “lift up their soul”^{f67} to it; diligently looking after it, not caring how much they committed; since the more sin offerings would be brought which would be to their advantage. Though some think the sin of whoredom, frequently and impudently committed at these idol feasts, is meant, which the priests were much addicted to, and very greedy of; they committed cleanness with greediness, (~~4019~~ Ephesians 4:19).

Ver. 9. *And there shall be, like people, like priest*, etc.] No difference between them in their festivals, the one being as greedy of committing intemperance and uncleanness as the other, and in their common conversation of life; though the priests ought both to have given good instructions, and to have set good examples; but instead of that were equally guilty as the people, and so would be alike in their punishment, as it follows:

and I will punish them for their ways; their evil ways, as the Targum; their wicked manner of life and conversation, both of the people and the priests; especially the latter are meant: or, “I will visit upon him his ways”^{f68}; upon everyone of the priests, as well as the people; which visit must be understood in a way of wrath and vengeance:

and reward them their doings; reward them according to their doings, as their sins deserve, and as it is explained in the next verse: or, “I will return their doings to them”^{f69}; bring them back again, when they seemed to be past and gone, and set them before them, and charge them with them, and punish for them.

Ver. 10. *For they shall eat, and not have enough*, etc.] Namely, the priests; for of them the words are continued, who ate of the sacrifices of the people, and of feasts made in honour of idols; and yet, either what they ate did not satisfy or nourish them, or else their appetites were still greedy after more of the same kind: or this may respect a famine, either at the siege of Samaria, or in their captivity; when they who had lived so voluptuously should have so little to eat, that it should not satisfy them: or though, as others, they eat to the honour of their idols, expecting to be blessed with plenty by them, they shall not have it:

they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase; that is, their offspring; they shall not beget children, so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or the children they beget shall quickly die; yea, though they commit whoredom in the idol's temple with that view, where the women prostituted themselves for that purpose:

because they have left off to take heed to the Lord; to his word, and worship, and ordinances, which they formerly had some regard unto, but now had relinquished: or, "the Lord they have forsaken", or "left off to observe"^{f70}; his ways, his word, and worship. R. Saadiah connects this with the following words, they have forsaken the Lord to observe fornication and wine; but wrongly.

Ver. 11. *Whoredom and wine, and new wine, take away the heart.*]

Uncleanness and intemperance besot men, deprive them of reason and judgment, and even of common sense, make them downright fools, and so stupid as to do the following things; or they take away the heart from following the Lord, and taking heed to him, and lead to idolatry; or they "occupy"^{f71} the heart, and fill it up, and cause it to prefer sensual lusts and pleasures to the fear and love of God: their stupidity brought on hereby is exposed in the next verse; though it seems chiefly to respect the priests, who erred in vision through wine and strong drink, and stumbled in judgment, (^{<23XU>}Isaiah 28:7).

Ver. 12. *My people ask counsel at their stocks*, etc.] Or "at his wood"^{f72}, or stick; his wooden image, as the Targum; their wooden gods, their idols made of wood, mere stocks and blocks, without life or sense, and much less reason and understanding, and still less divinity. Reference is here had either to the matter of which an idol was made, being the trunk of a tree, or a block of wood; as the poet^{f73} introduces Priapus saying, "olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum": or to sticks of wood themselves, without being put into any form or shape; for so it is reported^{f74}, that the ancient idolaters used to receive for gods, with great veneration, trees or pieces of wood, having the bark taken off; particularly the Carians worshipped for Diana a piece of wood, not hewed, squared, or planed^{f75}: though the first seems rather to be the sense here; and either was extremely foolish. And yet such was the stupidity of this people, whom God had formerly chose for his people and had distinguished them by his favours from others, and they had professed themselves to be his people, and as yet were not utterly cast off, as to forsake him and his divine oracles, and all methods of

knowing his will; as to ask counsel of such wooden deities in matters of moment and difficulty, what should be done by them, or concerning things to come.

And their staff declareth unto them; what methods are to be taken by them in the present case, or what shall come to pass, as they fancy; that is, either their idol, made of a staff or stick of wood, or a little image carried on a staff; such as probably were the teraphim they consulted, instead of the Urim and Thummim; and imagined they declared to them what they should do, or what would befall them. Kimchi's father interprets it of the false prophets on whom they depended, and whose declarations they received as oracles. Perhaps some respect is had to a sort of divination used among the Heathens by rods and staves, called "rhabdomancy", which the Jews had learnt of them; like that by arrows used by Nebuchadnezzar, (³²¹²Ezekiel 21:21). This was performed by setting up a stick or staff, and as that fell, so they judged and determined what was to be done. The manner, according to Theophylact on the place, was this,

"they set up two rods, and muttered some verses and enchantments; and then the rods falling through the influence of demons, they considered how they fell, whether forward or backward, to the right or the left; and so gave answers to the foolish people, using the fall of the rods for signs."

The Jews take this to be forbid by that negative precept, (⁶¹⁸⁰Deuteronomy 18:10), "there shall not be found among you any that useth divination". So Jarchi and Baal Hatturim on that text explain a diviner by one that holds his staff; and the former adds and says, shall I go, or shall I not go? as it is said, "my people ask counsel at their stocks", etc.; the manner of which they thus describe^{f76},

"when they are about to go on a journey, they inquire before they set out, i.e. whether it will be prosperous or not; and the diviner takes a branch of a tree, and takes off the bark on one side, and leaves it on the other, and then throws it out of his hand; if, when it falls, the bark is uppermost, he says, this is a man; then he casts it again, and if the white is uppermost, this is a woman; to a man, and after that a woman, this is a good sign, and he goes his journey, or does what he desires to do: but if the white appears first, and after that the bark, then he says, to a woman, and after that a man, and he forbears (that is, to go on his journey, or do what he desired):

but if the bark is uppermost in both (throws), or the white uppermost in both, to a man after a man, and a woman after a woman, then his journey (as to the success of it) is between both; and so they say they do in the land of Slavonia.”

And from the Slavonians, Grotius says, the Germans took this way of divination, of which Tacitus^{f77} gives an account; and it seems by him that the Chaldeans also had it, from whom the Jews might have it. This way of divination by the staff is a little differently given in Hascuni:^{f78} the diviner measures his staff with his finger, or with his hand; one time he says, I will go; another time, I will not go; but if it happens, at the end of the staff, I will not go, he goes not.

For the spirit of whoredom hath caused them to err; a violent inclination and bias of mind to idolatry, which is spiritual adultery, and a strong affection for it, stirred up by an evil spirit, the devil; which so wrought upon them, and influenced them, as to cause them to wander from the true God, and his worship, as follows:

and they have gone a whoring from under their God; or

“erred from the worship of their God,”

as the Targum; from the true God, who stood in the relation of a husband to them; but, led by a spirit of error, they departed from him, and committed spiritual adultery, that is, idolatry; which is explained and enlarged upon in the next verse.

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains*, etc.] The highest part of them, nearest to the heavens, where they built their altars to idols, and offered sacrifice unto them, as we often read in Scripture they did:

and burn incense upon the hills; to their idols, which was one kind of sacrifice put for all others:

under oaks, and poplars, and elms; and indeed under every green tree that grew upon them, where there were groves of them raised up for this purpose; (see ²⁴²²Jeremiah 2:20 ²⁴⁰⁶3:6):

because the shadow, thereof is good; the shadow of these trees, of each of them, was large, and preserved them from the sultry heat of the sun, as well as hid them from the sight of men; they could perform their idolatrous rites, as well as gratify their impure lusts, with more privacy and secrecy;

and perhaps they thought the gods delighted in such shady places, and that these were frequented by spirits, and the departed souls of men; in such places the Heathens, whom the Jews imitated, built their temples, and offered their sacrifices^{f79}. The “oak” is a very spreading tree; its branches are large, and its shadow very great: hence the religious Heathens in ancient times used to live under them, and worship them as gods, and dedicate temples to them, because they furnished them with acorns for food, and a shelter from the rain, and other inclemencies of the heavens^{f80}; particularly the oak was consecrated to Jupiter, as appears from what Virgil says^{f81}. The oak at Dodona is famous for its antiquity, where were a fountain and groves, and a temple dedicated to the same Heathen deity; and from whence oracles were given forth^{f82}. The Druids here in Britain chose to have their groves of oaks; nor did they perform any of their sacred rites without the leaves of them: hence Pliny^{f83} says they had their name. The “poplar” mentioned is the white poplar, as the word used signifies, and which affords a very hospitable shadow, as the poet^{f84} calls it; and this was a tree also with the Heathens sacred to their gods, particularly to Hercules^{f85}; because it is said he brought it first into Greece from the river Acheron, where it grew; and the wood of no other tree would the Eleans use, in preparing the sacrifices for Jupiter Olympius^{f86}. The “elm” is also a very shady tree; hence Virgil^{f87} calls it “*ulmus opaca, ingens*”: and under this tree sacrifices used to be offered to idols, as is evident from (²³⁶³Ezekiel 6:13), where the same word is used as here, though it is there rendered an “oak”; but that it is different from the oak appears from these two words being read together, so that they cannot be names of one and the same tree, (²³⁶³Isaiah 6:13), where it is rendered the “teal tree”, as distinct from the oak. Now these trees being very shady ones, and under which the Gentiles used to perform their religious rites, the Jews imitated them therein, which is here complained of.

Therefore your daughters shall commit whoredoms, and your spouses shall commit adultery; or their “sons’ wives”^{f88}; either spiritually, that is, commit idolatry by the example of their parents and husbands; or corporeally, being left at home while their parents and husbands were worshipping their idols upon the mountains, as Aben Ezra and Kimchi: and so this is to be considered as a punishment of the idolatry of their parents and husbands; that as they commit spiritual adultery against God, or idolatry, their daughters and wives shall be given up to such vile affections, or by force shall be made to commit corporeal adultery against them; or

rather the sense is, led by the example of their parents and husbands, whom they see not only sacrifice to idols in the above places, but commit uncleanness with harlots there, they will throw off all shame, and commit whoredom with men: for so the words may be rendered, “hence your daughters”, etc.; so Abarbinel.

Ver. 14. *I will not punish your daughters when they commit whoredoms, nor your spouses when they commit adultery,* etc.] Either not punish them at all, so that they shall go on in sin, and to a greater degree, to the disgrace and reproach of their parents and husbands; or not as yet, or not so severely in them, because it was by their example they were led into it. Jarchi’s note is very impertinent, that God threatens them with the disuse of the bitter waters of jealousy. The words are by some rendered interrogatively, “shall I not punish your daughters?” etc.^{f89}; verily I will; and not them only, but their parents and husbands too, who deserve more severe corrections:

for themselves are separated with whores, and sacrifice with harlots; they separated themselves to Baalpeor, that shameful idol, (^{<3090>}Hosea 9:10), the Priapus of the Gentiles, in whose idolatrous worship many obscene rites were used; these men separated themselves from their wives, as well as from God and his worship, and from the company and conversation of men, and in private committed uncleanness with the women that attended, and with the female priests that officiated at the worship of idols; those “sanctified” ones, as the word may be rendered; and after that ate of things offered to idols with them. So the Targum,

“they associated themselves with whores, and ate and drank with harlots.”

Some versions understand the latter of catamites, or sodomitical persons, and of the wickedness practised by them in such places.

Therefore the people that doth not understand; the law, as the Targum; what is to be done, and what to be avoided; the difference between the true and false religion; have no knowledge of divine and spiritual things, at least are very wavering and unsettled in their minds about religion, having thought little, and know less, of the matter:

shall fall: into idolatry and adultery, led by such examples. So the Septuagint version, “is implicated with a whore”; or “embraces a whore”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions; (see ^{<3102>}Proverbs 7:22 ^{<3124>}22:14) or shall

fall into calamities, ruin, and destruction; shall be dashed, as the Targum; so the Arabic interpreter of (~~4025~~ Mark 9:26 ~~4042~~ Luke 9:42), uses the word: though Aben Ezra and Kimchi say, that in the Arabic language it signifies to be perplexed and disturbed, so as not to know what to do^{f90}. The first sense seems to be best, of being scandalized, offended, and stumbling and falling into sin; and which Abarbinel suggests, and it agrees with what follows concerning Judah.

Ver. 15. *Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend,* etc.] That is, though the Israelites, the people of the ten tribes, committed adultery, both corporeal and spiritual, in their idolatrous worship, as before observed, to which they had been used ever since the times of Jeroboam the first, and were hardened therein, and from which there were little hopes of reforming them; yet let not the men of Judah be guilty of the same crimes, who have as yet retained the pure worship of God among them; where the house of God is, and the priests of the Lord officiate, and sacrifices are offered up to him according to his will, and all other parts of religious service are performed: or the whole seems to be directed to Israel, as an exhortation to them, that though they had given into such abominations, yet should be careful not to offend Judah, or cause them to stumble and fall, and become guilty of the same sins, and so be exposed to the same punishment; and which would be an aggravation of Israel's sin, to draw others into it with them:

and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven; to worship idols in those places; otherwise it might be lawful to go to them on any civil accounts: Gilgal was upon the borders of the ten tribes, between them and Judah, where Joshua circumcised the Israelites; kept the first passover in the land; and where the ark and tabernacle were for a time; and perhaps for these reasons was chosen for a place of idolatrous worship: Bethaven is the same with Bethel, the name Jacob gave it, signifying the house of God; but when Jeroboam set up one of his calves here, the prophets, by way of contempt, called it Bethaven, the house of iniquity, or the house of an idol; though there was a place called Bethaven near Bethel, and Ai, as Kimchi observes, and as appears from (~~4072~~ Joshua 7:2), yet Bethel was sometimes so called, as it seems to be here, because of the idolatry in it; and so the Talmudists^{f91} say, the place called Bethel is now called Bethaven. Now the question is, whether Judah or Israel are here addressed; many interpreters carry it in the former sense, as if the men of Judah were dissuaded from going to these places for worship, when the temple, the proper place of

worship, was in their own tribe; but the speech seems rather to be directed to the Israelites, to stop going to these places for worship; for being so near to Judah, they might be the means of ensnaring and drawing them into the same idolatrous practices:

nor swear, the Lord liveth; or swear by the living God, so long as they worshipped idols; for it was not well pleasing to God to have his name used by idolaters, or joined with their idols: especially as they meant their idol when they swore by the Lord.

Ver. 16. *For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer*, etc.] A heifer or young cow Israel is compared unto; the rather, because of the object of their idolatrous worship, the calves at Daniel and Bethel: the Septuagint calls them “heifers”: which they are hereby put in mind of, and upbraided with; as also to express their brutish stupidity in worshipping such idols, in which they obstinately persisted: and so were like a “refractory” and “untamed” heifer, as some^{f92} render it, which will not be kept within bounds, either within doors or without, but breaks through, and passes over, all fences and enclosures; as they did, who transgressed the laws of God, and would not be restrained by them: or like a heifer unaccustomed to the yoke, which will not submit to it, but wriggles its neck from under it: so the Israelites would not be subject to the yoke of the law of God, were sons of Belial, children without a yoke; or like one, though yoked, yet would not draw the plough, but slid back in the furrows, even though goaded; so they, though stimulated by the prophets, whose words were as goads and pricks to push them on, yet would not hearken to them, but pulled away the shoulder, and slid back from the ways and worship of God; hence called backsliding Israel, (²⁴⁸⁶Jeremiah 3:6), and this is either a reason why Judah should not follow their example, because backsliders, or why they should be punished, as follows:

now, or “therefore”^{f93},

the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place: not that they were like lambs for the good properties of them, innocence, harmlessness, meekness, and patience; nor fed as the Lord feeds his lambs, and gathers them in his arms; but either as a heifer in sheep pasture, in short commons, for that creature cannot live where sheep and lambs can; or rather as a lamb that is alone, separate from the flock, not under the care of any shepherd; but exposed to every beast of prey upon a large common, on a wild desert and uncultivated place; afraid of every thing it hears and sees; bleating after its

dam, of whose sustenance and nourishment it is destitute; and so is expressive of the state and condition of Israel in captivity, in the large Assyrian empire; and dispersed among the nations, where they were weak and helpless, destitute of all good things, and exposed to all dangers, and to every enemy. Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand the words in a good sense, that the Lord would have fed them as lambs in a large place, in an affluent manner, but that they rebelled and backslided: and to this sense the Targum seems to incline, which paraphrases the whole verse thus,

“for as an ox which is fattened and kicks, so Israel rebels because of the multitude of good things; now the Lord will lead them as a choice lamb in a valley,”

or plain: and so Noldius, “though Israel is refractory”, etc.

notwithstanding the Lord will feed them, etc.; and indeed the phrase is used in a good sense in (²³¹³Isaiah 30:23), but there herds and flocks are spoken of, and not a single lamb, as here; though Kimchi thinks the singular is put for the plural, lamb for lambs.

Ver. 17. *Ephraim is joined to idols*, etc.] That is, the ten tribes of Israel, frequently so called after their separation from the rest, because that Jeroboam, by whom the revolt was made, was of that tribe; and because that tribe was the principal of them, and Samaria, the metropolis of their kingdom, was in it: and so the Targum here renders it,

“the house of Israel are joined to idols;”

to the calves at Daniel and Bethel; to Baal, and other idols, they worshipped: the phrase expresses their strong affection for them, their constant worship of them, and their obstinate persisting therein, and the difficulty there was of bringing them off of it; they cleaved to their idols, were glued, and as it were wedded unto them, and there was no separating of them; as men are, who are addicted to the lusts of the flesh, to the mammon of unrighteousness, or to their own self-righteousness, or to any idol they set up in their hearts as such: hence it follows,

let them alone: which are either the words of the Lord to the prophet, enjoining him to prophesy no more to them; to reprove them no more for their sins, since it was all to no purpose, there was no reclaiming them, so Jarchi and Kimchi; and therefore let them alone, let them go on in their sins, and in their errors, and in their superstition and idolatry; (see

^{<418>}Ezekiel 3:26 ^{<1514>}Matthew 15:14). God was determined to let them alone himself, and therefore bids his prophet to do so likewise: and sad is the case with men when he lets them alone, and will not disturb their consciences any more by jogs and convictions, but gives them up to a seared conscience, to hardness of heart, and to their own lusts; when he will not hedge up their way with thorns, or distress them with afflictive providences, and hinder them from going on in a course of sin and wickedness; nor give them restraining grace, but suffer them to go on in the broad road, till they drop into hell; and says of them,

let him that is filthy be filthy still, (^{<621>}Revelation 22:11) or else they are the words of the prophet to the men of Judah, to have nothing to do with Israel, since they were such backsliders and idolaters; to have no communion and conversation with them, but let them be alone, and worship alone for them; since what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness, light with darkness, Christ with Belial, a believer with an infidel, or the temple of the living God with idols and idolaters? (^{<404>}2 Corinthians 6:14,15 ^{<451>}Ephesians 5:11), some take them to be the words of the prophet to God concerning Israel, approving of his righteous judgments, in threatening to feed them as a lamb in a large place; dismiss him thither, suffer and leave him to feed there. The Targum interprets it of their sin, and not their punishment,

“they have left their worship;”

the service of God.

Ver. 18. *Their drink is sour*, etc.] In their stomachs, having drunk so much that they cannot digest it; hence nauseous eructations, with a filthy stench, are belched out; so it is a charge of drunkenness which Ephraim or the ten tribes were addicted to, and are accused of, (^{<230>}Isaiah 28:1) or “their drink is gone”^{f94}; it has lost its colour, brightness, smell, and flavour; it is turned to vinegar; expressive of the general corruption and depravity of manners and religion among them; (see ^{<202>}Isaiah 1:22) or “their drink departeth”, or “causeth to depart”; or “is refractory”^{f95}; that is, it made them refractory, like a refractory belief, as before; caused them to depart from God and his worship, and led them into all sin and irreligion, particularly what follows:

they have committed whoredom continually; corporeal whoredom, which drunkenness leads to; and spiritual whoredom or idolatry, which they had

committed, and continued in, ever since the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and increased therein:

her rulers with shame do love, give ye; or “her shields”^{f96}; those that should have been the protectors of Israel, compared before to a heifer; and preserved them not only from their external enemies, but from all innovations in religion; and which we rightly enough render “rulers”, civil and ecclesiastic, kings, princes, and priests; (see ^{
}Psalm 47:9), these “loved, give ye”, which was a “shame” to them: the sense is, either they loved gifts and bribes, and were continually saying, “give, give”, when causes were to be tried, and so perverted justice and judgment, which was very shameful; or they loved wine and strong drink, and therefore required it to be continually given them, which was very scandalous in rulers more especially, (^{
}Proverbs 30:4); or they loved whoredom, both in a corporeal and spiritual sense, and desired more harlots and more idols, and added to their old ones, which was very abominable and ignominious. So the Targum,

“they turned themselves after fornication they loved, which brought shame unto them;”

and these may be considered as so many reasons why Judah should have nothing to do with Israel.

Ver. 19. *The wind hath bound her up in her wings*, etc.] That is, the wind in its wings hath bound up Ephraim, Israel, or the ten tribes, compared to a heifer; meaning, that the wind of God’s wrath and vengeance, or the enemy, the Assyrian, should come like a whirlwind, and carry them swiftly, suddenly, and irresistibly, out of their own land, into a foreign country: the past tense for the future, as is common in prophecy, because of the certainty of it; so Jarchi and Joseph Kimchi: but Aben Ezra, David Kimchi, Abarbinel, and Abendana, render it “she”, that is, Israel, “hath bound up the wind in her wings”^{f97}; meaning that they had laboured in vain in their idolatrous worship; and it was all one as if a than should attempt to gather the wind, and bind it up in the skirts of his garment, and when he opens them there is nothing to be found: and to this sense is the Targum,

“the works of their great men are not right, as it is impossible to bind the wind in a wing;”

referring to the sins of their rulers, as before: or rather the sense is, the wind shall get into the loose skirts of the garments of, he Israelites, which

shall be as a sail to it, as Schmidt observes, and shall carry them into distant lands; which falls in with the first sense of the words, and is best:

and they shall be ashamed because of their sacrifices: they of the ten tribes, the people of Israel; or their shields, their rulers, as Aben Ezra, shall be filled with shame, being disappointed of the help they expected from their idols, to whom they offered sacrifices; and the more, inasmuch as they will find that these idolatrous sacrifices are the cause of their ruin and destruction. The Targum is,

“because of the altars of their idols;”

and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, “because of their altars”.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 5

The design of this chapter is to expose the sins of Israel and of Judah, and to declare the judgment of God upon them for them. Men of all ranks in Israel are summoned to attend to the charge brought against them, and the sentence on them, (~~2891~~Hosea 5:1). The charge exhibited is, that they were guilty of in, hating men to the slaughter of idolatrous sacrifices, though they had been sufficiently rebuked and corrected, (~~2891~~Hosea 5:1,2); of both corporeal and spiritual adultery, whereby they were defiled, and which was well known to the Lord, (~~2898~~Hosea 5:3); of obstinate persistence in impenitence, owing to the efficacy of an unclean spirit in them, and their want of the knowledge of God, (~~2891~~Hosea 5:4); of open pride, which stared them in the face, and for which they fell into calamities, and Judah with them, and should not be able with all their sacrifices to find favour with God, who had withdrawn himself from them, (~~2895~~Hosea 5:5,6); also of treacherous dealing with the Lord by their spiritual adultery, and begetting strange children, (~~2897~~Hosea 5:7); next their punishment is denounced, of which notice was to be given them by the sound of the trumpet, as an alarm of war, or as calling for mourning, (~~2898~~Hosea 5:8); since Ephraim would become desolate, of which notification had been made among the tribes, (~~2898~~Hosea 5:9); and wrath would be poured out in great abundance on the princes of Judah, who were very wicked men, (~~2891~~Hosea 5:10); and Ephraim would be oppressed and broken by the judgment of God, who would be as a moth unto them, and also rottenness to Judah, because they followed the commandments of men, (~~2891~~Hosea 5:11,12); and, what was still more provoking, when they were sensible of their calamities and distresses, they sought not help from the Lord, but from men that could do them no good; and therefore he threatens to be as a devouring lion to them, (~~2893~~Hosea 5:13,14); and yet the chapter concludes with a promise of the conversion of these people, after the Lord had dealt with them in an angry manner, (~~2895~~Hosea 5:15).

Ver. 1. *Hear ye this, O priests*, etc.] Though idolatrous ones, who called themselves priests, and were reckoned so by others, though not of the tribe

of Levi, but such as Jeroboam had made priests, or were their successors; and there might be some of the family of Aaron and tribe of Levi, that might continue in the cities of Israel, and who gave in to the idolatrous worship of those times. Some render it “princes”^{f98} and the word signifies both:

and hearken, ye house of Israel; not the kingdom of Judah, as Kimchi, for this is manifestly distinguished from Israel in this chapter; nor the sanhedrim, to which sense Aben Ezra seems to incline; but the ten tribes, the whole kingdom of Israel, the common people in it:

and give ye ear, O house of the king; of the king of Israel, who, at this time, is thought to be Menahem; the royal family, the princes of the blood, and all that belonged to the king’s court; all of every office, priestly or kingly, of every rank, high and low, are called upon to hearken to what is about to be said, both concerning their sin and punishment:

for judgment [is] toward you: either to know and do that which is just and right; it belonged to the priests to know and teach divine judgment, to instruct the people in the knowledge of the judgments, statutes, and laws of God; and it belonged to, the king to execute human judgment, to do justice and judgment according to the laws of God, and of the realm; and it belonged to the people to attend to both: so the Targum,

“does it not “belong” to you to know judgments?”

or rather this is to be understood of punitive justice and judgment, of the sentence of condemnation, or denunciation of punishment for sin: the reasons of which follow,

because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor; these were two high mountains in the land of Israel; the former was near Hermon and Lebanon, and the same with Gilead, (^{<611B>}Joshua 11:3 ^{<611B>}Judges 11:29); the latter was a mountain in Galilee, between Issachar and Zebulun, six miles from Nazareth: it was, according to Joseph ben Gorion^{f99} almost four miles high, had on the top of it a plain of almost three miles; the true Josephus^{f100} says it was three and a quarter miles; (see Gill on “^{<241B>}Jeremiah 46:18”); the Jews^{f101} have a tradition, that Jeroboam set spies upon these mountains at the time of the solemn feasts, to watch who went to them out of Israel, and to inform against them; but these could not command all the roads leading to Jerusalem. It may be these mountains were much infested with hawkers and hunters, to which there may be an

allusion; and the sense be, ye priests, people, and king, are like to those that set snares and nets on those hills, as they to ensnare and catch creatures, so ye to ensnare and draw men into idolatrous practices; or rather, since there is no note of comparison, the meaning is, that they set up altars, and offered sacrifices on these hills, and thereby ensnared not only those of their own tribes, but drew and enticed many of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to fall in with the same idolatrous practices.

Ver. 2. *And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter,* etc.] The revolvers are the king, priests, and people, who had revolted from the true worship and ways of God unto idolatry. These formed deep laid schemes, and took crafty methods, like hawkers; who lay themselves flat upon the ground to manage their snares and nets, and observe the creatures that fall into them, and take them, and whom they artfully decoy, to which the allusion is; and that either to slay those who would not comply with their false worship; or rather to multiply the sacrifices of slain beasts, and offer them with a great show of devotion and religion, and thereby beguile, entice, and ensnare simple and unwary souls; so the Targum,

“they sacrifice to idols abundantly;”

and which, in the sight of God, was mere slaughter and butchery:

though I [have been] a rebuker of them all; king, priests, and prophets; those idolaters, revolvers, or worshippers of Baal, as Aben Ezra calls them: this is to be interpreted either of the prophet, who had freely, faithfully, and openly reprov'd all orders of men for their departure from God and his worship, and for their idolatrous practices; or of the Lord himself, which comes to the same sense, who had rebuked them by his prophets, and corrected them by his judgments, but to no purpose: and therefore they could not plead ignorance, or excuse themselves upon that account.

Ver. 3. *I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me,* etc.] Though they may cover their designs from men, and seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and make plausible pretences for what they do, and put on an appearance of religion; yet God, who knows all men, and their hearts, cannot be deceived; he judges not according to outward appearance; all things are naked and open to him; nor can any hide themselves from him; he knows their persons, intentions, and designs, as well as actions. Kimchi interprets Ephraim of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who was of that tribe; others, of the tribe itself, and Israel of the other nine tribes; others take

Ephraim for the ten tribes, and Israel for the two tribes: but it is best to understand Ephraim and Israel of the same, even of the ten tribes; whose works, as the Targum paraphrases it, the Lord knew, particularly what follows:

for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom; both corporeal and spiritual adultery, which frequently went together, as observed in the preceding chapter: the Lord knew their corporeal whoredom, though ever so secretly committed, and their spiritual adultery or idolatry, under all the specious pretences of worshipping him; which was an abhorrence to him, as well as a pollution to them:

[and] Israel is defiled; with the same sins; for all sin is of a defiling nature, and especially those mentioned, which defile body and soul, and render men loathsome and abominable in the sight of God.

Ver. 4. *They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God*, etc.] Either their evil doings; they will not leave, as the Targum and Jarchi^{f102}; their evil ways and worship, their adultery and idolatry; which was necessary to repentance and true conversion to God, whom they yet professed to be their God, though they had so sadly departed from him: or their good works; they did not choose to do them, which were leading steps to repentance and conversion, or fruits and evidences of it: they had no mind to repent of their sins, and turn from them to the Lord; they had no thought, care, or concern, about these things, but obstinately persisted in their sins and in their impenitence: their wills were wretchedly depraved and corrupted; their hearts hard, perverse, and obstinate; they had no will to that which is good:

for the spirit of whoredom [is] in the midst of them; an unclean spirit, that prompts them to and pushes them on to commit corporeal and spiritual whoredom; the bias and inclination of their minds were this way which put them upon such evil practices; the spirit of error, which caused them to err, as the Targum and Kimchi; the lying spirit in the false prophets which encouraged them therein; and even himself, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience:

and they have not known the Lord; ignorance of God, his nature and perfections, his will, word, and worship, was the cause of their idolatry, and other sins; (see ~~<XIII>~~ Hosea 4:1); and this was wilful and affected

ignorance; they knew not, nor would they understand: they rejected the knowledge of God, and the means of it; so the Targum,

“and they sought not instruction (or doctrine) from the Lord.”

Ver. 5. *And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face*, etc.] Or, “does” or “shall answer to his face”^{f103}; contradicts him, convicts him, and fills him with shame; the pride of his heart, and of his countenance, and which appears in all his actions, and which is open and manifest to all, shall stare him in the face, and confound him; even all the sinful actions done by him in a proud and haughty manner, in contempt of God and of his laws, shall fly in his face, and fill him with dread and horror. The Targum is,

“the glory of Israel shall be humbled, and they seeing [it]:”

instead of greatness, glory, and honour, they formerly had, they shall be in a mean low condition, even in their own land, before they go into captivity; and which their eyes shall behold, as Kimchi explains the paraphrase; and to this sense Jarchi and Aben Ezra incline; and so read the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions. Some understand this of God himself, who, formerly, at least, was the pride, glory, and excellency of Israel; of whom they were proud, and boasted, and gloried in; even he shall be a swift witness against them: and

therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; that is, the ten tribes shall fall by and for their iniquities, such as before mentioned, into ruin and misery; it has respect to their final destruction and captivity by the Assyrians; they first fell into sin, and then by it into ruin: (see ^{<3840>}Hosea 14:1);

Judah also shall fall with them; the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as they fell into idolatry, and were guilty of the same crimes, so should be involved in the same or like punishment, though not at the same time; for the Babylonish captivity, in which Judah was carried captive, was many years after Israel was carried captive by the Assyrians: unless this is to be understood of the low, afflicted, and distressed condition of Judah, in the times of Ahaz, by Tiglathpileser, king of Assyria, who had a little before carried captive part of Israel, and by others; and in which times Judah fell into idolatrous practices, and fell by them; (see ^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:29 ^{<1267>}16:7,8 ^{<1405>}2 Chronicles 28:5,6,16-20).

Ver. 6. *They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord*, etc.] Not only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, to whom Kimchi, Aben Ezra, and Abarbinel, restrain the words; but the ten tribes of Israel also, who, when in distress, and seeing ruin coming upon them, should seek the Lord; seek help from him against their enemies, and the pardon of their sins; seek his face and favour, and to appease his wrath, by bringing a multitude of sacrifices out of their flocks and herds; such a number of them, as if they brought all their flocks and herds with them; but not with true repentance for their sins, nor with faith in the great sacrifice, which legal sacrifices, rightly performed, prefigured. Kimchi refers this to the times of Josiah; but, as it respects Israel as well as Judah, it seems to design some time a little before the ruin of them both:

but they shall not find [him]; shall not find grace and mercy with him; he will not be favourable to them, will not afford them any help, but give them up to utter ruin and destruction; as he did Israel at the Assyrian captivity, and Judah at the Babylonish captivity:

he hath withdrawn himself from them; the glory of the Lord departed from them; his Shechinah, or divine Majesty, as the Targum, removed from them, because of their idolatry, and other sins; they sought him not where and while he was to be found; and therefore, when they sought him, found him not, because he had withdrawn his presence from among them, being provoked by their iniquities.

Ver. 7. *They have dealt treacherously against the Lord*, etc.] Which was the reason of his departure from them; as a woman deals treacherously with her husband when she is unfaithful to him, and commits adultery; so Israel and Judah dealt treacherously with the Lord, who stood in the relation of a husband to them in covenant, by committing idolatry;

for they have begotten strange children; either of strange women, the daughters of idolatrous Heathens they married, so the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or rather their natural children, though born of Israelitish or Jewish parents, both such; yet being educated by them in an idolatrous way, and brought up in the commission of the evils their parents were guilty of, are said to be strange children to the Lord, alienated from him and his worship, and as such to be begotten:

now shall a month devour them with their portions; the Jews understand this literally of the month Ab, the time of Jerusalem's destruction, so Jarchi

and R. Jeshuah in Aben Ezra and Ben Melech; or the month Tammuz, in which the city was broke up, and the month Ab, in which it was destroyed, as Kimchi; or rather, which is also a sense he mentions, it signifies a short time, a very little while before the destruction should come; and compares it with (^{<3818>}Zechariah 11:8); though, according to the Targum, it is to be understood of every month; and so denotes the continual desolation that should be made, until they were utterly destroyed; but others seem better to interpret it of their new moon, or first day of the month, which they observed in a religious way, by offering sacrifice, etc. and on which they depended; but this should be so far from being of any service to them, that it should turn against them; and, because of the idolatry committed in them, the Lord would hate them, and destroy them on account of them; even their farms, and fields, and vineyards, which were their portions and inheritances; (see ^{<3013>}Isaiah 1:13,14); unless it is rather to be understood of the parts of the beasts slain in sacrifice on those days, to appease the Lord; which would be so far from doing it, that they would provoke him yet more to wrath, and slay them.

Ver. 8. *Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, [and] the trumpet in Ramah, etc.]*

As an alarm of war, to give notice that the enemy is at hand, just ready to invade the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and bring destruction upon them; according to the Targum, the words are directed to the prophets,

“O ye prophets, lift up your voice like a trumpet;”

to declare to the people of Judah their sins and transgressions, and the punishment that would be inflicted on them for them; or it may be, this is a call of the people to fasting, mourning, and lamentation, as in (^{<2000>}Joel 2:1,15). Gibeah is the same which is called “Gibeah of Saul”, (^{<0910>}1 Samuel 11:4); it being the birth place of that prince; and which Josephus^{f104} calls Gabathsaul, and interprets it the hill of Saul, and says it was distant from Jerusalem about four miles; though elsewhere^{f105} he represents it as but two and a half miles; perhaps in the latter place there is a corruption in the number; for, according to Jerom, it was near Ramah, which was seven miles from Jerusalem; he says it is called also “Gibeah of Benjamin”, (^{<0912>}1 Samuel 13:2); because it was in that tribe, as was also Ramah; which, according to Eusebius^{f106}, was six miles from Jerusalem; these were near to each other; (see ^{<07913>}Judges 19:13); so that the calamity threatened is what respects the two tribes:

cry aloud [at] Bethaven; the same with Bethel, or a place near unto it, in the tribe of Benjamin, or on the borders of Ephraim; (see ^{<3045>}Hosea 4:15). According to the above writer^{f107}, it lay about twelve miles from Jerusalem; in the way to Sichem; and being upon the borders both of Benjamin and Ephraim, it sometimes belonged to Israel, and sometimes to Judah; (see ^{<4139>}2 Chronicles 13:19); and seeing, as Jerom observes, that Benjamin was at the back of it (for where the tribe of Benjamin ended, not far in the tribe of Ephraim, according to him, was this city built), it therefore very beautifully follows,

after thee, O Benjamin; that is, either the enemy is after thee, O Benjamin, is just at hand, ready to fall upon thee, and destroy thee, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech; or rather, after the trumpet is blown in Gibeah and Ramah, cities which belonged to Benjamin, let it be blown, either in Bethaven, on the borders of Benjamin and Ephraim; or let it be blown in the tribe of Judah, so that all the twelve tribes may have notice, and prepare for what is coming upon them.

Ver. 9. *Ephraim shall he desolate in the day of rebuke*, etc.] The country of the ten tribes shall be laid desolate, the inhabitants of them destroyed either by the sword, or famine, or pestilence, and the rest carried captive, as they were by Shalmaneser; and this was the day of the Lord's rebuke and chastisement of them: or of the reward of their sins, as the Targum, when the Lord punished them for them; and this is what the trumpet was to be blown for, in order to give notice of, or to call for mourning on account of it:

among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be; this desolation was foretold by the prophets, and published in all the tribes of Israel, as what should certainly come to pass; and therefore they could not plead ignorance of it, or say they had no notice given them, or they would have repented of their sins. The Targum is,

“in the tribes of Israel I have made known the law;”

so Jarchi; which they transgressed, and therefore were made desolate; or the word of truth, as Kimchi; the true and faithful word, that if they walked in his ways, hearkened unto him, it would be well with them; but, if not, he would destroy their land, and carry them captive.

Ver. 10. *The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound*, etc.] Or landmark, which to do was contrary to the law, (^{<6594>}Deuteronomy

19:14); and has always been reckoned a heinous sin among all nations, and is only done by such who have no regard to right and wrong, and by them secretly; and such were the kings, princes, and nobles of Judah; they secretly committed the grossest iniquities, yea, were abandoned to their vile lusts, and could not be contained within any bounds. The “caph” here used is, according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, not a note of similitude, but of certainty; and then the sense is, that the princes of Judah did remove the bound; either, in a literal sense, by force and violence seized on the possessions and inheritances of their neighbours which lay next to theirs; or, in a figurative sense, they broke through all bounds and limits, and transgressed the laws of God and men, being not to be restrained by either:

[therefore] I will pour out my wrath upon them like water; in great abundance, and with such force and vehemence, as not to be stopped, but utterly destroy; like a flood of water, which overflows the banks, or breaks them down, and carries all before it; or like the flood of water that came upon the earth, and carried off the world of the ungodly; in like manner should the wrath of God be poured down from heaven upon these princes without measure, exceeding all bounds, in just retaliation for their removing the bounds of their neighbours, or transgressing the laws of God: this was fulfilled either in the times of Ahaz, when Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah king of Israel, as well as Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, greatly afflicted Judah, (~~420~~2 Chronicles 28:1-27); or at the time of the Babylonish captivity.

Ver. 11. *Ephraim [is] oppressed, [and] broken in judgment*, etc.] Here the prophet again returns to the ten tribes, who were oppressed and broken, either by their own judgments, as the Targum; by the tyranny of their kings, and the injustice of their judges, who looked only for the mammon of unrighteousness; or by the judgment of their enemies, the Assyrians, the taxes they laid upon them, the devastations they made among them, and by whom, at last, they were carried captive; or by the judgments of God upon them; for all the enemy did was by his permission, and according to his will:

because he willingly walked after the commandment; not after the commandment of God, but after the commandment of men, as Aben Ezra; or after the commandment of the prophets of Baal, as Jarchi; or after the commandment of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, as Kimchi, by worshipping the calves at Daniel and Bethel he set up there.

Ver. 12. *Therefore [will] I [be] unto Ephraim as a moth*, etc.] Which eats garments, penetrates into them, feeds on them privately, secretly, without any noise, and gradually and slowly consumes them; but at last utterly, that they are of no use and profit: this may signify the various things which befell the ten tribes in the reigns of Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, and Pekah, which secretly and gradually weakened them; and the utter consumption of them in the times of Hoshea by Shalmaneser:

and to the house of Judah as rottenness; as rottenness in the bones, (^{<3004>}Proverbs 12:4); which can never be got out or cured; or as a worm that eats into wood, as Jarchi interprets it; and gets into the very heart of a tree, and eats it out: thus the Lord threatens the house of Judah, or the two tribes, with a gradual, yet thorough, ruin and destruction.

Ver. 13. *When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah [saw] his wound*, etc.] That their civil state were in a sickly condition, very languid, weak, feeble, and tottering, just upon the brink of ruin; (see ^{<2006>}Isaiah 1:6);

then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to King Jareb; that is, the ten tribes, or the king of them, went and met the Assyrian king; and Judah the two tribes, or the king of them, sent ambassadors to King Jareb; which sense the order of the words, in connection with the preceding clause, seems to require: by the Assyrian and King Jareb we are to understand one and the same, as appears from the following words, “yet could he not heal etc.”, whereas, if they were different, it would have been expressed, “yet could they not heal etc.”, and the king of Assyria is meant, who: also is called King Jareb, or rather king of Jareb^{f108}; (see ^{<3006>}Hosea 10:6); for this does not seem to be the name of the king of Assyria himself; though it may be that Pul, or Tiglathpileser, or Shalmaneser, might have more names than one, whoever is meant; but rather it is the name of some place in Assyria, as Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and Ben Melech, from which the country may be here denominated; though the Targum takes it to be, not the proper name of a man or place, but an appellative, paraphrasing it,

“and sent to the king that shall come to avenge them;”

and so other interpreters^{f109} understand it, rendering it, either the king that should defend, as Tremellius; or the king the adversary, or litigator, as Cocceius, Hillerus^{f110}, and Gussetius^{f111}; a court adversary, that litigates a point, contends with one, and is an advocate for another; or, as Hiller elsewhere^{f112} renders it, the king that lies in wait: this was fulfilled with

respect to Ephraim, when Menahem king of Israel, or the ten tribes, often meant by Ephraim, went and met Pul king of Assyria, and gave him a thousand talents to depart out of his land; perceiving his own weakness to withstand him, and in order to strengthen and confirm the kingdom in his hand, (^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:19); or when Hoshea king of Israel gave presents to Shalmaneser king of Assyria, and became a servant to him, till he could get stronger, and shake off his yoke, (^{<1278>}2 Kings 17:3); and with respect to Judah it had its accomplishment when Ahaz king of Judah sent messengers to Tiglathpileser king of Assyria to come and help him against the kings of Syria and Israel, finding he was not strong enough to oppose them himself, (^{<1267>}2 Kings 16:7); now all this was highly provoking to the Lord, that when both Israel and Judah found themselves in a weak condition, and unable to resist their enemies, instead of seeking to him for help they applied to a foreign prince, and which proved unsuccessful to them:

yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound; but, on the contrary, afflicted them, hurt and destroyed them; there being a “meiosis” in the words, which expresses less than is designed; for though, with respect to Ephraim or Israel, Pul king of Assyria desisted from doing any damage to Israel, yet a successor of his, TiglathPileser, came and took several places of Israel, and carried the inhabitants captive; and at last came Shalmaneser, and took Samaria, the metropolis of the land, and carried all the ten tribes captive, (^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:29 ^{<1270>}17:4-6); and so, with respect to Judah, Tiglathpileser, whom Ahaz sent unto for help, not only did not help and strengthen him, but afflicted him, (^{<1483>}2 Chronicles 28:20); thus when sensible sinners see their spiritual maladies, and feel the smart of their wounds, and make a wrong application for relief, to their tears, repentance, and humiliation, and to works of: righteousness, or to anything or person short of Christ the great Physician, they meet with no success, find no relief until better directed.

Ver. 14. *For I [will be] unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah,* etc.] Being provoked by their above conduct and behaviour in seeking to others, and not to him, for help, he threatens to punish them in a more public and severe manner; not be to them only as a moth and rottenness, but as a lion, and as a young lion, creatures strong and fierce, that destroy and devour all that come into their hands, and from whom there is no deliverance: thus the Lord was both to Israel and Judah, by means of the Assyrians and Babylonians; the former are compared to a lion, that devoured Israel; and the latter to a young lion, that broke the

bones of Judah; (see ²⁸¹⁷Jeremiah 50:17); and last of all by means of the Romans, especially to Judah:

I, [even] I, will tear and go away; as a lion tears its prey in pieces it seizes upon, and goes away, and leaves it torn, having satisfied itself; and is in no fear of being pursued, or any vengeance taken on him for what he has done; so the Lord would destroy Israel and Judah, and leave them in their ruinous state, none being able to rise up and avenge their cause. The “I” is doubled, to express the certainty of it:

I will take away, and none shall rescue [him]; as the lion, having glutted itself with its prey, takes the rest away, and carries it to its den, where none dare come and take it from him; so the Lord signifies, that those of Israel and Judah that perished not by the sword of the enemy, or by famine or pestilence, should be carried captive, and none should be able to return them till he pleases: under the wrath and displeasure of God, and under this tearing, rending, and afflictive dispensation, they now are, and will continue till the time of their conversion.

Ver. 15. *I will go [and] return to my place*, etc.] Leave the countries of Israel and of Judah, where he had used to grant his gracious and spiritual presence unto his people, and watched over them, and cared for them, and bestowed many favours on them, and go up to heaven, the place of his more glorious presence, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret it; and there, as it were, shut himself up, particularly with respect to these people, as if he had no more thought of them, or concern for them: this is to be understood in a sense becoming and agreeable to the omnipresence of God:

till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face; till the Israelites acknowledge their idolatry, and the Jews their disbelief and rejection of the Messiah, and all other sins; till they ingenuously confess themselves to be guilty, or know and acknowledge they have sinned, as the Targum; and then humbly seek the face and favour of God, the remission of their sins from him, and acceptance with him:

in their affliction they will seek me early; in the morning, betimes, early, and earnestly; which affliction may be understood both of the Assyrian and Babylonish captivity; or rather of their present affliction toward the close of it, when they shall be sensible of their sins, and confess them, and look to him whom they have pierced, and mourn, and seek for pardon,

righteousness, and salvation, from him; and so all Israel shall be saved, of whose conversion this is a prophecy.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 6

This chapter gives an account of some who were truly penitent, and stirred up one another to return to the Lord, encouraged by his power, grace, and goodness, (~~301~~Hosea 6:1-3); and of others, who had only a form of religion, were very unstable in it; regarded more the ceremonial law, and the external sacrifices of it, than the moral law; either that part of it which respects the love of the neighbour, or that which concerns the knowledge of God; and dealt treacherously with the Lord, transgressing the covenant, (~~206~~Hosea 6:4-7); particularly the city of Gilead is represented as full of the workers of iniquity, and is charged with bloodshed, (~~208~~Hosea 6:8); yea, even the priests were guilty of murder and lewdness, (~~209~~Hosea 6:9); and Israel, or the ten tribes in general, are accused of whoredom, both corporeal and spiritual, with which they were defiled, (~~200~~Hosea 6:10); nor was Judah clear of these crimes, and therefore a reckoning day is set for them, (~~201~~Hosea 6:11).

Ver. 1. *Come, and let us return unto the Lord*, etc.] The Septuagint and Arabic versions connect these words with the last clause of the preceding chapter, adding the word, “saying”; and so the Targum and Syriac version, “they shall say”; and very rightly as to the sense; for they are the words of those persons under the afflicting hand of God; and, being brought thereby to a sense of their sins, acknowledge them, and seek to the Lord for pardon, and encourage one another so to do; as Israel and Judah will in the latter day, when the veil shall be taken off their minds, the hardness of their heart removed, and they shall be converted, and turn to the Lord, and seek him together, weeping as they go; having both faith in Christ, and repentance towards God, by which they will return unto him; (see ~~406~~2 Corinthians 3:16 ~~250~~Jeremiah 50:4,5); so all sinners sensible of their departure from God by sin, and of the evil and danger of it, repent of it, and loath it, confess and acknowledge it, depart from it, and forsake it; and return to the Lord, having some view and apprehension of him as a God, gracious and merciful in Christ; imploring the forgiveness of their sins, with some degree of faith and confidence in him; and not having only love to

their own souls, and the welfare of them, but also to the souls of others, exhort and encourage them to join with them in the same acts of faith, repentance, and obedience. The Targum is,

“let us return to the worship of the Lord;”

from which they have sadly departed. The arguments or reasons follow,

for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up; the same hand that has torn will heal and that has smitten will bind up, and none else can; and therefore there is a necessity of returning to him for healing and a cure, (^{<6523>}Deuteronomy 32:39); and his tearing is in order to heal, and his smiting in order to bind up; and, as sure as he has done the one, he will do the other, and therefore there is great encouragement to apply to him; all which the Jews will be sensible of in the last day; and then the Lord, who is now tearing them in his wrath, and smiting them in his sore displeasure, both in their civil and church state, dispersing them among the nations, and has been so doing for many hundred years, will “bind up the breach of his people, and heal the stroke of their wound”, (^{<2315>}Isaiah 30:26); and so the Lord deals with all his people, who are truly and really converted by him; he rends their heart, tears the caul of it; pricks and cuts them to the heart; smites them with the hammer of his word; wounds their consciences with a sense of sin; lets in the law into them, which works wrath, whereby they become broken and contrite; and all this in order to their turning to him that smites them, and be healed, and in love to their souls, though for the present grievous to bear: and then the great Physician heals them by his stripes and wounds; by the application of his blood; by means of his word, the Gospel of peace and pardon; by a look to him, and a touch of him by faith; by discoveries of his love, and particularly his pardoning grace and mercy, which as oil and wine he pours into the wounds made by sin, and binds them up; and which he heals universally, both with respect to persons and diseases, for which he is applied unto, and infallibly, thoroughly, and perfectly, and all freely.

Ver. 2. *After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up*, etc.] The Jews, in their present state, are as dead men, both in a civil and spiritual sense, and their conversion and restoration will be as life from the dead; they are like persons buried, and, when they are restored, they will be raised out of their graves, both of sin and misery; (see ^{<6115>}Romans 11:15 ^{<3711>}Ezekiel 37:11-14); the time of which is here fixed, after two days, and on the third; which Jarchi interprets of the two temples that have been

destroyed, and of the third temple to be built, which the Jews expect, but in vain, and when they hope for good times: Kimchi explains it of their three captivities, in Egypt, Babylon, and the present one, and so Ben Melech, from which they hope to be raised, and live comfortably; which sense is much better than the former: and with it may be compared Vitringa's^{f113} notion of the text, that the first day was between Israel's coming out of Egypt and the Babylonish captivity; the second day between that and the times of Antiochus, which was the third night; then the third day followed, which is the times of the Messiah: but the Targum comes nearer the truth, which paraphrases the words thus,

“he will quicken us in the days of consolation which are to come, and in the day of the resurrection of the dead he will raise us up;”

where by days of consolation are meant the days of the Messiah, with which the Jews generally connect the resurrection of the dead; and if we understand them of the last days of the Messiah, it is not much amiss; for the words respect the quickening and raising up of the Jews in the latter day, the times of Christ's spiritual coming and reign: and these two and three days may be expressive of a long and short time, as interpreters differently explain them; of a long time, as the third day is a long time for a man to lie dead, when there can be little or no hope of his reviving, (~~(Luke 24:21)~~ Luke 24:21); or of a short time, for which two or three days is a common phrase; and both true in this case: it is a long time Israel and Judah have been in captivity, and there may seem little hope of their restoration; but it will be a short time with the Lord, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years: and this I take to be the sense of the words, that after the second Millennium, or the Lord's two days, and at the beginning of the third, will be the time of their conversion and restoration, reckoning from the last destruction of them by the Romans; for not till then were Israel and Judah wholly in a state of death: many of Israel were mixed among those of Judah before the Babylonish captivity, and many returned with them from it; but, when destroyed by the Romans, there was an end of their civil and church state; which will both be revived on a better foundation at this period of time: but if this conjecture is not agreeable (for I only propose it as such), the sense may be taken thus, that in a short time after the repentance of Israel, and their conversion to the Lord, they will be brought into a very comfortable and happy state and condition, both with respect to things temporal and spiritual;

and we shall live in his sight; comfortably, in a civil sense, in their own land, and in the possession of all their privileges and liberties; and in a spiritual sense, by faith on Jesus Christ, whom they shall now embrace, and in the enjoyment of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances; and the prophet represents the penitents and faithful among them as believing and hoping for these things. This may be applied to the case of sensible sinners, who, as they are in their natural state dead in sin, and dead in law, so they see themselves to be such when awakened; and yet entertain a secret hope that sooner or later they shall be revived and refreshed, and raised up to a more comfortable state, and live in the presence of God, and the enjoyment of his favour. The ancient fathers generally understood these words of Christ, who was buried on the sixth day, lay in the grave the whole seventh day, and after these two days, on the third, rose again from the dead; and to this passage the apostle is thought to have respect, (~~45B~~ 1 Corinthians 15:3); and also of the resurrection of his people in and with him, and by virtue of his: and true it is that Christ rose from the dead on the third day, and all his redeemed ones were quickened and raised up together with him as their head and representative, (~~40B~~ Ephesians 2:5,6); and his in virtue of his being quickened that they are regenerated and quickened, and made alive, in a spiritual sense; he is the author of their spiritual life, and their life itself; (see ~~40B~~ 1 Peter 1:3); and not only in virtue of his resurrection is their spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace, but even their corporeal resurrection at the last day; and as, in consequence of their spiritual resurrection, they live in the sight of God a life of grace and holiness by faith in Christ, and in a comfortable view and enjoyment of the divine favour; so they shall live eternally in the presence of God, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore: but the first sense is best, and most agreeable to the context and scope of it.

Ver. 3. *Then shall we know, [if] we follow on to know the Lord*, etc.] The word “if” is not in the original text, and the passage is not conditional, but absolute; for as persons, when converted, know Christ, and not before, when he is revealed to them, and in them, as the only Saviour and Redeemer, so they continue and increase in the knowledge of him; they earnestly desire to know more of him, and eagerly pursue those means and methods by which they attain to a greater degree of it; for so the words are, “and we shall know, we shall follow on to know the Lord”^{f114}; that grace, which has given the first measure of spiritual and experimental knowledge of him, will influence and engage them to seek after more. The

Jews, when they are quickened, and turn to the Lord, will know him, own and acknowledge him, as the Messiah, the only Redeemer and Saviour; and will be so delighted with the knowledge of him, that they will be desirous of, and seek after, a larger measure of it; and indeed they shall all know him, from the least to the greatest, when the covenant of grace shall be renewed with them, manifested and applied to them. The words may be considered as a continuation of their exhortation to one another from (~~2000~~ Hosea 6:1); thus, “and let us acknowledge, let us follow on to know him”^{f115}; let us own him as the true Messiah, whom we and our fathers have rejected; and let us make use of all means to gain more knowledge of him: or let us follow after him, to serve and obey him, which is the practical knowledge of him; let us imitate him, and follow him the Lamb of God, embrace his Gospel, and submit to his ordinances. So Kimchi interprets it, “to know him”; that is, to serve him; first know him, then serve him;

his going forth is prepared as the morning; that is, the Lord’s going forth, who is known, and followed after to be more known; and is to be understood, not of his going forth in the council and covenant of grace from everlasting; nor of his incarnation in time, or of his resurrection from the dead; but of his spiritual coming in the latter day, with the brightness of which he will destroy antichrist; or of his going forth in the ministration of the Gospel, to the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, the light of which dispensation will be very great; it will be like a morning after a long night of darkness with the Jewish and Pagan nations; and be as grateful and delightful, beautiful and cheerful, as the morning light; and move as swiftly and irresistibly as that, and be alike growing and increasing: and so the words are a reason of the increasing knowledge of the Lord’s people in those times, because he shall go forth in the ministration of the word like the morning light, which increases more and more till noon; and of the evidence and clearness of it, it being like a morning without clouds; with which agrees the note of Joseph Kimchi,

“we shall know him, and it will be as clear to us as the light of the morning without clouds:”

and also of the firmness and certainty of it; for both the increasing knowledge of the saints, and the going forth of Christ in a spiritual manner, is “firm” and “sure” (which may be the sense of the word^{f116}) as the morning; for, as sure as the night cometh, so also the morning;

and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter [and] former rain unto the earth; in the land of Israel they had usually two rains in a year; the one in autumn, or quickly after the seed was sown; the other in the spring, when the corn was ripe, and harvest near, and which was very reviving and refreshing to the earth, and the fruits of it; and such will be the coming of Christ unto his people, in the ministration of the Gospel in the latter day, which will drop as the rain, and distil as the dew, as the small rain on the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass; and in the discoveries of his favour and love to them, and in the distribution of the blessings of his grace among them. Much the like phrases are used of the spiritual coming of Christ in the latter day, (^{497B}Psalm 72:6). The Targum is,

“and we shall learn, and we shall follow on, to know the fear of the Lord, as the morning light, which darts in its going out; and blessings will come to us as a prevailing rain, and as the latter rain which waters the earth.”

Ver. 4. *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?* etc.] Or, “for thee”^{f117}? The Lord having observed the effect and consequence of his going and returning to his place, of his leaving his people for a long time under afflictions and in distress; namely, their thorough conversion to him in the latter day, and the blessings attending it; returns to the then present times again, and to the state and condition in which Ephraim and Judah, the ten and two tribes, were; and speaks as one at a loss, and under difficulties, to know what to do with them and for them; how as it were to give them up to ruin and destruction; and yet, having tried all ways with them, and in vain, asks what further was to be done, or could be done, to bring them to a sense of their sins, to reform them, and cause them to return to him;

for your goodness [is] as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away; meaning not the goodness of God bestowed upon them, and the mercy he showed to them; but the goodness that appeared in them, and all the good things done by them, their repentance, reformation, holiness, and righteousness; these, which were only in show, did not last long, came to nothing, and disappeared; like a light cloud in the morning, which vanishes away when the sun rises; or like the dew that falls in the night, which is quickly dried up and gone, after the sun has been up a small time. Thus it was with Ephraim, or the ten tribes, in the time of Jehu; there was a show of zeal for religion, and a reformation from idolatry; but it did not go on,

nor last long; and with the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the times of Hezekiah and Josiah, who did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord; but then the Jews, in the times of their successors, returned to their former evil ways. And so the best works, holiness and righteousness of men, can no more stand before the justice of God, and the strict examination of it, than a thin light morning cloud, or the small drops of dew, before the light, force, and heat of the sun; nor do formal and carnal professors continue in these things; they may run well for a while, and then drop their profession and religion, and turn from the holy commandment. And this being the case, what can they expect from the Lord?

Ver. 5. *Therefore have I hewed [them] by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth,* etc.] Sharply reprov'd them for their sins by the prophets, who were as lapidaries that cut stone, or us hewers of timber that cut off the knotty parts; so these by preaching the terrors of the law, which is a killing letter, and by delivering out the threatenings of the Lord, and denouncing his judgments upon them for their sins, cut them to the heart, and killed them; for their foretelling and prophesying of their being slain, ruined, and destroyed, was a slaying of them; (see ^{<3010>}Jeremiah 1:10). The Targum is,

“because I admonished them by the message of my prophets, and they returned not, I will bring upon them those that slay, because they have transgressed the word of my will.”

But the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and so Aben Ezra and Joseph Kimchi, understand these words, not of hewing, and cutting, and slaying of the people by the prophets, but of the cutting and slaying the prophets themselves, and read the words, “therefore have I cut off the prophets, and slain them etc.”, either the false prophets, some of them that caused the people to err, that they might not repent, as Aben Ezra; as the prophets of Baal in the times of Elijah, and the Scribes and Pharisees in Christ’s time, who were in the way of the people’s repentance, reformation, and reception of Christ; these he cut off, and their doctrine, and condemned by his own, and the doctrine of his apostles, the words of the Lord’s mouth; (see ^{<3018>}Zechariah 11:8); and this he did for the good of his people, in answer to the question put by himself in (^{<2008>}Hosea 6:4); so Schmidt interprets it: or else the true prophets of God, who were exposed to death, to be cut off and slain, for the messages they were sent with: or those messages were such as were killing to them to carry them, and

deliver them; and they were so constantly employed, early and late, in such service, that for the work of the Lord they were often nigh unto death: but our version, and the sense agreeable to it, scent best;

and thy judgments [are as] the light [that] goeth forth; that is, their judgments, the people's, a sudden change of person: meaning either the statutes and judgments prescribed them by the Lord, and to be observed by them; which were clear and plain as the light at noon day, and therefore could not plead any excuse of ignorance of them, that they did not observe them: or the judgments of God upon them for their sins; which were open and manifest to all, and increasing like the light, more and more, and no more to be resisted than that; and the righteousness of God in them was very conspicuous; his judgments were manifest, and the justice of them. Some understand this of the judgments or righteousnesses of the saints, both imputed and inherent, (^{<41516>}Romans 5:16 ^{<4006>}Luke 1:6); which appear light and clear, the darkness of pharisaism being removed by Christ. The Targum is,

“my judgment goes forth as the light.”

Ver. 6. *For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice,* etc.] That is, the one rather than the other, as the next clause explains it. Sacrifices were of early use, even before the law of Moses; they were of divine appointment, and were approved and accepted of by the Lord; they were types of Christ, and led to him, and were continued unto his death; but in comparison of moral duties, which respect love to God, and to our neighbour, the Lord did not will them, desire them, and delight in them; or he had more regard for the former than the latter; (see ^{<0952>}1 Samuel 15:22 ^{<4123>}Mark 12:33,34); nor did he will or accept at all of the sacrifices ordered to the calves at Daniel and Bethel; nor others, when they were not such as the law required, or were not offered up in the faith of Christ, attended with repentance for sin, and in sincerity, and were brought as real expiatory sacrifices for sin, and especially as now abrogated by the sacrifice of Christ. And as these words are twice quoted by our Lord, at one time to justify his mercy, pity, and compassion, to the souls of poor sinners, by conversing with them, (^{<4093>}Matthew 9:13); and at another time to justify the disciples in an act of mercy to their bodies when hungry, by plucking ears of corn on the sabbath day, (^{<4017>}Matthew 12:7); “mercy” may here respect both acts of mercy shown by the Lord, and acts of mercy done by men; both which the Lord wills, desires, and delights in: he takes pleasure in showing mercy himself,

as appears by his free and open declarations of it; by the throne of grace and mercy he has set up; by the encouragement he gives to souls to hope in his mercy; by the objects of it, the chief of sinners; by the various ways he has taken to display it, in election, in the covenant of grace, in the mission of Christ, in the pardon of sin by him, and in regeneration; and by his opposing it to everything else, in the affair of salvation. And he likewise has a very great regard to mercy as exercised by men; as this is one of the weightier matters of the law, and may be put for the whole of it, or however the second table of it, which is love to our neighbours, and takes in all kind offices done to them; and especially designs acts of liberality to necessitous persons; which are sacrifices God is well pleased with, even more than with the ceremonious ones; these being such in which men resemble him the merciful God, who is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil;

and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings; which were reckoned the greatest and most excellent sacrifices, the whole being the Lord's; but knowledge of God is preferred to them; by which is meant, not the knowledge of God, the light of nature, which men might have, and not him; nor by the law of Moses, as a lawgiver, judge, and consuming fire; but a knowledge of him in Christ, as the God and Father of Christ, as the God of all grace, gracious and merciful in him; as a covenant God and Father in him, which is through the Gospel by the Spirit, and is eternal life, (^{<B7B>}John 17:3); this includes in it faith and hope in God, love to him, fear of him and his goodness, and the whole worship of him, both internal and external. These words seem designed to expose and remove the false ground of trust and confidence in sacrifices the people of Israel were prone unto; as we find they were in the times of Isaiah, who was contemporary with Hoses; (see ^{<B1D>}Isaiah 1:12-15). The Targum interprets them of those that exercise mercy, and do the law of the Lord.

Ver. 7. *But they, like men, have transgressed the covenant*, etc.] The false prophets, as Aben Ezra, whom he threatened to cut off and slay, (^{<B1B>}Hosea 6:5); or rather Ephraim and Judah, whose goodness was so fickle and unstable; and who, instead of doing acts of mercy, and seeking after the true knowledge of God and his worship, which are preferable to all sacrifices, they transgressed the law of God, which they promised at Mount Sinai to obey; the precepts of the moral law, even of both tables, which concern both God and man; and also the ceremonial law, by appointing priests to sacrifice who were not of the tribe of Levi, as did Ephraim or the

ten tribes under Jeroboam; and by offering sacrifices to their calves, and by not observing the solemn feasts; and the precepts relating to both these laws constitute the covenant made with the children of Israel at Sinai, (^(124B)Exodus 24:3-8); which they transgressed, either “like Adam”,^{f118} the first man, as Jarchi; who transgressed the covenant of works in paradise God made with him, and all mankind in him: or like the men of old, the former generations, as the Targum; meaning either the old inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites; or the men of the old world at the time of the flood, who were a very wicked and abandoned generation of men; or like men in common, depraved and degenerated, fickle and inconstant, vain and deceitful, and not at all to be depended upon; especially like the lower sort of men, the common people, who have no regard to their word, covenant, and agreement; or particularly like such men that are given to penury, and make no conscience of oaths and covenants ever so solemnly made: or, as others read the words, “but they have transgressed the covenant like man’s”^{f119}; making no more account of it than if it was a man’s covenant;

there have they dealt treacherously against me; in the covenant they entered into, by breaking it, not performing their promises; and even in the very sacrifices they offered, and were so fond of, and put their confidence in; either by offering such sacrifices as were not legal, or by offering them to idols, under a pretence of offering them to God, which was dealing treacherously against him; and in all other acts of religion, in which they would be thought to have regard to the covenant of God, his laws and precepts, and to be very serious and devout, yet acted the hypocritical part, were false and deceitful, and devoid of all sincerity: or there, in the promised land, where the Lord had so largely bestowed his favours on them; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, agreeably to the Targum, which paraphrases it thus,

“and in the good land, which I gave unto them to do my will, they have dealt falsely with my word.”

Ver. 8. *Gilead [is] a city of them that work iniquity*, etc.] The chief city in the land of Gilead, which lay beyond Jordan, inhabited by Gad and Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh; and so belonged to the ten tribes, whose sins are here particularly observed. It had its name from the country, or the country from that, or both from the mountain of the same name. It is thought to be Ramothgilead, a city of refuge, and put for all the cities of refuge in those parts, which were inhabited by priests and Levites; and who

ought to have had knowledge of the laws, and instructed the people in them, and observed them themselves, and set a good example to others; but, instead of this, the whole course of their lives, was vicious; they made a trade of sinning, did nothing else but work iniquity; and this was general among them, the city or cities of them consisted of none else; and all manner of iniquity was committed by them, particularly idolatry; for so the words may be rendered, “a city of them that serve an idol”^{f120}; not only at Daniel and Bethel, but in the cities of the priests, idols were set up and worshipped; this shows the state to be very corrupt:

[and is] polluted with blood; with the blood of murderers harboured there, who ought not to have been admitted; or with the blood of such who were delivered up to the avenger of blood, that ought to have been sheltered, and both for the sake of money; or with the blood of children, sacrificed to Moloch: the word used has the signification of supplanting, lying in wait, and so is understood of a private, secret, shedding of blood, in a deceitful and insidious way: hence some render it, “cunning for blood”^{f121}; to which the Targum seems to agree, calling it a city

“of them that secretly or deceitfully shed innocent blood.”

It has also the signification of the heel of a man’s foot, and is by some rendered, “trodden by blood”^{f122}; that is, by bloody men: or “footed” or “heeled by blood”^{f123}; that is, such an abundance of it was shed, that a man could not set his foot or his heel any where but in blood.

Ver. 9. *And as troops of robbers wait for a man,* etc.] As a gang of highwaymen or footpads lie in wait in a ditch, or under a hedge, or in a cave of a rock or mountain, for a man they know will come by that way, who is full of money, in order to rob him; or, as Saadiah interprets it, as fishermen stand upon the banks of a river, and cast in their hooks to draw out the fish; and to the same purpose is Jarchi’s note from R. Meir:

[so] the company of priests murder in the way by consent; not only encourage murderers, and commit murders within the city, but go out in a body together upon the highway, and there commit murders and robberies, and divide the spoil among them; all which they did unanimously, and were well agreed, being brethren in iniquity, as well as in office: or, “in the way of Shechem”^{f124}; as good people passed by Gilead to Shechem, and so to Jerusalem, to worship there at the solemn feasts, they lay in wait for them, and murdered them; because they did not give into the idolatrous worship

of the calves at Daniel and Bethel: or, “in the manner of Shechem”^{f125}; that is, they murdered men in a deceitful treacherous manner, as the Shechemites were murdered by Simeon and Levi: Joseph Kimchi interprets this of the princes and great men, so the word “cohanim” is sometimes used; but the context seems to carry it to the priests:

for they commit lewdness; or “enormity”; the most enormous crimes, and that purposely, with deliberation devising and contriving them.

Ver. 10. *I have seen an horrible thing in the house of Israel*, etc.] Idolatry, the calves set up at Daniel and Bethel, which God saw with abhorrence and detestation; or the prophet saw it, and it made his hair stand on end as it were, as the word^{f126} signifies, that such wickedness should be committed by a professing people:

there [is] the whoredom of Ephraim; in the house of Israel is the whoredom of Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, and caused Israel to sin, to go a whoring after idols; or the whoredom of the tribe of Ephraim, which belonged to the house of Israel, and even of all the ten tribes; both corporeal and spiritual whoredom, or idolatry, are here meant:

Israel is defiled; with whoredom of both kinds; it had spread itself all over the ten tribes; they were all infected with it, and polluted by it; (see ~~288~~Hosea 5:3).

Ver. 11. *Also, O Judah, he hath set an harvest for thee*, etc.] That is, God hath set and appointed a time of wrath and vengeance for thee, which is sometimes signified by a harvest, (~~645~~Revelation 14:15); because thou hast been guilty of idolatry also, as well as Ephraim or the ten tribes: or rather it may be rendered, “but, O Judah”^{f127}, he, that is, God, hath set an harvest for thee; appointed a time of joy and gladness, as a time of harvest is:

when I returned, or “return”^{f128},

the captivity of my people; the people of Judah from the Babylonish captivity; so that here is a prophecy both of their captivity, and of their return from it: and it may be applied unto their return from their spiritual captivity to sin, Satan, and the law, through the Gospel of Christ and his apostles, first published in Judea, by means of which there was a large harvest of souls gathered in, and was an occasion of great joy.

CHAPTER 7

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 7

This chapter either begins a new sermon, discourse, or prophecy, or it is a continuation of the former; at least it seems to be of the same argument with the latter part of it, only it is directed to Israel alone; and consists of complaints against them because of their manifold sins, and of denunciations of punishment for them. They are charged with ingratitude to God, sinning in a daring manner against mercy, and with falsehood, thefts, and robberies, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:1); with want of consideration of the omniscience of God, and his notice of their sins, which surrounded them, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:2); with flattery to their king and princes, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:3); with adultery, which lust raged in them like a heated oven, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:4); with drunkenness, aggravated by drawing their king into it, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:5); with raging lusts, which devoured their judges, made their kings to fall, and brought on such a general corruption, that there were none that called upon the Lord, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:6,7); with mixing themselves with the nations of the earth, and so learning their ways, and bringing their superstition and idolatry into the worship of God, so that they were nothing in religion, like a half baked cake, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:8); with stupidity and insensibility of their declining state, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:9); with pride, impenitence, and stubbornness, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:10); with folly, in seeking to Egypt and Assyria for help, and not to the Lord; for which they would be taken as birds in a net, and sorely chastised, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:11,12); with ingratitude, hypocrisy, and deceitfulness; for all which they are threatened with destruction, (^{<2010>}Hosea 7:13-16).

Ver. 1. *When I would have healed Israel*, etc.] Or rather, “when I healed Israel”;^{f129} for this is not to be understood of a velleity, wish, or desire of healing and saving them, as Jarchi; nor of a bare attempt to do it by the admonitions of the prophets, and by corrections in Providence; but of actual healing them; and by which is meant, not healing them in a spiritual and religious sense, as in (^{<2010>}Hosea 6:1); but in a political sense, of the restoring of their civil state to a more flourishing condition; which was done in the times of Jeroboam the son of Joash, as Kimchi rightly observes;

who restored the coast of Israel, from the entering of Hamath, unto the sea of the plain, (^{<1245>}2 Kings 14:25,26);

then the iniquity of Ephraim was discovered, and the wickedness of Samaria; some refer this to the times of Jeroboam the first, and that the sense is, that the Lord having cured Israel of the idolatry introduced by Solomon, quickly a new scene of idolatry broke out in Ephraim, or the ten tribes, of which Samaria was the metropolis; for Jeroboam soon set up the calves at Daniel and Bethel to be worshipped; but it does not appear that Israel was corrupted with the idolatry of Solomon, and needed a cure then; nor was Samaria built in Jeroboam's time: others apply it to the times of Jehu, who, though he slew the worshippers of Baal, and broke his images, and destroyed him out of Israel, yet retained the worship of the calves at Daniel and Bethel, (^{<1205>}2 Kings 10:25-30); so, though they were healed of one sort of idolatry, another prevailed. It is right, in both these senses, that the iniquity of Ephraim, and wickedness or wickednesses of Samaria, are taken for the idolatrous worship of the golden calves; but then it respects the times of Jeroboam the second, the son of Joash, in whose days Israel was prosperous; and yet these superstitious and idolatrous practices of worship were flagrant and notorious, were countenanced by the king and his courtiers that dwelt at Samaria, as is clear from (^{<3070>}Amos 7:10-13); which was an instance of great ingratitude to the Lord;

for they commit falsehood; among themselves, lying to one another, and deceiving each other; or to God, deal falsely with him, are guilty of false worship, worshipping idols, which are vanities and lies:

and the thief cometh in, [and] the troop of robbers spoileth without; which may be interpreted either of their sins, their sins in general, both private and public; and their sins of theft and robbery in particular; both such as were committed in houses by the thief privately entering there, and by a gang of robbers in the streets, or on the highway: so the Targum,

“in the night they thieve in houses, and in the day they rob on the plain,”

or fields: or else of punishment for their sins; and then the words may be rendered ^{f130}, “therefore the thief entereth in, and the troop” or “army spreads without”; this thief was Shallum, who came in to kill and to steal; he slew Zachariah the son of Jeroboam, after he had reigned six months, and usurped the kingdom, and so put an end to the family of Jehu,

according as the Lord had threatened, (^{<1182>}2 Kings 8:12); the troop or army is the Assyrian army under Pul, who came against Menahem, king of Israel, of whom he exacted a tribute, and departed, (^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:19,20); so Cocceius.

Ver. 2. *And they consider not in their hearts [that] I remember all their wickedness*, etc.] That is, the people of the ten tribes, and the inhabitants of Samaria, whose iniquity and wickedness are said to be discovered, and to be very notorious: and yet “they said not to their hearts”^{f131}, as in the original text; they did not think within themselves; they did not commune with their own hearts; they did not put themselves in mind, or put this to their consciences, that the Lord saw all their wicked actions, their idolatry, falsehood, thefts, and robberies, and whatsoever they were guilty of; that the Lord took notice of them, and put them down in the book of his remembrance, in order to call them to an account, and punish them for them:

now their own doings have beset them about; or, “that now their own doings”, etc.^{f132}; they do not consider in their hearts that their sins are all around them, on every side, committed by them openly, and in abundance, and are notorious to all their neighbours, and much more to the omniscient God: and that

they are before my face; so the Targum,

“which are revealed before me;”

were manifest in his sight, before whom all things are; but this they did not consider, and therefore went on in that bold and daring manner they did. Some understand these clauses of the punishment of their sins, which should surround them on every side, that they should not be able to escape, like persons closely besieged in a city, that they cannot get out; alluding to the future siege of Samaria, when it would be a plain case, though they did not now think of it, that all their sins were before the Lord, and were observed by him.

Ver. 3. *They make the king glad with their wickedness*, etc.] Not any particular king; not Jeroboam the first, as Kimchi; nor Jehu, as Grotius; if any particular king, rather Jeroboam the second; but their kings in general, as the Septuagint render it, in succession, one after another; who were highly delighted and pleased with the priests in offering sacrifice to the calves, and with the people in attending to that idolatrous worship, by

which they hoped to secure the kingdom of Israel to themselves, and prevent the people going to Jerusalem to worship: it made them glad to the heart to hear them say that God was as well pleased with sacrifices offered at Daniel and Bethel, as at Jerusalem:

and the princes with their lies; with their idols and idolatrous practices, which are vanity and a lie; though some interpret this of their flatteries, either of them, or their favourites; and of their calumnies and detractions of such they had a dislike of.

Ver. 4. *They [are] all adulterers*, etc.] King, princes, priests, and people, both in a spiritual and corporeal sense; they were all idolaters, given to idols try, eager of it, and constant in it, as the following metaphors show; and they were addicted to corporeal adultery; this was a prevailing vice among all ranks and degrees of men. So the Targum,

“they all desire to lie with their neighbours’ wives;”

(see ^{<4107>}Jeremiah 5:7,8 9:2);

as an oven heated by the baker; which, if understood of spiritual adultery or idolatry, denotes their eagerness after it, and fervour in it, excited by their king, or by the devil and his instruments, the priests and false prophets; and if of bodily uncleanness, it is expressive of the heat of that lust, which is sometimes signified by burning; and is stirred up by the devil and the corrupt hearts of men to such a degree as to be raised to a flame, and be like a raging fire, or a heated oven; (see ^{<4107>}Romans 1:27 ^{<4109>}1 Corinthians 7:9);

[who] ceaseth from raising; that is, the baker, having heated his oven, ceaseth from raising up the women to bring their bread to the bake house; or he ceaseth from waking, or from watching his oven; he lays himself down to sleep, and continues in it:

after he hath kneaded the dough, until it be leavened; having kneaded the dough, and put in the leaven, he lets it alone to work till the whole mass is leavened, taking his rest in the mean while: as the former clause expresses the vehement desire of the people after adultery, spiritual or corporeal, this may signify their continuance in it; or rather the wilful negligence of the king, priests, and prophets, who, instead of awaking them out of their sleep on a bed of adultery, let them alone in it, until they were all infected with it.

Ver. 5. *In the day of our king*, etc.] Either his birthday, or his coronation day, when he was inaugurated into his kingly office, as the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi; or the day on which Jeroboam set up the calves, which might be kept as an anniversary: or, “it is the day of our king”^{f133}; and may be the words of the priests and false prophets, exciting the people to adultery; and may show by what means they drew them into it, saying this is the king’s birthday, or coronation day, or a holy day of his appointing, let us meet together, and drink his health; and so by indulging to intemperance, through the heat of wine, led them on to adultery, corporeal or spiritual, or both:

the princes have made [him] sick with bottles of wine: that is, the courtiers who attended at court on such a day to compliment the king upon the occasion, and to drink his health, drank to him in large cups, perhaps a bottle of wine at once; which he pledging them in the same manner, made him sick or drunk: to make any man drunk is criminal, and especially a king; as it was also a weakness and sin in him to drink to excess, which is not for kings, of all men, to do: or it may be rendered, “the princes became sick through the heat of wine”^{f134}, so Jarchi; they were made sick by others, or they made themselves so by drinking too much wine, which inflamed their bodies, gorged their stomachs, made their heads dizzy, and them so “weak”, as the word^{f135} also signifies, that they could not stand upon their legs; which are commonly the effects of excessive drinking, especially in those who are not used to it, as the king and the princes might not be, only on such occasions:

he stretched out his hand with scorners; meaning the king, who, in his cups, forgetting his royal dignity, used too much familiarity with persons of low life, and of an ill behaviour, irreligious ones; who, especially when drunk, made a jest of all religion; scoffed at good men, and everything that was serious; and even set their mouths against the heavens; denied there was a God, or spoke very indecently and irreverently of him; these the king made his drinking companions, took the cup, and drank to them in turn, and shook them by the hand; or admitted them to kiss his hand, and were all together, hail fellows well met. Joseph Kimchi thinks these are the same with the princes, called so before they were drunk, but afterwards “scorners”.

Ver. 6. *For they have made ready their heart like an oven, whiles they lie in wait*, etc.] The prince, people, and scorners before mentioned, being

heated with wine, and their lust enraged, they were ready for any wickedness; for the commission of adultery, lying in wait for their neighbours' wives to debauch them; or for rebellion and treason against their king, and even the murder of him, made drunk by them, whom they now despised, and waited for an opportunity to dispatch him:

their baker sleepeth all the night; in the morning it burneth as a flaming fire; as a baker having put wood into his oven, and kindled it, leaves it, and sleeps all night, and in the morning it is all burning, and in a flame, and his oven is thoroughly heated, and fit for his purpose; so the evil concupiscence in these men's hearts, made hot like an oven, rests all night, devising mischief on their beds, either against the chastity of their neighbours' wives, or against the lives of others, they bear an ill will to, particularly against their judges and their kings, as (~~<3007>~~Hosea 7:7); seems to intimate; and in the morning this lust of uncleanness or revenge is all in a flame, and ready to execute the wicked designs contrived; (see ~~<3011>~~Micah 2:1). Some by "their baker" understand Satan; others, their king asleep and secure; others Shallum, the head of the conspiracy against Zachariah.

Ver. 7. *They are all hot as an oven*, etc.] Eager upon their idolatry, or burning in their unclean desires after other men's wives; or rather raging and furious, hot with anger and wrath against their rulers and governors, breathing out slaughter and death unto them:

and have devoured their judges; that stood in the way of their lusts, reproved them for them, and restrained them from them; or were on the side of the king they conspired against, and were determined to depose and slay:

all their kings have fallen; either into sin, the sin of idolatry particularly, as all from Jeroboam the first did, down to Hoshea the last; or they fell into calamities, or by the sword of one another, as did most of them; so Zachariah by Shallum, Shallum by Menahem, Pekahiah by Pekah, and Pekah by Hoshea; (see ~~<251>~~2 Kings 15:1-38). So the Targum,

"all their kings are slain:"

[there is] none among them that calleth unto me; either among the kings, when their lives were in danger from conspirators; or none among the people, when their land was in distress, either by civil wars among themselves, or by a foreign enemy; such was their stupidity, and to such a height was irreligion come to among them!

Ver. 8. *Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people*, etc.] Either locally, by dwelling among them, as some of them at least might do among the Syrians; or carnally, by intermarrying with them, contrary to the command of God; or civilly, by entering into alliances and confederacies with them, as Pekah the son of Remaliah king of Israel did with Rezin king of Syria, (^{<300>}Isaiah 7:2,5); or by seeking to them for help, calling to Egypt, and going to Assyria, as in (^{<301>}Hosea 7:11); so Aben Ezra; or morally, by learning their manners, and conforming to their customs, especially in religious things: though some understand this as a punishment threatened them for their above sins, that they should be carried captive into foreign lands, and so be mixed among the people, and which is Jarchi's sense: but it is rather to be considered as their evil in joining with other nations in their superstition, idolatry, and other impieties; and it is highly offensive to God when his professing people mix themselves with the world, keep company with the men of it, fashion themselves according to them, do as they do, and wilfully go into their conversation, and repeat it, and continue therein, and resolve to do so: for so it may be rendered, "he will mix himself"^{f136}; it denotes a voluntary act, repeated and persisted in with obstinacy;

Ephraim is a cake not turned; like a cake that is laid on coals, if it is not turned, the nether part will be burnt, and the upper part unbaked, and so be good for nothing; not fit to be eaten, being nothing indeed, neither bread nor dough; and so may signify, that Ephraim having introduced much of the superstition and idolatry of the Gentiles into religious worship, was nothing in religion, neither fish nor flesh, as is proverbially said of persons and things of which nothing can be made; they worshipped the calves at Daniel and Bethel, and Yet swore by the name of the Lord; they halted between two opinions, and were of neither; they were like the hotch potch inhabitants of Samaria in later times, that came in their place, that feared the Lord, and served their own gods: and such professors of religion there are, who are nothing in religion; nothing in principle, they have no scheme of principles; they are neither one thing nor another; they are nothing in experience; if they have a form of godliness, they deny the power of it; they are nothing in practice, all they do is to be seen of men; they are neither hot nor cold, especially not throughout, or on both sides, like a cake unturned; but are lukewarm and indifferent, and therefore very disagreeable to the Lord. Some take this to be expressive of punishment, and not of fault; either of their partial captivity by Tiglathpileser, when only a part of them

was carried captive; or of the swift and total destruction of them by their enemies, who would be like hungry and half starved persons, who meeting with a cake on the coals half baked, snatch it up, and eat it, not staying for the turning and baking it on the other side; and thus it should be with them. So the Targum,

“the house of Ephraim is like to a cake baked on coals, which before it is turned is eaten.”

Ver. 9. *Strangers have devoured his strength*, etc.] Or his substance, as the Targum; his wealth and riches, fortresses and strong holds: these strangers were either the Syrians, who, in the times of Jehoahaz, destroyed Ephraim or the Israelites, and so weakened them, as to make them like the dust by threshing, (~~217~~ 2 Kings 12:7); or the Assyrians, first under Pul king of Assyria, who came out against Menahem king of Israel, and exacted a tribute of a thousand talents of silver, and so drained them of their treasure, which was their strength, (~~219~~ 2 Kings 15:19,20); and then under Tiglathpileser, another king of Assyria, who came and took away from them many of their fortified places, and carried the inhabitants captive, (~~219~~ 2 Kings 15:29);

and he knoweth [it] not; is not sensible how much he is weakened by such exactions and depredations; or does not take notice of the hand of God in all this; does not consider from whence it comes, what is the cause of it, and for what ends;

yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not; or, “old age has sprinkled itself upon him”^{f137}; or, “gray hairs are sprinkled on him”; gray hairs, when thick, are a sign that old age is come; and, when sprinkled here and there, are symptoms of its coming on, and of a person’s being on the decline of life; and here it signifies the weak and declining state of Israel, through the exactions and depredations of their neighbours, and that theft utter ruin was near; and yet they did not know nor consider their latter end, nor repent of their sins and acknowledge them, and return unto the Lord, and implore his mercy: so carnal professors, who mix with the men of the world, that are strangers to God and godliness, and everything that is divine and good, are devoured by them; they lose their time and substance, and their precious souls, and are not aware of it. The symptoms of the declining state of the church of God are at this time upon us, and yet not taken notice of; such as great departures from the faith; a number of false teachers risen up; great failings off of professors, and of such who

have made a great figure in the church; a small number of faithful men; great coldness and lukewarmness to spiritual things; little faith on the earth; great neglect of Gospel worship and ordinances; much sleepiness and drowsiness; great immorality and profaneness: as also the symptoms of the declining state of the world, and of its drawing to its period; as wars, and rumours of wars, famine, pestilence, and earthquakes in divers places; volcanos, burning mountains, eruptions of subterraneous fire, which portend the general conflagration; and yet these things are little attended to.

Ver. 10. *And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face*, etc.] (See Gill on “~~2885~~ Hosea 5:5”); notwithstanding their weak and declining state, they were proud and haughty; entertained a high conceit of themselves, and of their good and safe condition; and behaved insolently towards God, and were not humbled before him for their sins. Their pride was notorious, which they themselves could not deny; they were self-convicted, and self-condemned:

and they do not return to the Lord their God; by acknowledgment of their sins, repentance for them, and reformation from them; and by attendance on his worship, from which they had revolted; so the Targum,

“they return not to the worship of the Lord their God:”

nor seek him for all this; though they are in this wasting, declining, condition, and just upon the brink of ruin, yet they seek not the face and favour of the Lord; they do not ask help of him, or implore his mercy; and though they have been so long in these circumstances, and have been gradually consuming for many years, yet in all this time they have made no application to the Lord, that he would be favourable, and raise their sinking state, and restore them to their former glory.

Ver. 11. *Ephraim also is like a silly dove, without heart*, etc.] Or understanding; which comes and picks up the corns of grain, which lie scattered about, and does not know that the net is spread for it; and when its young are taken away, it is unconcerned, and continues its nest in the same place still; and, when frightened, flees not to its dove house, where it would be safe, but flies about here and there, and so becomes a prey to others. Thus Ephraim, going to Egypt and Assyria for help, were ensnared by them, not having sense enough to perceive that this would be their ruin; and though they had heretofore suffered by them, yet still they continued to

make their addresses to them; and instead of keeping close to the Lord, and to his worship and the place of it, and asking counsel and help of him they ran about and sought for it here and there:

they call to Egypt; that is, for help; as Hoshea king of Israel, when he sent messengers to So or Sabacon king of Egypt, for protection and assistance, (^{<12704>}2 Kings 17:4). Such a foolish part, like the silly doves, did they act; since the Egyptians had been their implacable enemies, and their fathers had been in cruel bondage under them:

they go to Assyria; send gifts and presents, and pay tribute to the kings thereof, to make them easy; as Menahem did to Pul, and Hoshea to Shalmaneser, (^{<12519>}2 Kings 15:19 17:3). Some understand this last clause, not of their sin in going to the Assyrian for help; but of their punishment in going or being carried captive thither; and so the Targum seems to interpret it,

“they go captive, or are carried captive, into Assyria.”

Ver. 12. *When they shall go*, etc.] That is, to Egypt or Assyria:

I will spread my net upon them; bring them into great straits and difficulties; perhaps the Assyrian army is meant, which was the Lord’s net, guided, and directed, and spread by his providence, and according to his will, to take this silly dove in; and which enclosed them on all sides, that they could not escape; (see ^{<13213>}Ezekiel 12:13). Hoshea the king of Israel was taken by the Assyrian, and bound and shut up in prison; Samaria the capital city was besieged three years, and then taken, (^{<12704>}2 Kings 17:4-6);

I will bring them down as the fowls of the heaven; though they fly on high, soar aloft, and behave proudly, and fancy themselves out of all danger; yet, as the flying fowl, the eagle, and other birds, may be brought down to the earth by an arrow from the bow, or by some decoy so should they be brought down from their fancied safe and exalted state, and be taken in the net, and become a prey to their enemies:

I will chastise them, as their congregation hath heard; what was written in the law, and in the prophets, were read and explained in the congregations of Israel on their stated days they met together on for religious worship; in which it was threatened, that if they did not observe the laws and statutes of the Lord their God, but neglected and broke them, they should be severely chastised and corrected with his sore judgments, famine,

pestilence, the sword of the enemy, and captivity: and now the Lord would fulfil his word, agreeably to what had often been heard by them, but not regarded; (see ^{<530>}Leviticus 26:1-46) (^{<530>}Deuteronomy 28:1-68).

Ver. 13. *Woe unto them, for they have fled from me*, etc.] From the Lord, from his worship, and the place of it; from obedience to him, and the service of him; as birds fly from their nests, and leave their young, and wander about; so they had deserted the temple at Jerusalem, and forsaken the service of the sanctuary, and set up calves at Daniel and Bethel, and worshipped them; and, instead of fleeing to God for help in time of distress, fled further off still, even out of their own land to Egypt or Assyria: the consequence of which was, nothing but ruin; and so lamentation and woes:

destruction unto them, because they have transgressed against me; against the laws which God gave them; setting up idols, and worshipping them, and so broke the first table of the law; committing murder, adultery, thefts and robberies, with which they are charged the preceding part of this chapter, and so transgressed the second table of the law; and by all brought destruction upon themselves, which was near at hand, and would certainly come, as here threatened; though they promised themselves peace, and expected assistance from neighbouring nations, but in vain, having made the Lord their enemy, by breaking his laws:

though I have redeemed them; out of Egypt formerly, and out of the hands of the Moabites, Ammonites, Philistines, and others, in the times of the judges; and more lately in the times of Joash and Jeroboam the second, who recovered many cities out of the hands of the Syrians. Aben Ezra, Jarchi, and Kimchi, interpret this of the good disposition of God towards them, having it in his heart to redeem them now from their present afflictions and distresses, but that they were so impious and wicked, and so unfaithful to him:

yet they have spoken lies against me; against his being and providence, being atheistically inclined; or pretending repentance for their sins, when they were hypocrites, and returned to their former courses; or setting up idols in opposition to him, which were vanity to him; attributing all their good things to them, and charging him with all their evils. Abendana reads the words interrogatively, “should I redeem them, when they have spoken lies against me?”^{f138} no, I will not.

Ver. 14. *And they have not cried unto me with their heart*, etc.] In their distress, indeed, they cried unto the Lord, and said they repented of their sins, and promised reformation, and made a show of worshipping God; as invocation is sometimes put for the whole worship of God; but then this was not heartily, but hypocritically; their hearts and their mouths did not go together, and therefore was not reckoned prayer; nothing but howling, as follows:

when they howled upon their beds; lying sick or wounded there; or, as some, in their idol temples, those beds of adultery, where they pretended to worship God by them, and to pray to him through them; but such idolatrous prayers were no better than the howlings of clogs to him; even though they expressed outwardly their cries with great vehemency, as the word used denotes, having one letter more in it than common:

they assemble themselves for corn and wine: either at their banquets, to feast upon them, as Aben Ezra; or to the markets, to buy them, as Kimchi suggests; or rather to their idol temples, to deprecate a famine, and to pray for rain and fruitful seasons; or if they gather together to pray to the Lord, it is only for carnal and worldly things; they only seek themselves, and their own interest, and not the glory of God, and ask for these things, to consume them on their lust. The Septuagint version is, “for corn and wine they were cut”, or cut themselves, as Baal’s priests did, when they cried to him, (~~1~~1 Kings 18:28); and Theodoret here observes, that they performed the Heathen rites, and in idol temples made incisions on their bodies:

[and] they rebel against me: not only flee from him transgress his laws but cast off all allegiance to him and take up arms, and commit hostilities against him. The Targum joins this with the preceding clause,

“because of the multitude of corn and wine which they have gathered they have rebelled against my word;”

and to the same sense Jarchi; thus, Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked.

Ver. 15. *Though I have bound [and] strengthened their arms*, etc.] As a surgeon sets a broken arm and swathes and binds it, and so restores it to its former strength, or at least to a good degree of strength again, so the Lord dealt with Israel; their arms were broken, and their strength weakened, and they greatly distressed and reduced by the Syrians in the times of Jehoahaz; but they were brought into a better state and condition in the times of

Joash and Jeroboam the second; the former retook several cities out of the hands of the Syrians, and the latter restored the border of Israel, and greatly enlarged it; and as all this was done through the blessing of divine Providence, the Lord is said to do it himself. Some render it, “though I have chastised, I have strengthened their arms”^{f139}; though he corrected them for their sins in the times of Jehoahaz, and suffered their arms to be broken by their enemies, for their instruction, and in order to bring them to repentance for their sins; yet he strengthened them again in the following reigns:

yet do they imagine mischief against me; so ungrateful were they, they contrived to do hurt to his prophets that were sent to them in his name, to warn them of their sins and danger, and exhort them to repent, and forsake their idolatrous worship, and other sins; and they sought by all means to dishonour the name of the Lord, by imputing their success in the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam to their idols, and not unto him; and so hardened themselves against him, and in their evil ways.

Ver. 16. *They return, [but] not to the most High*, etc.] To Egypt, and not to Jerusalem, and the temple there, and the worship of it; to their idols, and not to him whose name alone is Jehovah, and is the most High all the earth, the God of gods, and Lord of lords, and King of kings; though they made some feint as if they would return, and did begin, and take some steps towards repentance and reformation; but then they presently fell back again, as in Jehu’s time, and did not go on to make a thorough reformation; nor returned to God alone, and to his pure worship they pretended to, and ought to have done: or, “not on high, upwards, above”^{f140}; their affections and desires are not after things above; they do not look upwards to God in heaven for help and assistance, but to men and things on earth, on which all their affection and dependence are placed:

they are like a deceitful bow; which misses the mark it is directed to; which being designed to send its arrow one way, causes it to go the reverse; or its arrow returns upon the archer, or drops at his feet; so these people deviated from the law of God, acted contrary to their profession and promises, and relapsed into their former idolatries and impieties, and sunk into earth and earthly things; (see ~~19857~~ Psalm 78:57);

their princes shall fall by the sword: either of their conspirators, as Zachariah, Shallum, Pekahiah, and Pekah; or by the sword of the Assyrians, as Hoshea, and the princes with him, by Shalmaneser;

for the rage of their tongue; their blasphemy against God, his being and providences; his worship, and the place of it; his priests and people that served him, and particularly the prophets he sent unto them to reprove them;

this [shall be] their derision in the land of Egypt; whither they sent, and called for help; but now, when their princes are slain, and they carried captive into a foreign land, even those friends and allies of theirs shall laugh and mock at them. The Targum is,

“these [were] their works while they were in the land of Egypt;”

or rather the words may be rendered, “this is their derision, [as of old] in the land of Egypt”^{f141}; that is, the calves they now worshipped, and to which they ascribed all their good things, were made in imitation of the gods of Egypt, their Apis and Serapis, which were in the form of an ox, and which their fathers derided there; and these were justly to be derided now, and they to be derided for their worship of them, and ascribing all their good things to them; and which would be done when their destruction came upon them.

CHAPTER 8

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 8

This chapter treats of the sins and punishment of Israel for them, as the preceding; it is threatened and proclaimed that an enemy should come swiftly against them, because of their transgression of the covenant and law of God, (~~280E~~Hosea 8:1); their hypocrisy is exposed, (~~280D~~Hosea 8:2); they are charged with the rejection of that which is good, and therefore should be pursued by the enemy, (~~280B~~Hosea 8:3); with setting up kings and princes without consulting the Lord, (~~280A~~Hosea 8:4); and with making of idols, particularly the golden calves, which would be of no use to them, disappoint them, and at last be broke to pieces, (~~280F~~Hosea 8:4-6); their seeking to their neighbours for help, and entering into alliances with them, are represented as vain and fruitless, and issuing in their ruin and destruction, (~~280G~~Hosea 8:7-10); their sins of multiplying altars, contrary to the law of God, and in contempt of it, and offering sacrifices to the Lord, are observed; and they with a visitation from him, (~~280I~~Hosea 8:11-13); and the chapter is concluded with some notice and Judah, the one building temples, and multiplying fenced cities, which should be by fire, (~~280H~~Hosea 8:14).

Ver. 1. [*Set the trumpet to thy mouth*, etc.] Or, “the trumpet to the roof of thy mouth”^{f142}; a concise expression denoting haste, and the vehemence of the passions speaking; they are either the words of the Lord to the prophet, as the Targum,

“O prophet, cry with thy throat as with a trumpet, saying;”

Aben Ezra take them to be the words of the Lord the prophet, and the sense agrees with (~~280I~~Isaiah 58:1). The prophet is here considered as a watchman, and is called upon to blow his trumpet; either to call the people together, “as an eagle to the house of the Lord”^{f143}, as the next clause may be connected with this; that is, to come as swiftly to the house of the Lord, and hear what he had to say to them, and to supplicate the Lord for mercy in a time of distress: or to give the people notice of the approach of the enemy, and tell them that

[he shall come] as an eagle against the house of the Lord; “flying as an eagle over”^{f144} or “against the house of the Lord”: or they are the words of the Lord, or of the prophet, to the enemy, to blow his trumpet, and sound the alarm of war, and call his army together, and bid them fly like an eagle, with that swiftness and fierceness as that creature does to its prey, against the house of the Lord; meaning not the temple at Jerusalem, but the nation of Israel, formerly called the house and family of God, and still pretended to be so. There may be some allusion to Bethel, which signifies the house of God, where they practised their idolatry. This is to be understood, not of Nebuchadnezzar, sometimes compared to an eagle, (^{37B}Ezekiel 17:3); for not the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem is here meant; nor of the Romans, as Lyra seems to understand it, the eagle being the ensign of the Romans; but of Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, compared to this creature for his swiftness in coming, his strength, fierceness, and cruelty; this creature being swift in flight, and a bird of prey. So the Targum interprets it of a king and his army,

“behold, as an eagle flieth, so shall a king with his army come up and encamp against the house of the sanctuary of the Lord.”

Some reference seems to be had to (^{158D}Deuteronomy 28:49);

because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law; the law that was given to Israel by Moses at the appointment of God, to which they assented, and promised to observe: and so it had the form of a covenant to them: the bounds of this law and covenant they transgressed, and dealt perfidiously with, and prevaricated in, and wilfully broke all its commands, by their idolatry, murder, adultery, theft, and other sins.

Ver. 2. *Israel shall cry unto me, my God, we know thee.*] In their distress they shall cry to the Lord to help them, and have mercy on them, as they used to do when in trouble, (³³⁶Isaiah 26:16); when the eagle is come upon them, and just ready to devour them; when Samaria is besieged with file Assyrian army, their king taken prisoner, and they just ready to fall into the hands of the enemy, then they shall cry to God, though in a hypocritical manner; own him to be the true God, and claim their interest in him, and pretend knowledge of him, and acquaintance with him; though they have not served and worshipped him, but idols, and that for hundreds of years; like others who profess to know God, but in works deny him, (⁵⁰¹⁶Titus 1:16). Israel is the last word in the verse, and occasions different versions:

“they shall cry unto me”; these transgressors of the covenant and the law, these hypocrites, shall pray to God in trouble, saying, “my God, we Israel”, or Israelites, “know thee”; or, “we know thee who are Israel”^{f145}; and to this sense is the Targum,

“in every time that distress comes upon them, they pray before me, and say, now we know that we have no God besides thee; redeem us, for we are thy people Israel;”

why may they not be rendered thus, “they shall cry unto me; my God, we know thee, Israel” shall say? Castalio renders them to this sense, “my God”, say they; but “we know thee, Israel”; we, the three Persons in the Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit, we know thy hypocrisy and wickedness, that it is only outwardly and hypocritically, and not sincerely, that thou criest unto and callest upon God.

Ver. 3. *Israel hath cast off [the thing that is] good*, etc.] Or “rejected [him that is] good”^{f146}; that is, God, as Kimchi observes; for there is none good but him, (⁴³⁹⁷Matthew 19:17); he is the “summum bonum”, “the chiefest good” to men, and is essentially, originally, and infinitely good in himself, and the fountain of all goodness to his creatures; and yet Israel has rejected him with detestation and contempt, as the word^{f147} signifies, though they pretended to know him, which shows their hypocrisy; and therefore it is no wonder that their prayers were rejected by him: or they rejected the good word of God, the law, or doctrine contained in it, and the good worship, service, and fear of God, and indeed everything that was good, just, and right. Cocceius renders it, “the good One”, or he that is God, the good God, “hath cast off Israel”. This reading of the words Drusius also mentions, and seems to like best, and as agreeing with what follows; so Rivet; but the position of the words in the Hebrew text, and the accents, do not favour it;

the enemy shall pursue him; who is before compared to an eagle, which flies swiftly, and pursues its prey with eagerness and fierceness: Shalmaneser is meant, who should invade the land, come up to Samaria, besiege and take it; nothing should stop him, nor should Israel escape from him, since they had cast off the Lord, and everything that was good. The Targum is,

“the house of Israel have erred from my worship, for the sake of which I brought good things upon them; henceforward the enemy shall pursue them.”

Ver. 4. *They have set up kings, but not by me*, etc.] Not by his authority, order, and command; not by asking advice of him, or his leave, but of themselves, and of their own, accord: this refers to the case of Jeroboam their first king, after their separation from the house of David, and from the tribes of Judah and Benjamin; for though his becoming king of Israel was according to the secret will of God, and by his overruling providence; yet it was done without his express orders, and without asking counsel of him, or his consent, and of their own heads; and many of his successors were conspirators, and set up themselves with the consent of the people, to the dethroning of others, and upon the slaughter of them, as Shallum, Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea: the people of Israel had no right to choose a king for themselves; the right was alone in the Lord; it was he that chose, appointed, and constituted their kings, (^{<6175>}Deuteronomy 17:15); thus Saul, David, and Solomon, were chose and appointed by him, (^{<9026>}1 Samuel 10:24 ^{<1012>}2 Samuel 5:2 ^{<1385>}1 Chronicles 28:5); it was not the person of Jeroboam chosen God disliked; but their taking it upon them to choose and set him up without his leave;

they have made princes, and knew [it] not; that is, they set up subordinate governors, judges, civil magistrates, elders of the people, over them, without his approbation, and such as were very disagreeable to him; otherwise he knew what was done by them, as being the omniscient God, but he did not approve of what they did. Some observe, that Ç, in the word used, is put for S, and should be rendered, “they have removed”, so Jarchi and Japhet; that is, they have set up kings, and they have removed them; they have took it upon them to make and pose kings at pleasure, without seeking the Lord about it, when this is his prerogative, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords, (^{<2021>}Daniel 2:21); which sense makes a strong and beautiful antithesis;

of their silver and their gold have they made their idols; some of their idols were made of silver, others of gold; particularly the calves at Daniel and Bethel, which are called the golden calves, because made of gold; as was the calf in the wilderness, (^{<1123>}1 Kings 12:28); (see ^{<346>}Isaiah 46:6 ^{<318>}Hosea 2:8);

that they may be cut off: which denotes not the end, intentions, and design of making these idols of silver and gold, but the event thereof; namely, either the destruction of the idols themselves, which, for the sake of the silver and gold they were made of; were cut in pieces by a foreign enemy; or the gold and silver were cut off from the people, their riches and wealth were wasted by such means; or rather the people were cut off, everyone of them, because of their worship of them, or this would be the case.

Ver. 5. *Thy calf, O Samaria, hath cast [thee] off*, etc.] Or, is the cause of thy being cast off by the Lord, and of being cast out of thine own land, and carried captive into another; the past tense is used for the future, as is common in prophetic writings, to denote the certainty of the thing: or “thy calf hath left thee”^{f148}; in the lurch; it cannot help thee; it is gone off, and forsaken thee; it has “removed” itself from thee, according to the sense of the word in (²³⁰⁷Lamentations 3:17); as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe; or is removed far from thee, being carried captive itself into Assyria; for, when the king of Assyria took Samaria, he seized on the golden calf for the sake of the gold, and took it away; (see ²³⁰⁵Hosea 10:5,6 ²³⁰¹Isaiah 10:11); or “he hath removed thy calf”^{f149}; that is, the enemy, taking it away when he took the city; or God has rejected it with the utmost contempt and abhorrence: the calf is here, and in the following verse, called the calf of Samaria, because this was the metropolis of the ten tribes, in which the calf was worshipped, and because it was worshipped by the Samaritans; and it may be, when Samaria became the chief city, the calf at Bethel might be removed thither, or another set up in that city:

mine anger is kindled against them: the calves at Daniel and Bethel, the singular before being put for the plural; or against the if of Samaria, and Samaria itself; or the inhabitants of it, because of the worship of the calf, which was highly provoking to God, it being a robbing him of his glory, and giving it to graven images:

how long [will it be] ere they attain to innocency? or “purity”^{f150}; of worship, life, and conversation: the words may be rendered thus, “how long?”^{f151} for there is a large stop there; and this may be a question of the prophet’s, asking how long the wrath of God would burn against the people, what; would be the duration of it, and when it would end? to which an answer is returned, as the words may be translated, “they cannot bear purity”^{f152}; of doctrine, of worship of heart, and life; when they can, mine anger will cease burning: or, as the Targum,

“as long as they cannot purify themselves,”

or be purified; so long as they continue in their sins, in their superstition and idolatry, and other impieties, and are not purged from them.

Ver. 6. *For from Israel [was] it also*, etc.] That is, the calf was from Israel; it was an invention of theirs, as some say; they did not borrow it from their neighbours, as they did other idols, but it was their own contrivance: but this tines not seem to be fact; for the calf, the making of it indeed, was of themselves, but the worship of it they borrowed from the Egyptians; with this difference, the Egyptians worshipped a living cow or ox, these the golden image of a calf: but rather the sense is, that this calf was made by the advice of Israel, by the advice of Jeroboam their king, and of their princes, they assenting to it, so Aben Ezra; or the gold and silver of which it was made was exacted on them, and collected from them, as the Targum and Jarchi; or workmen were employed by them to make it; and so it was of them also, as any other work that was done by their advice and direction, and at their expense; and therefore could never have any divinity in it, any more than other things they did; though this is commonly interpreted as having respect to the making of the golden calf by Aaron, that this also was of Israel as well as that:

the workman made it; therefore it [is] not God; a strong and invincible reason this; for, since the call was the work of an artificer, of the goldsmith or founder, it could not be God; there could not be deity in it; for a creature cannot make a God, or give that which itself has not; if the workman was not God, but a creature, if deity was not in him, he could never give it to a golden image, a lifeless statue fashioned by him: this, one would think, should have been a clear, plain, striking, and convincing argument to them, that their calf was, as the Targum has it,

“a deity in which there was no profit:”

but the calf of Samaria shall be broken to pieces; or “for^{f153} the calf of Samaria”, etc. being another reason to prove it could not be God; if the former would not convince them, this surely would, when they should see it broke to pieces by the enemy, from whom it could not save itself; and therefore could not be a god that could be of any service to them, or save them. The Vulgate Latin version renders it, “for the calf of Samaria shall become spiders webs”: and Jerom says he learned it of a Jew that the word so signifies; but his Jew imposed upon him: it, does not appear to be any

where so used, either in the Bible, or in any other writings. Kimchi interprets it shivers, fragments, broken pieces of anything. Jarchi says it signifies, in the Syriac language, beams, planks, and boards, pieces of them; so the Targum and Ben Melech from the Rabbins; or rather the dust which falls from them in sawing, sawdust; to dust as small as that should this calf be reduced, as the golden calf was ground to powder by Moses, to which, it is thought, there is an allusion.

Ver. 7. *For they have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind,* etc.] The sense is, the Israelites took a great deal of pains in the idolatrous worship of the calves, and made a great stir, bustle, and noise in it, like the wind; were very vainglorious and ostentatious, made a great show of religion and devotion, and promised themselves great things from it, peace and plenty, wealth and riches, all prosperity and happiness, enjoyed by Heathen nations; but this was lost labour, it was labouring for the wind, or sowing that; they got nothing by it, or what was worse than nothing; it proved not only useless, but hurtful, to them; for, for their idolatry, and continuance in it, the whirlwind of God's wrath would be raised up against them, and the Assyrian army, like a vehement storm of wind, would rush in upon them, and destroy them; so they that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption, (~~808~~ Galatians 6:8);

it hath no stalk; what they sowed did not rise up above ground; or, if it did, it did not spring up in a blade or stalk, which was promising of fruit; no real good, profit, and advantage, sprung from their idolatrous practices:

the bud shall yield no meal; yea, though it rise up into a stalk, and this stalk produced ears of corn, yet those so thin, that no meal or flour could be got out of them, and so of no worth and use:

and if so be it yield: any meal or flour:

the strangers shall swallow it up; the Israelites should not be the better for it; it should till come into the hands of foreigners, the Assyrian army. The meaning is, that if they did prosper and increase in riches, yet they should not long enjoy them themselves, but be pillaged and spoiled of them; as they were by the exactions of Pul, and by the depredations of Shalmaneser, kings of Assyria. So the Targum,

“if they got substance, the nations shall spoil them of it.”

Ver. 8. *Israel is swallowed up*, etc.] Not only their substance, but their persons also, the whole nation of them, their whole estate, civil and ecclesiastic: it notes the utter destruction of them by the Assyrians, so that nothing of them and theirs remained; just as anyone is swallowed up and devoured by a breast of prey; the present is put for the future, because of the certainty of it:

now shall they be among the Gentiles as a vessel wherein [is] no pleasure; when Shalmaneser took Samaria, and with it swallowed up the whole kingdom of Israel, he carried captive the inhabitants of it, and placed them among the nations, in “Halah, Habor, by the river Gozan”, and in the cities of the Medes, (^{<12716>}2 Kings 17:6); where they lived poor, mean, and abject, and were treated with the utmost neglect and contempt; no more regarded than a broken useless vessel, or than a vessel of dishonour, that is made and used for the ease of nature, for which no more regard is had than for that service: thus idolaters, who dishonour God by their idolatries, shall, sooner or later, be brought to disgrace and dishonour themselves.

Ver. 9. *For they are gone up to Assyria*, etc.] Or, “though they should go up to Assyria”^{f154}; to the king of Assyria, to gain his friendship, and enter into alliance with him; as, when Pal king of Assyria came against them, Menahem king of Israel went forth to meet him, and gave him a thousand talents of silver to be his confederate, and strengthen his kingdom, (^{<12519>}2 Kings 15:19); yet this hindered not but that Israel was at length swallowed up by that people, and scattered by them among the nations; for this is not to be understood of their going captive into the land of Assyria, as the Targum interprets it:

a wild ass alone by himself; which may be applied either to the king of Assyria, and be considered as a description of him, to whom Israel went for help and friendship; who, though he took their present, and made them fair promises, yet was perfidious, unsociable, and inhuman, studied only his own advantage, and not their good: or to the Israelites that went to him, who were as sottish and stupid as the ass, and as headstrong and unruly as that, and, like it, lustful, and impetuous in their lusts; running to and fro for the satisfying of them, and taking no advice, nor suffering themselves to be controlled, and, being alone, became an easy prey to the Assyrian lion: or yet they should be as “a wild ass alone by itself”^{f155}; notwithstanding all the methods they took to obtain the friendship and alliance of the king of Assyria, yet they should be carried captive by him, and dwell in the

captivity like a wild ass in the wilderness; and so it is to be understood here, agreeably to (^{<3846>}Job 24:5 ^{<3424>}Jeremiah 2:24); otherwise, as Bochart^{f156} has proved from various writers, these creatures go in flocks:

Ephraim hath hired lovers; by giving presents to the kings of Assyria and Egypt, to be their allies and confederates, patrons and defenders, (^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:19 17:3,4); who are represented as their gallants, with whom Ephraim or the ten tribes committed adultery, departing from God their Husband, and liege Lord and King, and from his true worship; (see ^{<3106>}Ezekiel 16:26,28,33 23:4,5). R. Elias Levita^{f157} observes, that some interpret the words, “Ephraim made a covenant with lovers”.

Ver. 10. *Yea, though they have hired among the nations*, etc.] That is, lovers, as before; got into confederacies and alliances with the nations about them, thinking thereby to strengthen their hands, and secure themselves and their kingdom; particular regard may be had to the Egyptians, as distinct from the Assyrians, whom they privately engaged on their side to shake off the Assyrian yoke, or their obligation to send yearly presents to the Assyrian king:

now will I gather them; either the Assyrians against them, to invade their land, besiege their city, and take and carry them captive; or the Israelites in a body into the city of Samaria, and there be cooped up, and taken and destroyed, or carried captive; for this is not to be interpreted of the collection of them out of their captivity, as the Targum and Jarchi, but of the gathering of them together for their destruction:

and they shall sorrow a little for the burden of the king of princes; the tax or tribute imposed upon them by the king of Assyria, whose princes were altogether kings, (^{<2308>}Isaiah 10:8); and who used to be called king of kings, being at the head of a monarchy, which had many kings subject to it; as the kings of Babylon were afterwards called, (^{<2630>}Ezekiel 26:7); this may refer to the yearly present or tribute, which Hoshea king of Israel was obliged to give to the king of Assyria, which he was very uneasy at, and did not pay it, which drew upon him the resentment of the Assyrian king; and that sorrow and uneasiness which that tribute gave the king of Israel and his people were but little and small in comparison of what they after found; it was the beginning of sorrows to them: and so some render the words, “they began”^{f158}; that is, to sorrow and complain “a little”; or this may refer to their burdens and oppressions when in captivity, which were laid upon them by the king of Assyria, and the princes, the rulers, and governors of

the several places where the Israelites were carried captive: even the “few [that] shall remain”^{f159}, as some render it; and not die by famine, pestilence, and sword. Kimchi and Ben Melech think there is a deficiency of the copulative and between king and princes; which is supplied by the Targum, and by the Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, which read, “the king and princes”.

Ver. 11. *Because Ephraim hath, made many altars to sin*, etc.] Not with an intention to commit sin, but to offer sacrifice for sin, and make atonement for it, as they thought; but these altars being erected for the sake of idols, and sacrifices offered on them to them, they sinned in so doing, and were the cause of sin in others, who were drawn into it by their example; as they were made to sin, or drawn into it, by Jeroboam their king. These altars were those set up at Daniel and Bethel, and in all high places, and tops of mountains, where they sacrificed to idols; and which was contrary to the express command of God, who required sacrifice only at one place, and on one altar, (^{f155}Deuteronomy 12:5,6); typical of the one altar Christ, and his alone sacrifice, who is the only Mediator between God and man; and they are guilty of the same crime as Ephraim here, who make use of more, or neglect him;

altars shall be unto him for sin; either these same altars, and the sacrifices offered on them, shall be reckoned and imputed to him as sins, trod shall be the cause of his condemnation and punishment: or, “let the altars be unto him for sin”, so some^{f160}; since he will have them, let him have them, and go on in sinning, till he has filled up the measure of his sins, and brought on him just condemnation; or else other altars are meant, even in the land of Assyria, where, since they were so fond of multiplying altars, they should have altars enough to sin at, whereby their sins would be increased, and their punishment for them aggravated. The Targum is,

“seeing the house of Ephraim hath multiplied altars to sin, the altars of their idols shall he to them for a stumbling block,”

or ruin; so sin is taken in a different sense, both for guilt, and the punishment of it.

Ver. 12. *I have written to him the great things of my law*, etc.] Which was given by Moses to Israel at the appointment of God, in which were many commands, holy, just, and true; a multiplicity of them, as the Targum, relating to the honour of God, and the good of men; many excellent and

useful ones of a moral nature, and others of a ceremonial kind; and particularly concerning sacrifices, showing what they should be, the nature and use of them, and where and on what altar they should be offered; and which pointed at the great sacrifice of the Messiah, who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest: and these things were frequently inculcated by the prophets, who from time to time were sent unto them; so that the Lord was continually writing these things to them by them, as Jarchi, Kimchi, and Ben Melech interpret it; hence they could not plead ignorance, and excuse themselves on that account. The law sometimes not only designs the law of the decalogue, and the ceremonial law, respecting sacrifices, etc. but all the books of Moses, in which are written many great and excellent things concerning Christ, his person, offices, and grace; yea, all the books of the prophets, the whole of Scripture, which is by inspiration of God, and is the writing and word of God, and not men; and of which holy men of God were the “amanuenses”; and in which many valuable and precious things are recorded, even all the works of God, of creation, providence, and grace; yea, the various thoughts, counsels, and purposes of his heart, relating to the salvation of men, are transcribed here; and the manifold grace of God, or each of the doctrines of grace, are contained herein, especially in the doctrinal and evangelical part of it, which is sometimes called the law of the Lord, even of Christ; and the law or doctrine of faith; (see ^{}Psalm 119:18 ^{}Isaiah 2:3 43:4 ^{}Romans 3:27); here are delivered and held forth the great doctrines of a trinity of Persons in the Godhead; of the everlasting love of God to his people, and of their choice in Christ before the world began; of the covenant of grace; of the incarnation of Christ; of redemption by him; of peace, pardon, righteousness, and atonement, through him; of eternal salvation by him; these things are written, and to be read and referred unto, and observed as the rule of faith and practice, and not unwritten traditions, pretended revelations, reveries, and dreams of men; and written they were, not for the use of the Israelites only under the former dispensation, but for the learning and instruction of us Gentiles also, (^{}Romans 3:2 9:4 15:4);

[but] they were counted as a strange thing; the laws respecting sacrifices more especially, and the place where they were to be offered, which are the things mentioned in the context, had been so long disregarded and disused by Ephraim or the ten tribes, that when they were put in mind of them by the prophets, they looked upon them as things they had no concern with; as laws that belonged to another people, and not to them: and so the great

things of divine revelation, the great doctrines of the Gospel, are treated by many as things they have nothing to do with, not at all interesting to them; yea, as nauseous and despicable things, deserving their scorn and contempt, very ungrateful and disagreeable, and in this sense strange, as Job's breath was to his wife (~~<8897>~~ Job 19:17); and also as foreign to reason and good sense, and what cannot be reconciled thereunto: so the Athenians charged the doctrines of the Apostle Paul as strange, irrational, and unaccountable, (~~<4473>~~ Acts 17:20).

Ver. 13. *They sacrifice flesh [for] the sacrifices of mine offerings, and eat [it]*, etc.] Or, "as to the sacrifices mine offerings" or "gifts, they sacrifice flesh, and eat it"^{f161}; these sacrifices, which, according to the law, should given to God when they offered them, they did not give them to him, they took them to themselves, and ate them; they were carnal offerings, and offered with a carnal mind, without faith and piety, without any regard to the glory of God, but merely for the sake of caring: the Targum interprets it of sacrifices got by rapine, which God hates, (~~<2308>~~ Isaiah 61:8);

[but] the Lord accepteth them not; neither the sacrifices, nor the sacrificers, but despised and abhorred them; no sacrifice was acceptable to God but what was offered according to law, and where he directed, and in the faith of Christ, and through him:

now will he remember their iniquities, and visit their sins; he will not pardon them, but punish for them; so far were their sacrifices making atonement for them, as they expected, they added to the measure of their iniquities:

they shall return into Egypt; either flee thither for refuge, many of them it seems did, when the king of Assyria entered their land, and besieged Samaria; where they lived miserably, as in exile, and were there buried, and never returned to their own land any more; (see ~~<3008>~~ Hosea 9:3,6 ~~<5238>~~ Deuteronomy 28:68); or they should be carried captive into Assyria, where they should be in a like state of bondage as their fathers were in Egypt. Some render it, "they return into Egypt"^{f162}; and consider it not as their punishment, but as their sin; that when the Lord was about to visit them for their transgressions, they being made tributary to the Assyrians, instead of returning to the Lord, and humbling themselves before him, they sent to the king of Egypt for help, (~~<2704>~~ 2 Kings 17:4).

Ver. 14. *For Israel hath forgotten his Maker*, etc.] The Creator and Preserver of everyone of them, and who had raised them up to a state and kingdom, and had made them great and rich, and populous, and bestowed many favours and blessings on them; and yet they forgot him, to give him glory, and to serve and worship him:

and buildeth temples; to idols, as the Targum adds; to the calves at Daniel and Bethel, at which places, as there were altars set up, and priests appointed, so temples and houses of high places built to worship in; (see ~~1128~~ 1 Kings 12:31,32 ~~3171~~ Amos 7:10, 13);

and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities; to protect them from their enemies, which was not unlawful; but that they should put their trust and confidence in them, and not in the Lord their God, which was their sin; when they saw the ten tribes carried captive by the Assyrians, they betook themselves to such methods for their security, but were not careful to avoid those sins which brought ruin upon Israel:

but I will send a fire upon his cities, and it shall devour the palaces thereof; that is, an enemy, that should set fire to their cities, particularly Jerusalem their chief city, and burn the temple of the Lord, the palaces of their king and nobles, and all the fine houses of the great men; which was done many years after this prophecy, by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, (~~2523~~ Jeremiah 52:13).

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 9

This chapter is an address to Israel or the ten tribes, and contains either a new sermon, or is a very considerable part of the former upon the same subject, the sins and punishment of that people. It begins with an instruction to them, not to rejoice in their prosperity, as others did; since it would soon be at an end, because of their idolatry, which was everywhere committed, and for which they expected a reward of temporal good things, (~~2001~~Hosea 9:1); but, on the contrary, they are threatened with famine, with want both of corn and wine, (~~2002~~Hosea 9:2); and with an ejection out of their land into foreign countries; where they should be obliged to eat things unclean by their law, (~~2003~~Hosea 9:3); and where their sacrifices and solemnities should be no more attended to, (~~2004~~Hosea 9:4,5); yea, where their carcasses should fall and be buried, while their own country and houses lay waste and desolate, (~~2005~~Hosea 9:6); for, whatsoever their foolish and mad prophets said to the contrary, who pretended to be with God, and know his will, and were a snare to them that gave heed unto them, and brought hatred on them, the time of their punishment would certainly come, (~~2007~~Hosea 9:7,8); and their iniquities would be remembered and visited; seeing their corruptions were deep, like those that appeared in Gibeah, in the days of old, (~~2008~~Hosea 9:9); they acting the same ungrateful part their fathers had done, of whom they were a degenerate offspring, (~~2009~~Hosea 9:10); wherefore for these, and other offences mentioned, they are threatened with being bereaved of their children, and drove out of their land, to wander among the nations, (~~2011~~Hosea 9:11-17).

Ver. 1. *Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy, as [other] people*, etc.] But rather mourn and lament, since such a load of guilt lay upon them, and they had so highly provoked the Lord to anger by their sins, and punishment would quickly be inflicted on them; and though they might be now in prosperity, through Jeroboam's success against their enemies, who by his victories had enlarged their border; yet they should not rejoice at it, as other people used to do on such occasions, by illumination of houses, making fires in the

streets, feasting, and the like, since this prosperity would be but short lived: or if it was on account of the league made by Menahem with the king of Assyria, this would not last long; or on account of a good harvest, they need not so much rejoice as they that rejoice in harvest, since there would quickly be a famine among them: or rather it may respect rejoicing at their idols, and in their idolatrous worship, as other people, which is forbidden; such as instituting plays to the honour of them, making feasts before them, and dancing about them; whatever others might do, who knew not the true God, had not his law before them, nor his prophets sent to them to make known his will; who had been brought up in idolatry, adhered to their gods, and never forsook them; it ill became Israel to do the like. So the words may be rendered, “rejoice not, O Israel”, at an idol^{f163}, or idols, “as [other] people”, idolatrous ones; the word signifies “similitude”^{f164} or “likeness”, which an idol is:

for thou hast gone a whoring from thy God; playing the harlot with many lovers; committing adultery with stocks and stones; worshipping idols, and so departing from God, the true God, they had professed to be their God, their God in covenant; who stood in the relation of a husband to them, but they proved treacherous to him, and were guilty of spiritual adultery, which is idolatry; and therefore had no cause to rejoice as other nations that never left their gods, but to take shame to themselves, and mourn over their sad departure; (see ^{<300B>}Hosea 1:3);

thou hast loved a reward upon every corn floor; alluding to the hire of a harlot, prostituting herself for it on a corn floor, or any where else, and that for a measure of corn, or for bread: it may point either at their giving the tithes of their corn floors to their idols, instead of giving them to the Lord; or to their ascribing their plenty of corn, and all good things to their worship of them, which they called their rewards, or hires their lovers gave them, (^{<301B>}Hosea 2:5,12); or to their erecting of altars on their corn floors; as David erected one to the true God on the threshing floor of Araunah, (^{<1224>}2 Samuel 24:24,25); and which they might do, either by way of thanksgiving for a good harvest, which they imputed to them; or in order to obtain one, but in vain, as follows. The Targum is,

“for you have erred from the worship of your God; you have loved to serve idols on all, corn floors.”

Ver. 2. *The floor and the winepress shall not feed them*, etc.] Though their expectations from their worship of idols were large, they should find

themselves mistaken; for there would not be a sufficiency of corn on the floor, nor of wine in the press, to supply them with what was necessary for their sustenance; either through a blight upon their fields and vineyards, or through the invasion of an enemy, treading them down, and spoiling and foraging them: or else supposing a sufficient quantity of corn and wine got in; yet those blessings should be either turned into curses, or carried off by the enemy, that they should do then, no good; or if they enjoyed them, yet they should receive no nourishment from them; but should become lean, and look like starved and famishing creatures in the midst of plenty; by all which it would appear that their idols could neither give them a sufficiency of provisions, nor make those nourishing to them they had:

and the new wine shall fail in her; in the congregation or land of Israel: or, “shall lie to her”^{f165}; shall not answer their expectations, but disappoint and deceive them; whereas they expected great plenty from the promising prospect of the vines, these by one means or another should be destroyed, so that they would yield but little, and balk them; (see ^{<RB7>}Habakkuk 3:17 ^{<RD6>}Haggai 1:6,10,11 2:16).

Ver. 3. *They shall not dwell in the Lord’s land*, etc.] The land of Israel, or Canaan; which, though all the earth is the Lord’s, was peculiarly his; which he had chosen for himself, and for this people; where he had his temple, and caused his Shechinah or divine Majesty to dwell in a very special manner, and where his worship and service were performed. So the Targum calls it the land of the Shechinah or majesty of the Lord. Sometimes it is called Immanuel’s land, where the Messiah Immanuel, God with us, was to be born, and dwell, and where he did. Kimchi wrongly interprets this of Jerusalem only; and others of Judea; but it designs the whole land of promise, which God gave by promise to the fathers of this people, and put them in the possession of, the tenure of which they held by their obedience; but they not living according to will, and in obedience to his laws, who was Lord of the land, sole Proprietor and Governor of it, he turned them out of it, and would not suffer them to continue any longer in it; and which was a great punishment indeed, to be driven out of such a land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and where they had been favoured with privileges and blessings of every kind;

but Ephraim shall return to Egypt; or the ten tribes; that is, some of them, who should flee thither for refuge and sustenance; when the Assyrian should invade their land, and besiege Samaria, they should go thither again,

where their ancestors had formerly been in a state of bondage: this is prophesied of them, (^{<B88>}Deuteronomy 28:68);

and they shall eat unclean [things] in Assyria; that is, Ephraim or the ten tribes, the far greater part of there, should be taken captive, and carried into Assyria, and there eat food which by their law was unclean, as things sacrificed to idols, swine's flesh, and many others; or food that was not fit for men to eat, which nature abhorred; such bread as Ezekiel was bid to make and eat, (^{<B09>}Ezekiel 4:9,12,13). This may be understood even of them that went to Egypt for help against the Assyrians, or for shelter from them, or for food to eat in the time of famine; who should be brought back again, and carried into Assyria, and there live a miserable and an uncomfortable life; who had been used to enjoy corn and wine, and plenty of all good things, to which these unclean things may be opposed.

Ver. 4. *They shall not offer wine [offerings] to the Lord*, etc.] This is either a threatening of the cessation of sacrifices, being carried into Assyria, a strange land, where it was not lawful to offer sacrifice, there being no temple nor altar to offer in or at; and so as they would not offer to the Lord when they should, now they shall not if they would: or this respects not, the future time of their exile, but their present time now, as Kimchi observes; and so is a reproof of their present sacrifices, which are forbidden to be observed; because they were offered not in faith, nor in sincerity, but hypocritically, and before their calves: besides, the future tease is sometimes put for the present; and this way goes Schmid;

neither shall their sacrifices be pleasing unto him; unto the Lord, if they were offered; and is a reason why they should not, because unacceptable to him, and that for the reasons before mentioned:

their sacrifices [shall be] unto them as the bread of mourners: all that eat thereof [shall be] polluted; as all that ate of the bread of such who were mourning for their dead, that partook of their funeral feasts, or ate bread with them at any time during their mourning, were defiled thereby, according to the Levitical law, and were unqualified for service, (^{<B10>}Leviticus 21:1 ^{<B14>}Deuteronomy 26:14); so the sacrifices of these people being offered up with a wicked mind instead of atoning for their sins, more and more defiled them; and, instead of being acceptable to God, were abominable to him:

for their bread for their soul shall not come into the house of the Lord; in the captivity there was no house of the Lord for them to bring it into; and, when in their own land, they did not bring their offerings to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, as they should have done, but offered them before their calves at Daniel and Bethel; and which is the thing complained of, that the bread for their souls, that is, the offerings accompanied with the “minchah”, or bread offering, for the expiation of the sins of their souls, were not brought into the house of the Lord (the future for the present); or else, this being the case, their sacrifices were reckoned by the Lord as no other than common bread, which they ate for the sustenance of their lives.

Ver. 5. *What will ye do in the solemn day, and in the day of the feast of the Lord?*] Since their sacrifices now were so disagreeable and displeasing to the Lord, and so unavailable to themselves, what would they do when in captivity, “in the solemn day”, the seventh day of the week, appointed by the Lord for rest and religious worship; and in the first day of the month, which also was to be solemnly observed, by offering sacrifice, etc. and on feast days of the Lord’s instituting, as the feasts of the passover, pentecost; and tabernacles? seeing those that carried and held them captive would not allow them time for such solemnities; nor would they be furnished with proper sacrifices; nor could they be accommodated with a proper place to offer them at; nor be able, in a strange land, and under hardships and miseries, to express that joy that is suitable to such occasions: thus should they learn, by sad experience, the want of those means and opportunities of serving the Lord, which in their own land they rejected and despised. Jarchi and Kimchi interpret this of the destruction of Israel, and of punishment inflicted on them at the time appointed by the Lord; and which would be a solemn time, a feast with the Lord, to which he should invite their enemies, and they should spill their blood as the blood of sacrifices; and when he would display the glory of his justice, truth, and faithfulness, before all the world. And it is asked, what will you do then? whither will you flee for help? or what sacrifice can you offer up to the Lord to atone for sin, or appease his wrath? will you be able to rejoice then? no, your joy will be turned into mourning; (see ^{230B} Isaiah 10:3 34:6).

Ver. 6. *For, lo, they are gone, because of destruction,* etc.] That is, many of the people of Israel were gone out of their own land to others, particularly to Egypt, because of the destruction that was coming upon them, and to avoid it; because of the Assyrian army which invaded their land, and besieged Samaria, and threatened them with entire destruction;

and upon which a famine ensued, and which is thought by Kimchi to be here particularly meant;

Egypt shall gather them up: being dead; for they shall die there, perhaps by the pestilence, and never return to their own country, as they flattered themselves; and they shall make preparations for their funeral:

Memphis shall bury them; or they shall be buried there; which was a principal city in Egypt, here called Moph, in (^{289B}Isaiah 19:13), Noph. It was the metropolis of upper Egypt, and the seat of the Egyptian kings. In it, as Plutarch says^{f166}, was the sepulchre of Osiris; and some say its name so signifies. Near to it were the famous pyramids, as Strabo^{f167} says, supposed to be built for the sepulchre of them. Herodotus^{f168} places these pyramids at Memphis, and says there were three of them; the largest had several subterraneous chambers in it; the next in size had none; the smallest was covered with Ethiopic marble. Strabo, in the place referred to, speaks of many pyramids near it, of which three were very remarkable, and expressly says they were the burying places of the kings. Diodorus^{f169} agrees with these, as to the number of them, but places them fifteen miles from Memphis. Pliny^{f170} places them between Memphis and the Delta, six miles from Memphis; pretty near to which is Strabo's account, who in the above place says, they stood forty furlongs, or five miles, from the city. Near it was the lake of Charon or Acherusia, over which he ferried dead bodies from Memphis to the pyramids, or to the plains of the mummies, the Elysian fields. Now since this was so famous for the burying places of kings, there may be an allusion to it in this expression. Here also were buried their deities, the Apis or ox when it died;

the pleasant [places] for their silver, nettles shall possess them; such beautiful edifices as were made for the repositories or treasure houses for their silver; or were built or purchased at great expense of silver; or were decorated with it; now should lie in ruins, and be like a waste, desert, and desolate place, all overrun with nettles, and uninhabited:

briers [shall be] in their tabernacles; their dwelling houses, which being demolished, briers shall grow upon the ground where they stood, and overspread it; another token of desolation. The Targum interprets it of living creatures, beasts of prey, that should dwell there; wild cats particularly.

Ver. 7. *The days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come,* etc.] In which the Lord would punish the people of Israel for their sins, and reward them in a righteous manner, according as their evil works deserved; which time, being fixed and appointed by him, are called “days”; and these, because near at hand, are said to be “come”; and this is repeated for the certainty of it:

Israel shall know [it]; by sad experience, that these days are come; and shall acknowledge the truth of the divine predictions, and the righteousness of God in his judgments. Schultens^{f171}, from the use of the phrase in the Arabic language, interprets it of Israel’s suffering punishment; with which agrees the Septuagint version, “Israel shall be afflicted”, or it shall go ill with him; and to the same purpose the Arabic version:

the prophet [is] a fool; so Israel said, before those days came, of a true prophet of the Lord, that he was a fool for prophesying of evil things, but now they shall find it otherwise. So the Targum,

“they of the house of Israel shall know that they who had prophesied to them were true prophets;”

but rather this is to be understood of false prophets, who, when the day of God’s visitation shall come on Israel in a way of wrath and vengeance, will appear both to themselves and others to be fools, for prophesying good things to them, when evil was at hand:

the spiritual man [is] mad; he that was truly so, and prophesied under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, was accounted a madman for speaking against the idolatry of the times, and foretelling the judgments of God that would come upon the nation for it; but now it would be manifest, that not he, but such who pretended to be spiritual men, and to be directed and dictated by the Spirit of God, when they promised the people peace, though they walked after the imagination of their hearts, were the real madmen; who pursued the frenzies and fancies of their own minds, to the deception of themselves and the people, and called these the revelations of God, and pretended they came from the Spirit of God:

for the multitude of thine iniquities, and the great hatred; that is, either those evil days came upon them for their manifold sins and transgressions, which were hateful to God, and the cause of his hatred of them; or they were suffered to give heed to those foolish and mad prophets, because of their many sins, especially idolatry; and because of their great hatred of

God, and of his true prophets, and of his laws and ordinances, of his word, will, and worship, and of one another, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to a judicial blindness and hardness of heart, to believe a lie, and whatsoever those false prophets declared unto them, because they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, to walk according to his law, and to believe his prophets. The Targum is,

“but the false prophets besotted them, so as to increase thy transgression, and strengthen thine iniquities.”

Ver. 8. *The watchman of Ephraim [was] with my God*, etc.] Formerly the watchmen of Ephraim, or the prophets of Israel, were with the true God, whom the prophet calls his God; as Elijah and Elisha, who had communion and intimacy with him; had revelations and instructions from him; and were under the direction and inspiration of his Spirit, and prophesied in his name things according to his will, and for the good of his people: or “the watchman of Ephraim [should be] with my God”; on his side, and promote his worship and service, his honour and interest; and give the people warning from him, having heard the word at his mouth: but now they were not with him, nor for him, nor did as they should: or one that bore this character of a watchman in the ten tribes, pretended to be such a one, and would be thought to be with God, and to have his mind and will, and to be sincere for his glory:

[but] the prophet [is] a snare of a fowler in all his ways; the false prophet, the same with the watchman, instead of guiding and directing Ephraim in the right way in which he should go, lays snares for him in all the ways he takes, to lead him wrong, and draw him into sin, particularly into idolatry, both by his doctrine and example:

[and] hatred in the house of his God; and so became detestable and execrable it the house of his own god, the calf at Bethel, in the temple there: prophesying such things as in the event prove false, and drawing into such practices as brought on ruin and desolation. The Targum interprets it, of laying snares for their prophets, their true prophets; and Kimchi and Jarchi of slaying Zechariah the prophet in the temple.

Ver. 9. *They have deeply corrupted [themselves], as in the days of Gibeah*, etc.] Not the false prophets and watchmen only; but rather Ephraim, or the ten tribes, through their means became extremely corrupt in principle and practice; they had most sadly degenerated, and were deeply

sunk and immersed in all manner of wickedness, and rooted in it, and continued obstinate and incorrigible, so that there was no hope of reformation among them; they had got to as great a pitch of wickedness, and were guilty of the like uncleanness, lewdness, barbarity, and cruelty, as were acted by the men of Gibeah, with respect to the Levite and his concubine, (^{<0790>}Judges 19:1-30); for Gibeah of Benjamin is here meant, where the people asked a king, and rebelled against the words of the prophet, as some in Jarchi interpret it:

[therefore] he will remember their iniquity, he will visit their sins: that is, God, my God, as the prophet calls him in (^{<2008>}Hosea 9:8), will not forgive and forget their sins; pardon being often expressed by a non-remembrance of sins; but will make inquiry after them, and visit them in a way of wrath and vengeance, and punish for them as they deserve: they being obstinate and impenitent, and persisting in their sins, like the men of Gibeah and Benjamin.

Ver. 10. *I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness,* etc.] Not Jacob or Israel personally, with the few souls that went down with him into Egypt; for these died in Egypt, and never returned from thence, or came into the wilderness to be found; nor Israel in a spiritual sense, the objects of electing, redeeming, and calling grace; though it may be accommodated to them, who in their nature state are as in a wilderness, in a forlorn, hopeless, helpless, and uncomfortable condition; in which the Lord finds them, seeking them by his Son in redemption, and by his Spirit in the effectual calling; when they are like grapes, not in themselves, being destitute of all good, and having nothing but sin and wickedness in them; for, whatever good thing is in them at conversion, it is not found, but put there; but the simile may serve to express the great and unmerited love of God to his people, who are as agreeable to him as grapes in the wilderness to a thirsty traveller; and in whom he takes great delight and complacency, notwithstanding all their sinfulness and unworthiness; and bestows abundance of grace upon them, and makes them like clusters of grapes indeed; and such were many of the Jewish fathers, and who are here intended, even the people of Israel brought out of Egypt into the wilderness of Arabia, through which they travelled to Canaan: here the Lord found them, took notice and care of them, provided for them, and protected them, and gave them, many tokens of his love and affection; (see ^{<6520>}Deuteronomy 32:10); and they were as acceptable to him, and he took as much delight and pleasure in them, as one travelling through the deserts

of Arabia, or any other desert, would rejoice at finding a vine laden with clusters of grapes. The design of this metaphor is not to compare Israel with grapes, because of any goodness in them, and as a reason of the Lord's delight in them; for neither for quantity nor quality were they like them, being few, and very obstinate and rebellious; but to set forth the great love of God to them, and his delight and complacency in them; which arose and sprung, not from any excellency in them, but from his own sovereign good will and pleasure; (see ^{<B06>}Deuteronomy 7:6-8 9:5,6 10:15);

I saw your fathers as the first ripe in the fig tree at her first time; the Lord looked upon their ancestors when they were settled as a people, in their civil and church state, upon their being brought out of Egypt, with as much pleasure as a man beholds the first ripe fig his fig tree produces after planting it, or the first it produces in the season, the fig tree bearing twice in a year; but the first is commonly most desired, as being most rare and valuable; and such were the Israelites to the Lord at first, (^{<B01>}Micah 7:1 ^{<B02>}Jeremiah 2:2). This is observed, to aggravate their ingratitude to the Lord, which soon discovered itself; and to suggest that their posterity were like them, who, though they had received many favours from the Lord, as tokens of his affection to them, and delight in them; yet behaved in a most shocking and shameful manner to him:

[but] they went to Baalpeor: or “went into Baalpeor”^{f172}; committed whoredom with that idol, even in the wilderness where the Lord found them and showed so much regard to them; this refers to the history in (^{<B03>}Numbers 25:1-18). Baalpeor is by some interpreted “the lord” or “god of opening”: and was so called, either from his opening his mouth in prophecy, as Ainsworth^{f173} thinks, as Nebo, a god of Babylon, had his name from prophesying; or from his open mouth, with which this idol was figured, as a Jewish writer^{f174} observes; whose worshipper took him to be inspired, and opened their mouths to receive the divine afflatus from him: others interpret it “the lord” or “god of nakedness”; because his worshippers exposed to him their posteriors in a shameful manner, and even those parts which ought to be covered; and this is the sense of most of the Jewish writers. So, in the Jerusalem Talmud^{f175}, the worship of Peor is represented in like manner, and as most filthy and obscene, as it is by Jarchi^{f176}, who seems to have taken his account from thence; and even Maimonides^{f177} says it was a known thing that the worship of Peor was by uncovering of the nakedness; and this he makes to be the reason why God

commanded the priests to make themselves breeches to cover their nakedness in the time of service, and why they might not go up to the altar by steps, that their nakedness might not be discovered; in short, they took this Peor to be no other than a Priapus; and in this they are followed by many Christians, particularly by Jerom on this place, who observes that Baalpeor is the god of the Moabites, whom we may call Priapus; and so Isidore^{f178} says, there was an idol in Moab called Baal, on Mount Fegor, whom the this call Priapus, the god of gardens; but Mr. Selden^{f179} rejects this notion, and contends that Peor is either the name of a mountain, of which Isidore, just now mentioned, speaks; (see ~~<1023>~~ Numbers 23:28); where Baal was worshipped, and so was called from thence Baalpeor; as Jupiter Olympius, Capitolinus, etc. is so called from the mountains of Olympus, Capitolinus, etc. where divine honours are paid him; or else the name of a man, of some great person in high esteem, who was deified by the Moabites, and worshipped by them after his death; and so Baalpeor may be the same as “Lord Peor”; and it seems most likely that Peor is the name of a man, at least of an idol, since we read of Bethpeor, or the temple of Peor, in (~~<1636>~~ Deuteronomy 34:6);

and separated themselves unto [that] shame; they separated themselves from God and his worship, and joined themselves to that shameful idol, and worshipped it, thought by many, as before observed, to be the Priapus of the Gentiles, in whose worship the greatest of obscenities were used, not fit to be named: so that this epithet of shame is with great propriety given it, and aggravates the sin of Israel, that such a people should be guilty of such filthy practices; though Baal, without supposing him to be a Priapus, may be called “that shame”, for Baal and Bosheth, which signifies shame, are some times put for each other; so Jerubbaal, namely Gideon, is called Jerubbesheth, (~~<1085>~~ Judges 8:35 ~~<1012>~~ 2 Samuel 11:21); and Eshbaal appears plainly to be the same son of Saul, whose name was Ishbosheth, (~~<1383>~~ 1 Chronicles 8:33 ~~<1020>~~ 2 Samuel 2:10); and Meribbaal is clearly the same with Mephibosheth (~~<1384>~~ 1 Chronicles 8:34 ~~<1006>~~ 2 Samuel 9:6); yea, it may be observed that the prophets of Baal are called, in the Septuagint version of (~~<1185>~~ 1 Kings 18:25); **προφητας της αισχυνης**, “the prophets of that shame”; every idol, and all idolatry being shameful, and the cause of shame, sooner or later, to their worshippers; especially when things obscene were done in their religious rites, as were in many of the Heathens in which the Jews followed them; (see ~~<1024>~~ Jeremiah 3:24,25 11:13);

and [their] abominations were according as they loved: or, “as they loved them”, the daughters of Moab; for it was through their impure love of them that they were drawn into these abominations, or to worship idols, which are often called abominations; or, as Joseph Kimchi reads the words, and gives the sense of them, “and they were abominations as I loved them”; that is, according to the measure of the love wherewith I loved them, so they were abominations in mine eyes; they were as detestable now as they were loved before.

Ver. 11. [*As for* Ephraim, *their glory shall flee away like a bird*, etc.] That is, suddenly, swiftly, and irrecoverably, and never return more; which some understand of God their glory, and of his departure from them, as in (²³⁹²Hosea 9:12); others of their wealth and riches, and whatever was glorious and valuable among them, which should fly away from them in a moment, when taken and carried captive; rather their numerous posterity, in which they were very fruitful, according to their name, and in which they gloried, as children are the glory of their parents, (³¹⁷⁶Proverbs 17:6); which sense agrees with what follows, and which explains the manner of their fleeing away, and the periods of it:

from the birth, and from the womb, and from the conception; that is, some of them, as soon as they were born; others while in the womb, being abortives; or, however, when they should, or as soon as they did, come from thence; and others, as soon as conceived, never come to any thing; or not conceived at all, as Kimchi interprets it, the women being barren.

Ver. 12. *Though they bring up their children*, etc.] Though this be the case of some, as to be conceived, carried in the womb to the full time, and be born, and brought up to a more adult age, and appear very promising to live, and perpetuate the names of their fathers and their families:

yet will I bereave them; their parents of them, by the sword, famine, pestilence, or by carrying them captive into a foreign country:

[that there shall] not [be] a man [left]; in the whole land of Israel, but all shall be destroyed, or carried captive; or, “from men”^{f180}; that is, either from being men, as the Targum; though they are brought up to some ripeness, and a more adult age than others, yet arrive not to such a time and age as to be called men, as Kimchi observes; or from being among men, being either taken away by death, or removed from the society of men to live among beasts, and to be slaves like them:

yea, woe also to them, when I depart from them; withdraw my presence, favour, and protection from them; or remove my Shechinah from them, as the Targum; and leave them to the spoil and cruelty of their enemies, which would be a greater calamity and judgment than the former. The Septuagint, and so Theodotion, render it, “woe is to them, my flesh is of them”; which some of the ancients interpret of the incarnation of Christ, not considering that the words are spoken of Ephraim, or the ten tribes; whereas the Messiah was to spring, and did, from the family of David, and tribe of Judah.

Ver. 13. *Ephraim, as I saw Tyrus, [is] planted in a pleasant place*, etc.]

That is, either as the city of Tyre, a very famous city in Phoenicia, was situated in a very pleasant place by the sea, and abounded in wealth and riches, and was well fortified, and seemed secure from all danger, and from all enemies; so Ephraim or the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, were in like circumstances, equal to Tyre, as the Targum paraphrases it, in prosperity and plenty; yet as the prophet in the vision of prophecy saw that Tyre, notwithstanding all its advantages by power and wealth, by art and nature, would be destroyed, first by Nebuchadnezzar, and then by Alexander; so by the same prophetic spirit he saw that Ephraim or the ten tribes, notwithstanding their present prosperity, and the safety and security they thought themselves in, yet should be given up to ruin and destruction by the hand of the Assyrians; or it may be rendered thus, “Ephraim as”, or “when I saw it, unto Tyre”^{f181}; reaching unto that place, and bordering upon it, as part of the ten tribes did; I saw it, I observed it, took a survey of it, and I perceived it was “planted in a pleasant place”; like a tree planted in a fruitful soil, well rooted, and in a flourishing condition; so were they, abounding with all good things, and having a numerous offspring; from all which they promised themselves much happiness for ages to come:

but Ephraim shall bring forth his children to the murderer; to sacrifice them to Moloch, as some; so the Targum,

“they of the house of Ephraim have sinned in slaying their children to the service of idols;”

with which Jarchi agrees; but rather the sense is, with Kimchi, and others, when their enemies shall come against them, as the Assyrian army, they shall go out with their sons to fight with them, and these shall be destroyed and murdered by them; it will be like leading lambs to the slaughter to be butchered and devoured by them.

Ver. 14. *Give them, O Lord: what wilt thou give them?* etc.] The prophet foreseeing the butchery and destruction of their children, his heart ached for them; and, to show his tender affection for this people, was desirous of putting up a supplication for them; but was at a loss what to ask, their sins were so many, and so aggravated, and the decree gone forth for their destruction: or, “give them what thou wilt give them”^{f182}; so Jarchi, Kimchi, and Abarbinel, what thou hast threatened before to give them, (^{<2811>}Hosea 9:11); do not give them to be butchered and murdered before the eyes of their parents by their enemies; but rather let them die in the womb, or as soon as born; so it follows:

give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts; the latter being a sign of the former, as physicians observe; or the words may be rendered disjunctively, give them one, or the other; that is, to the wives of the people of Israel, if they conceive, let them miscarry, prove abortive, rather than bring forth children to be destroyed in such a cruel manner by murderers; or if they bear them to the birth, and bring them forth, let their breasts be dried up, and afford no milk for their nourishment; and so die for lack of it, rather than fall into the hands of their merciless enemies: thus, of two evils, the prophet chooses and prays for the least. Some interpret this as a prediction of what would be, or an imprecation of it; but it rather seems a pathetic wish, flowing from the tender affection of the prophet, judging such a case to be preferable to the former; (see ^{<2739>}Luke 23:29); though the other sense seems best to agree with what follows, and which is favoured by the Targum,

“give thou, O Lord, the recompence of their works; give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts.”

Ver. 15. *Ah their wickedness [is] in Gilgal*, etc.] A place in the ten tribes, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed in Joshua’s time; the first passover was kept in the land of Canaan, and the people of Israel ate the firstfruits of the land; where the tabernacle was for a while, and sacrifices were offered up to the Lord: but now things were otherwise; all manner of iniquity was committed in it, especially idolatry; for which it was chosen by idolaters, because it had formerly been famous for religious worship: here, though not to the exclusion of other places, as Daniel and Bethel, was the above sin committed; here it begun and spread itself, and had the measure of it filled up; here began the first departure from the Lord, rejecting him, and asking a king in the days of Samuel, as Kimchi and Abarbinel observe;

and here were high places and altars erected for idolatry; and this is now the reason of the above threatenings of God, and the predictions of the prophet. Grotius thinks there is a mystical sense in the words, and that they have reference to the sin of the Jews in crucifying Christ on Golgotha; which, in the Syriac language, is the same with Gilgal; but both the people spoken of, and the place, are different:

for there I hated them; or “therefore”^{f183}, because they sinned so greatly against him in a place where they had formerly worshipped him; their sacrifices there, instead of being acceptable, were the more abominable to him, as they were offered there where his tabernacle once was, and sacrifices were offered to him according to his will:

for the wickedness of their doings I will drive them out of mine house; not out of the house of my sanctuary, or the temple, as the Targum; unless this is to be understood of losing the opportunity of going to the temple at Jerusalem, which those of the ten tribes had while they were in their own land, which the few godly persons among them then took, and made use of; but now their idolatry increasing in Gilgal, and other places, they should be carried captive; and, if they would, could not go up to the house of the Lord, and worship him there: or rather this may design, either the visible church of God, out of which they would be now ejected; or their native country, where they had been, as the family and household of God; but now should be so no more, but, as afterwards said, wanderers among the nations, and no more reckoned as belonging to the Lord, and under his paternal care and protection:

I will love them no more; which is not to be understood of the special love and favour the Lord bears to his own people in Christ, which is everlasting and unchangeable; but of his general and providential favour and regard unto these people, which he had manifested in bestowing many great and good things upon them; but now would do so no more; he would do nothing to them, or for them, that looked like love, or be interpreted of it, but all the reverse; and, by his behaviour to them, show that they were the objects of his aversion and hatred; and this was to continue, and has continued, and will continue unto the time of their conversion in the latter day, when “all Israel shall be saved”, (^{<6126>}Romans 11:26);

all their princes [are] revolters; from God and his worship, who should have set a good example to the people; and since these were perverse and rebellious against God, it is no wonder that the people in general

apostatized. This is to be understood of their king as supreme, and all subordinate rulers; of their judges and magistrates of every order; of all their governors, both civil and ecclesiastic; and not at Gilgal only, but in all the land. There is an elegant play on words^{f184} in the original, the beauty of which cannot be expressed in the translation.

Ver. 16. *Ephraim is smitten*, etc.] The people of the ten tribes, the kingdom of Israel, who had been like a tree planted in a pleasant place, (^{<2093>}Hosea 9:13); and were in very flourishing circumstances in the times of Jeroboam the second; but now were like a tree smitten with thunder and lightning, or hail stones, and beat to pieces; or with the heat of the sun, or with blasting winds, or by worms; as in the succeeding reigns, by the judgments of God upon them; by civil wars, conspiracies, and murders among themselves; and by the exactions of Pul and depredations of Tiglathpileser kings of Assyria; and quickly would be smitten again; the present being put for the future, because of the certainty of it, as usual in prophetic writings; or be utterly destroyed by Shalmaneser, and be no more a kingdom:

their root is dried up; like the root of a tree that has no sap and moisture in it, and can communicate none to the body and branches of the tree, which in course must die. This may be understood of their king, princes, nobles, and chief men, the support and strength of the nations; and of parents and heads of families, cut off by one judgment or another:

they shall bear no fruit; as a tree thus smitten, and its root dried up, cannot; so neither, this being their case, there would be none to beget, nor any to bear children, and bring them forth; called the fruit of the womb, in allusion to the fruit of trees:

yea, though they bring forth; though some of them should be spared, women with their husbands, and should procreate children:

yet will I slay [even] the beloved [fruit] of their womb; their children they should bring forth, on whom their affections were strongly set; and the rather, as they were but few, and from whom they had raised expectations of building up their families; even these the Lord would slay, or suffer to be slain, either by the sword of the enemy, or by famine, or by pestilence, or by some disease or another; so that there should be no hope of a future posterity, at least of no great number of them.

Ver. 17. *My God will cast them away*, etc.] With loathsomeness and contempt, having sinned against him, and done such abominable things; cast them out of their own land, as men not fit to live in it; cast them out of his sight, as not able to endure them; cast them away, as unprofitable and good for nothing; reject them from being his people; no more own them in the relation they had stood in to him; nor show them any more favour, at least until the conversion of them in the times of the Messiah. These are the words of the prophet, who calls the Lord his God, whom he worshipped, by whom he was sent, and in whose name he prophesied; and this in opposition to, and distinction from Israel, who worshipped other gods, and who had cast off the true God, and were now, or would be, cast away by him, and so no longer their God:

because they did not hearken unto him; to his word, as the Targum; to him speaking by his prophets; to the instructions, admonitions, threatenings, and predictions delivered to them from him; they did not obey his law, regard his will, or attend his worship; which was the cause of the rejection of them, and a just one:

and they shall be wanderers among the nations; being dispersed by the Assyrians in the several nations of the world, where they were fugitives and vagabonds; as their posterity are to this day.

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 10

This chapter is of the same argument with the former, and others before that; setting forth the sins of the ten tribes, and threatening them with the judgments of God for them; and exhorting them to repentance, and works of righteousness. They are charged with unfruitfulness and ingratitude; increasing in idolatry, as they increased in temporal good things, (^{<2801>}Hosea 10:1); with a divided heart, and with irreverence of God, and their king; and with false swearing, covenant breaking, and injustice, (^{<2802>}Hosea 10:2-4); and are threatened with a removal of their king, and with the destruction of their idols, and places of idolatry, which should cause fear in the common people, and mourning among the priests, (^{<2803>}Hosea 10:1,5-8). It is observed, that their sin had been of long continuance, though the Lord had been kind and good unto them, in chastising them in love, giving them good laws, sending his prophets to exhort them to repentance and reformation, but all in vain, (^{<2809>}Hosea 10:9-13); wherefore they are threatened with the spoiling of their fortresses, the destruction of the people, and the cutting off of their king, (^{<2804>}Hosea 10:14,15).

Ver. 1. *Israel [is] an empty vine*, etc.] The people of Israel are often compared to a vine, and such an one from whence fruit might be expected, being planted in a good soil, and well taken care of; (see ^{<2808>}Psalm 80:8 ^{<2801>}Isaiah 5:1-3 ^{<2402>}Jeremiah 2:21); but proved an “empty vine”, empty of fruit; not of temporal good things, for a multitude of such fruit it is afterwards said to have; but of spiritual fruit, of the fruit of grace, and of good works, being destitute of the Spirit of God, and his grace; and, having no spiritual moisture, was incapable of bringing forth good fruit: or, “an emptying vine”^{f185}; that casts its fruit before it is ripe; these people, what fruit they had, they made an ill use of it; even of their temporal good things; they emptied themselves of their wealth and riches, by sending presents, or paying tribute, to foreign princes for their alliance, friendship, and help; or by consuming it on their idols, and in their idolatrous worship. The Targum renders it,

“a spoiled vine^{f186};”

spoiled by their enemies, who robbed them of their wealth and riches, and trampled them under foot. The Septuagint version, and those that follow that, understand it in a sense quite the reverse, rendering it, “a flourishing vine”; putting forth branches, leaves, and fruit; and which the learned Pocock confirms from the use of the word in the Arabic language: but then it follows,

he bringeth forth fruit unto himself; all the good works done by them were not to the praise and glory of God, as fruits of righteousness are, which come by Jesus Christ; but were done to be seen of men, and to gain their applause and esteem, and so were for themselves; and all their temporal good things they abounded with were not made use of in the service of God, and for the promoting of his glory, and of true religion among them; but either consumed on their own lusts, or in the service of idols: or, “the fruit is like unto himself”^{f187}; as was the vine, so was its fruit: the vine was empty, and devoid of goodness, and so the fruit it produced. The Targum is,

“the fruit of their works was the cause of their being carried captive:”

according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars: as the Israelites increased in riches and wealth, their land bringing forth in great abundance, they erected the greater number of altars to their idols, and multiplied their sacrifices to them; this was the ill use they made of what fruit they did produce:

according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images; of richer metal, and more ornamented, and more of them, according to the plenty of good things, corn, and wine, and oil, their land produced; thus abusing the providential goodness of God to such vile purposes!

Ver. 2. *Their heart is divided*, etc.] Some say from Hoshea their king, who would have reformed them from their idolatry, and returned them to the true worship of God; but of that there is no proof; better from one another, their affections being alienated from each other, by their discords and animosities, their conspiracies against their kings, and the murders of them, and the civil wars among themselves; they also not being of one mind, but disagreeing in their sentiments about their idols; some being for one, and some for another: or rather from God himself, from the fear of him, from his worship and service; or from the law, as the Targum; or their hearts

were divided between God and their idols, as in Ahab's time between God and Baal; they pretended to worship God when they worshipped the calves, and so shared the service between them; or it may be rendered, "their heart flatters"^{f188} them; as if they had done that which was right and good, and were guilty of no evil, nor would any punishment be inflicted on them:

now shall they be found faulty; be convicted of their sin and folly, and appear guilty; when they shall be punished for their idolatry, and their idols not able to save them, as the destruction of them next mentioned will fully evince: or, "now shall they become desolate"^{f189} their land shall be desolate, and they carried captive:

he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images: that is, the king of Assyria shall do all this, or God by him: or, "behead their altars"^{f190}; take off the top of them, as the Targum; the horns of them, which might be made of gold, or other ornaments which were of value; and therefore became the plunder of the enemy; and who also would break in pieces their images, for the sake of the metal, gold or silver, of which they were made; as was usually done by conquerors, and to show their entire power over the conquered, that even their gods could not deliver them out of their hands.

Ver. 3. *For now they shall say, we have no king*, etc.] This they would say, either when they had one; but by their conduct and behaviour said they had none; because they had no regard unto him, no affection for him, and reverence of him; but everyone did what was right in his own eyes: or during the interregnum, between the murder of Pekah, which was in the twentieth year of Jotham, and the settlement of Hoshea, which was in the twelfth of Ahaz; (see ^{<DIS>}2 Kings 15:30 17:1); or when the land of Israel was invaded, and their king was shut up in prison, and Samaria besieged, so that it was as if they had no king; they had none to protect and defend them, to sally out at the head of them against the enemy, and fight their battles for them; or rather when the city was taken, the altars broke down, their images spoiled, and they and their king carried captive:

because we feared not the Lord: did not serve and worship him, but idols; and this sin, casting off the fear of the Lord, was the source and cause of all their troubles and sorrows; of the invasion of their land; of the besieging and taking their city, and having no king to rule over them, and protect them:

what then should a king do to us? if they had one, he could be of no service to them; for since they had offended God, the King of kings, and made him their enemy, what could an earthly king, a weak mortal man, do for them, or against him? it was now all over with them, and they could have no expectation of help and deliverance.

Ver. 4. *They have spoken words, swearing falsely in making a covenant,* etc.] Those are other crimes they were guilty of, for which the wrath of God could not be awarded from them by a king, if they had one, or by any other. They had used vain and idle words in their common talk and conversation; and lying and deceitful ones to one another in trade and commerce, in contracts and promises; and so had deceived and overreached one another: they had belched out many “oaths of vanity”^{f191}: or vain oaths and curses; their mouths had been full of cursing and bitterness; and they made covenants with God, and their king, and with other kings and princes, and with one another, and had not kept them; and now for these things God had a controversy with them:

thus judgment springeth up as hemlock in the furrows of the field; either the judgment of God, his wrath and vengeance for the above sins, rose up and spread itself in all their cities, towns, and villages; or rather the judgment and justice they pretended to execute, instead of being what it should have been, useful and beneficial to the people, like a wholesome herb, sprung up like hemlock, bitter and poisonous, and spread itself in all parts of the kingdom. Injustice is meant; (see ^{<inf>}Amos 6:12).

Ver. 5. *The inhabitants of Samaria shall fear because of the calves of Bethaven,* etc.] Or, “the cow calves”^{f192}, as in the original; so called by way of derision, and to denote their weakness and inability to help their worshippers; and so Bethel, where one of these calves was, is here, as elsewhere, called Bethaven; that is, the house of iniquity, or of an idol, by way of contempt; and may take in Daniel also, where was the other calf, since both are mentioned; unless the plural is put for the singular: now the land of Israel being invaded by the enemy, the inhabitants of Samaria, which was the metropolis of the nation, the king, nobles, and common people that dwelt there, and were worshippers of the calves, were in pain lest they should be taken by the enemy; or because they were, these places falling into his hands before Samaria was besieged, or at least taken; and these calves being broken to pieces, which they had worshipped, and put

their trust in, they were afraid the ruin of themselves and children would be next, and was not very far off:

for the people thereof shall mourn over it; either the people of Samaria, the same with the inhabitants of it; or rather the people of Bethaven, where the idol was; but now was broke to pieces, or carried away; though it is generally interpreted of the people of the calf, the worshippers of it, who would mourn over it, or for the loss of it, being taken away from them, and disposed of as in (^{<3106>}Hosea 10:6). The Jews^{f193} have a tradition, that, in the twentieth year of Pekah king of Israel, Tiglathpileser king of Assyria came and took away the golden calf in Dan; and, in the twelfth year of Ahaz, another king of Assyria (Shalmaneser) came and took away the golden calf at Bethel:

and the priests thereof [that] rejoiced on it; the Chemarims, as in (^{<3104>}Zephaniah 1:4); or “black”,^{f194} ones, because of their meagre and sordid countenances, or black clothing: the same word the Jews use for Popish monks: here it designs the priests of Bethaven, or the calf, who before this time rejoiced on account of it, because of the sacrifices and presents of the people to it, and the good living they got in the service of it; but now would mourn, as well as the people, and more, because of being deprived of their livelihood. Some read the words without the supplement “that, the priests thereof rejoiced on it”; which some interpret according to a tradition of the Jews mentioned by Jerom, though by no other, as I can find; that the priests stole away the golden calves, and put brasen and glided ones in the place of them; so that when they were carried away the people mourned, taking them to be the true golden calves; but the priests made themselves merry with their subtle device, and rejoiced that their fraud was not detected; but rather the word here used, as Pocock and others have observed, is of that kind which has contrary senses, and signifies both to mourn and to rejoice; and here to mourn, as perhaps also in (^{<3102>}Job 3:22 ^{<3121>}Psalms 2:11); and so Ben Melech observes, that there are some of their interpreters who understand it here in the sense of mourning:

for the glory of it, because it is departed from it; either because of the glory of the calf, which was gone from it, the veneration it was had in, the worship which was given to it, and the gems and ornaments that were about it; or rather the glory of Bethaven, and also of Samaria, and indeed

of all Israel, which was carried captive from them; that is, the calf, which was their god, in which they gloried, and put their trust and confidence in.

Ver. 6. *It shall also be carried unto Assyria [for] a present to King Jareb,* etc.] Or, “he himself”^{f195}; not the people of Samaria, or of Bethaven, or of the calf, but the calf itself; which, being all of gold, was sent a present to the king of Assyria, here called Jareb; either Assyria, or the king of it; (see Gill on “^{<2853>}Hosea 5:13”); this was done either by the people of Israel themselves, to appease the king of Assyria; or rather by the Assyrian army, who reserved the plunder of this as a proper present to their king and conqueror, to whom not only nations, but the gods of nations, were subject:

Ephraim shall receive shame; for worshipping such an idol, when they shall see it broke to pieces, and the gold of it made a present to the Assyrian king, and that it could not save them, nor itself:

and Israel shall be ashamed of his own counsel; of giving in to such idolatry, contrary to the counsel, mind, and will of God; or of the counsel which they and Jeroboam took to set up the calves at Daniel and Bethel, and thereby to keep the people from going up to Jerusalem, (^{<1128>}1 Kings 12:28); as well as of their counsel and covenant with the king of Egypt against the king of Assyria, (^{<1204>}2 Kings 17:4).

Ver. 7. [*As for*] *Samaria,* etc.] The metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel, and here put for the whole kingdom:

her king is cut off; which some understand of Pekah, who was killed by Hoshea; others of several of their kings cut off one after another, very suddenly and quickly, as the metaphor after used shows; or rather Hoshea the last king is meant, who was cut off by the king of Assyria; the present tense is used for the future, to denote the certainty of it. Aben Ezra thinks the verb “cut off” is to be repeated, Samaria is “cut off, her king [is] cut off”; both king and kingdom destroyed. So the Targum,

“Samaria is cut off with her king:”

as the foam upon the water; as any light thing flowing upon it; as the bark of a tree, as Kimchi and Abarbinel; or as the scum upon a boiling pot of water, as Jarchi, and the Targum; or as foam, which is an assemblage of bubbles upon the water; such are kings and kingdoms, swell, look big and high for a while; but are mere bubbles, empty things; and are often

suddenly, quickly, and easily destroyed; so Samaria and her king were by the Assyrian army; the Lord of hosts, the King of kings, being against them.

Ver. 8. *The high places also of Aven*, etc.] Bethel, which is not only as before called Bethaven, the house of iniquity; but Aven, iniquity itself; the high places of it were the temple and altars built there for idolatrous service, which were usually set on hills and mountains:

the sin of Israel shall be destroyed; that is, which high places are the sin of Israel, the occasion of sin unto them; and where they committed sin, the sin of idolatry, in worshipping the calves; these should be thrown down, demolished, and no longer used:

the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; lying in ruins, these shall grow upon them, the people and priests being carried captive that used to sacrifice upon them; but now they shall lie deserted by them, being destroyed by the enemy:

and they shall say to the mountains, cover us; and to the hills, fall on us; not that the high places and altars shall say so in a figurative sense, according to R. Moses in Aben Ezra; but, as Japhet, they that worshipped there, the priests and people of Samaria, Bethaven, and even of all Israel, because of their great distress; and, as persons in the utmost consternation, and in despair, and confounded, and ashamed, shall call to the mountains and hills where they have been guilty of idolatry to hide and cover them from the wrath of God; (see ^{<230>}Luke 23:30) (^{<616>}Revelation 6:16).

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast sinned from the days of Gibeah*, etc.] This has no respect, as the Targum, and others, to Gibeah of Saul, of which place he was, and the choosing him to be king; but to the affair of the Levite and his concubine at Gibeah in the days of the judges, and what followed upon it, (^{<790>}Judges 19:1-20:48); suggesting, that the sins of Israel were not new ones; they were the same with what were committed formerly, as early as the history referred to, and had been continued ever since; the measure of which were now filling up: or, as Aben Ezra and Abarbinel interpret it, “thou hast sinned more than the days of Gibeah”; were guilty of more idolatry, inhumanity, and impurity, than in those times; and yet the grossest of sins, particularly unnatural lusts, were then committed:

there they stood; either the men of Gibeah continued in their sins, and did not repent of them; and stood in their own defence against the tribes of

Israel, and the Benjamites stood also with them, and by them; and stood two battles, and were conquerors in them; and, though beaten in the third, were not wholly destroyed, as now the Israelites would be: or the tribes of Israel stood, and continued in, and connived at, the idolatry of the Levite; or rather stood sluggish and slothful, and were not eager to fight with the Benjamites, who took part with the men of Gibeah; which were their sins, for which they were worsted in the two first battles, and in which the present Israelites imitated them:

the battle in Gibeah against the children of iniquity did not overtake them; the two first battles against the men of Gibeah and the Benjamites, who are the children of iniquity, the one the actors, and the other the abettors and patrons of it, did not succeed against them, but the Israelites were overcome; and the third battle, in which they got the day, did not overtake them so as utterly to cut them off; for six hundred persons made their escape; but, in the present case prophesied of, it is suggested, that as their sins were as great or greater than theirs, their ruin should be entire and complete: or the sense is, that they were backward to go to battle; they were not eager upon it; they did not at once espouse the cause of the Levite; they did not stir in it till he had done that unheard of thing, cutting his concubine into twelve pieces, and sending them to the twelve tribes of Israel; and then they were not overly anxious, but sought the Lord, as if it was a doubtful case; which backwardness was resented in their ill success at first; and the same slow disposition to punish vice had continued with them ever since; so Schmidt.

Ver. 10. [*It is*] *in my desire that I should chastise them*, etc.] Or, “bind them”^{f196}, and carry them captive; and by so doing correct them for their sins they have so long continued in: this the Lord had in his heart to do, and was determined upon it, and would do it with pleasure, for the glorifying of his justice, since they had so long and so much abused his clemency and goodness:

and the people shall be gathered against them; the Assyrians, who, at the command of the Lord, would come and invade their land, besiege their city, and take it, and bind them, and carry them captive:

when they shall bind themselves in their two furrows; when, like heifers untamed, and bound in a yoke to plough, do not make and keep in one furrow, but turn out to the right or left, and make cross furrows; so it is intimated that this was the reason why the Lord would correct Israel, and

suffer the nations to gather together against them, and carry them captive, because they did not plough in one furrow, or keep in the true and pure worship of God; but made two furrows, worshipping partly God, and partly idols: or, “when they”, their enemies, “shall bind them”, being gathered against them, and carry them captive, they shall make them plough in “two furrows”, the one up, and the other down; and to this hard service they shall keep them continually. There is a double reading of this clause; the “Cetib”, or textual writing or reading, is, “to their two eyes”, or “fountains”: alluding, as Jarchi observes, to the binding of the yoke on oxen on each side of their eyes: or to the fountains in the land of Israel, the abundance of wine, milk, and honey; for the sake of which the people got together, broke in upon them, and bound them, in order to drink of. So Gussetius^{f197} renders the words, “and they shall bind them to drink of their fountains”. The “Keri” or marginal reading is, “their two iniquities”; which the Septuagint follows, rendering it,

“in chastising them, or when they are chastised for their two iniquities;”

so the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions; meaning either their worshipping the two calves at Daniel and Bethel; or their corporeal and spiritual adultery; or their forsaking the true God, and worshipping idols; (see ²⁴²³Jeremiah 2:13). Schmidt understands all this, not as a punishment threatened, but as an instance of the love of God to them, in chastising them in a loving and fatherly way; which had a good effect upon them, and brought them to repentance; partly in the times of the judges, but more especially in the days of Samuel, when they behaved well; and particularly in the reigns of David and Solomon; and when the people were gathered, not “against”, but “to” them; either became proselytes to them, or tributaries, or coveted their friendship; and when they themselves lived in great concord, in one kingdom, under one king, like oxen ploughing in two contiguous furrows.

Ver. 11. *And Ephraim [is as] an heifer [that is] taught, [and] loveth to tread out [the corn],* etc.] Like a heifer taught to bear the yoke, and to plough; but learned it not, as the Targum; does not like it; chooses to tread out the corn where it can feed upon it, its mouth not being then muzzled, according to the law; oxen or heifers were used both in ploughing and treading out corn, to which the allusion is. The sense is, that Ephraim or the ten tribes were taught to bear the yoke of the law, and yield obedience

to it, and perform good works; but did not like such a course of life; had no further regard for religion than as they found their own worldly profit and advantage in it: or they did not care to labour much in it; they liked the fruit and advantage arising from working, rather than the work itself; and thus, like a heifer, doing little, and living well, they grew fat, increased in power, wealth, and riches; and so became proud and haughty, and kicked against the house of David, and rent themselves from it; and set up a kingdom of their own, and lived and reigned according to their own will and pleasure, like a heifer without yoke and muzzle:

but I passed over upon her fair neck; or, “the goodness of her neck”^{f198}; which is expressive of the flourishing and opulent state and condition of the ten tribes, especially in the times of Jeroboam the second, which made them proud and haughty: but the Lord was determined to humble them, and first in a more light and gentle manner; or caused the rod of correction to pass over them more lightly; or put upon them a more easy yoke of affliction, by causing Pul king of Assyria to come against them; and to get rid of whom a present was given him, exacted of the people; and afterwards Tiglathpileser, another king of Assyria, who carried captive part of their land; and this not having its proper effect, the Lord was determined to proceed against them in a heavier manner:

I will make Ephraim to ride; some, taking the future for the past, render it, “I have made Ephraim to ride”^{f199}; that is, to rule and govern, having royal dignity and power given them, and that greater than that of Judah; and ride over the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, who were sometimes very much afflicted by them; and this is thought to be the sense of the following phrases,

Judah shall plough, [and] Jacob shall break his clods; or, “break the clods for him”^{f200}; for Ephraim while he rides, and uses them very hard; as in the days of Joash and Pekah, kings of Israel, when many of the tribes of Judah were slain by them, (¹²⁴²2 Kings 14:12,13 ¹⁴³⁶2 Chronicles 28:6,8); but rather the meaning is, “I will cause to ride on Ephraim”^{f201}; that is, the Assyrians shall ride upon them, get the dominion over them, carry them captive, and use them to hard service and bondage, as a heifer rid upon by a severe rider while ploughing; and the other tribes shall not escape, though they shall not be so hardly dealt with: “Judah shall plough, and Jacob shall break his clods”; these shall be carried captive into Babylon, and employed in hard and servile work, but more tolerable; as ploughing and breaking

clouds are easier than to ride upon; and as they had hope of deliverance at the end of seventy years; whereas no promise of return was made to the ten tribes, which is the sense some give; but Pocock and others think that these words regard the tender and gentle methods God took with these people to bring them to obedience to his law. Ephraim being teachable like a heifer, he took hold of her fair neck, and stroked it to encourage her, and accustom her to the hand, and to the yoke; and then put the yoke of his law upon them, add trained them up in his institutions, and used also gentle methods to keep them in obedience; and also set Judah to “plough”, and Jacob to “break the clods”, prescribed for them; and employed them in good works, in the duties of religion, from whence answerable fruit might have been expected; saying to them, by his prophets, as follows:

Ver. 12. *Saw to yourselves in righteousness*, etc.] Not the seed of grace, which bad men have not, and cannot see it; and which good men need not, it being sown in them already, and remaining; rather the seed of the word, which should be laid up in their hearts, dwell richly in them, and be kept and retained by them; though it is best of all to understand it of works of righteousness; as sowing to the flesh is doing the works of the flesh, or carnal and sinful acts; so sowing “unto righteousness”^{f202}, as it may be rendered, is doing works of righteousness; living soberly and righteously; doing works according to the word of righteousness, from good principles, and with good views, with a view to the glory of God: and which will be “sowing to themselves”, turn to their own account; for though such works are not profitable to God, as to merit anything at his hands; yet they are not only profitable to others, but to those that do them; for though not “for”, yet “in keeping” the commands of God there is “great reward”, (^{<D911>}Psalm 19:11). Reap in mercy; or “according to mercy”^{f203} not according to the merit of works, for there is none in them; but according to the mercy of God, to which all blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, are owing; and such who sow to the Spirit, or spiritual things, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting; not as the reward of debt, but of grace; not as of merit, but as owing to the mercy of Christ, (^{<R10>}Galatians 6:9) (^{<R12>}Jude 1:21);

break up your fallow ground; that is, of their hearts; which were like ground unopened, unbroken, not filled and manured, nor sown with seed, but overrun with weeds and thistles; and so were they, hard and impenitent, destitute of grace, and full of sin and wickedness, and stood in need of being renewed in the spirit of their minds; which this exhortation is designed to convince them of, and to stir them up to make use of proper

methods of obtaining it, through the efficacious grace of God; (see ^{<3015>}Jeremiah 4:5);

for [it is] time to seek the Lord: for his grace; as the husbandman seeks, prays, and waits for rain, when he has tilled his ground, and sowed his seed, to water it, and make it fruitful, that he may have a good reaping time, a plentiful harvest; and as there is a time to seek for the one, so for the other:

till he come and rain righteousness upon you; that is, Christ, whose coming is as the rain, (^{<2803>}Hosea 6:3 ^{<19715>}Psalm 72:6); and who, when he should come, whether personally by his incarnation, or spiritually by his gracious presence, would rain a plentiful rain of the doctrines of grace, and the blessings of it, such as peace pardon, righteousness, and eternal life by him; particularly the justifying righteousness wrought out by him, which is fully manifested in the Gospel, the ministration of that righteousness, and is applied unto, and put upon, all them that believe: or “till he come and teach you righteousness”^{f204}; as Christ did when come; he taught the word of righteousness in general, and the righteousness of God in particular, and directed men to seek it; declared he came to fulfil all righteousness, and taught men to believe in him for it, and that he is their righteousness, and the end of the law for it; as well as he taught them to live righteously and godly; (see ^{<3023>}Joel 2:23). The Targum is,

“O house of Israel, do for yourselves good works; walk in the way of truth; establish for yourselves the doctrine of the law; behold, at all times the prophets say to you, return to the fear of the Lord; now shall he be revealed, and bring righteousness to you.”

But these exhortations were vain and fruitless, as appears by what follows:

Ver. 13. *Ye have ploughed wickedness*, etc.] Contrived it, and took a great deal of pains to commit it; by ploughing sowed it, and which sprung up in a plentiful crop: it may denote their first sins, from whence all others arose; as their irreligion and infidelity; their apostasy from God; their idolatry and contempt of his word and prophets:

ye have reaped iniquity; abundance of other sins have sprung up from thence; a large harvest of them have been reaped and got in; or great numbers of other sins have been committed; one sin leads on to another, and these proceed “ad infinitum”; wickedness is of an increasing nature,

and grows worse and worse, and proceeds to more ungodliness: many understand this of the punishment or reward of sin:

ye have eaten the fruit of lies; as a sweet morsel though bread of deceit; which could not profit them, nor yield them in the issue the pleasure it promised them, and they hoped for from it:

because thou didst trust in thy way; in the worship of their idols, and in their alliances with neighbouring nations, and promised themselves great prosperity and happiness from hence:

and in the multitude of thy mighty men; their valiant soldiers, their numerous armies, and the generals of them, well skilled in war, and courageous; and also in their auxiliaries, which they had from the Egyptians and others; these they put their confidences in, to protect them; and so in their garrisons and fortresses, as the following words show:

Ver. 14. *Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people*, etc.] Because of their wickedness and vain confidence, the Assyrian army should invade them; which would cause a tumultuous noise to be made throughout the tribes in all cities and towns, a cry, a howling, and lamentation; especially among fearful and timorous ones as women and children; who would be thrown into a panic at hearing the news of a powerful foreign enemy entering their country, and laying waste all before them; a voice of clamour, as Jarchi observes, crying, flee, flee:

and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled; the strong holds, in which they put their confidence for safety; everyone of these should be taken and demolished by the enemy, in all parts of the kingdom; so that there should be none left to flee unto no place of retreat:

as Shalman spoiled Betharbel in the day of battle; that is, Shalmaneser king of Assyria, his name being abbreviated, as Bethaven is called Aven, (²³⁰⁸Hosea 10:8); who had lately, though there in no account of it elsewhere, spoiled this place, demolished its fortresses, and destroyed the inhabitants of it; which is thought to be either the city of Arbel beyond Jordan, in the Apocrypha:

“Who went forth by the way that leadeth to Galgala, and pitched their tents before Masaloth, which is in Arbela, and after they had won it, they slew much people.” (1 Maccabees 9:2)

which Josephus^{f205} calls a city of Galilee, and sometimes a village; and which, according to him, was not far from Sippore, and in lower Galilee near to which thieves and robbers dwelt in caves and dens, difficult to come at; and so a Jewish writer^{f206} places Arbel between Sippore and Tiberias; and elsewhere^{f207} mention is made of the valley of Arbel, near to these places: and Jerom^{f208} says, there was the village Arbel beyond Jordan, on the borders of Pella, a city of Palestine; and another of this name in the large plain, nine miles from the town of Legio: and he also speaks of an Arbela, the border of the tribe of Judah to the east; perhaps the same with Harbaalah, whence Arbela, or the mount of Baalah, (^(~~as~~)Joshua 15:11); now one or other of these places might be laid waste by this king of Assyria, in the first year of Hoshea, when he came up against him, and made him tributary: though some think Arbela in Assyria or Armenia is meant, famous for the utter defeat of Darius by Alexander, four hundred years after this, when it might have been rebuilt, and become considerable again: some of the Jewish writers^{f209} say there was a place near Nineveh so called; Benjamin of Tudela says^{f210}, from Nineveh to Arbel is one “parsa”, or four miles: and others^{f211} think Samaria itself is meant; but that cannot be, since the destruction of that city is here prophesied of, which should be as this: some conjecture it was the temple of a deity called Arbel, as Schmidt: but, be it what or where it will, here was a great devastation and slaughter made; which at this time was well known, and to which the desolation that would be made in the land of Israel is compared. The Vulgate Latin version is, “as Salmana was wasted by the house of him who judged Baal in the day of battle”; which patrons and defenders of interpret of the slaughter of Zalmunna by Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon; but the names of the one and the other are very different; nor does the text speak of the slaughter of a prince, but of the destruction of a city, and not of Shalman, but of Arbel; and refers not to an ancient, but recent history. Mr. Whiston^{f212} places the spoil of Arbela in the year 3272 A.M. or before Christ 732;

the mother was dashed in pieces with [her] children: women big with child, or having their children in their arms, had no mercy shown them, but were destroyed together; so it had been at Arbel, and would be again in Israel, which was dreadful to think of: according to Kimchi and Ben Melech, Arbel was the name of a great man in those days, whose family, meant by beth or a house, was thus cruelly destroyed.

Ver. 15. *So shall Bethel do unto you, because of your great wickedness,* etc.] Or, “because of the evil of your evil”^{f213}; their extreme wickedness, and exceeding sinfulness; the evil of evils they were guilty of was their idolatry, their worshipping the calf at Bethel; and this was the cause of all their ruin: God was the cause of it; the king of Assyria the instrument; but the procuring or meritorious cause was their abominable wickedness at Bethel; which therefore should be as Betharbel; yea, the whole land should be, on the account of that, like unto it, or be spoiled as that was. Or the words may be rendered, “so will he do unto you, O Bethel”^{f214}; that is, either God, or Shalman or Shalmaneser, shall do the same to Bethel as he did to Betharbel; utterly destroy it and its inhabitants, showing no mercy to age or sex;

in a morning shall the king of Israel be utterly cut off; meaning Hoshea the last king of Israel, and the kingdom entirely destroyed; so that afterwards there was no more king in Israel, nor has been to this day; there was not only an utter destruction of that king, but of all kingly power and government, and ever since the children of Israel have been without a king, (~~2KIN~~ Hosea 3:4); and this was to be done, and was done, in a “morning”: in the beginning of his reign, as Joseph Kimchi; but this seems not so well to agree with the history, since it was in the ninth year of his reign that Samaria was taken: but the sense is, either that it would be certainly done, as sure as the morning came; or suddenly and quickly, as the morning light breaks forth; or in the morning of prosperity, when they were expecting light and good days, from their alliance with the king of Egypt, against the king of Assyria.

CHAPTER 11

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 11

This chapter gives an account of the free and ancient love of God to Israel, and of the benefits and blessings of goodness he bestowed upon them; and of their ingratitude in not owning them, nor hearkening to his prophets, but sacrificing and burning incense to idols, (^{<2810>}Hosea 11:1-4); wherefore they are threatened with disappointment of relief from Egypt, with captivity into Assyria, and with the ravages of the sword in all places, being a people bent to backsliding, and incorrigible, (^{<2810>}Hosea 11:5-7); and yet, notwithstanding all this, the bowels of the Lord yearn after them, and promises of mercy are made to them; that they shall not utterly be destroyed, but a remnant shall be spared; which in the latter day shall be called and follow after the Lord, the King Messiah, and be returned from their captivity, and be resettled in their own land, and replaced in their own houses, (^{<2810>}Hosea 11:8-11); the chapter is concluded with an honourable character of Judah, (^{<2811>}Hosea 11:12).

Ver. 1. *When Israel [was] a child, then I loved him*, etc.] Or, “for Israel [was] a child”^{f215}; a rebellious and disobedient one, therefore his king was cut off in a morning, and he has been, and will be, without a king many days; yet still “I loved him”: or, “though Israel [was] a child”^{f216}; a weak, helpless, foolish, and imprudent one, “yet I loved him”: or, “when a child”; in the infancy of his civil and church state, when in Egypt, and in the wilderness; the Lord loved him, not only as his creature, as he does all the works of his hands, but with a more special love than he loved others; choosing them to be a special people above all others; giving them his law, his statutes, and his judgments, his word and his worship, which he did not give to other nations. So he loves spiritual and mystical Israel, all the elect of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, when children, as soon as born, and though born in sin, carnal and corrupt; yea, before they are born, and when having done neither good nor evil; and so may be expressive both of the earliness and antiquity of his love to them, and of the freeness of it, without any merits or motives of theirs;

and called my son out of Egypt, not literal Israel, as before, whom God called his son, and his firstborn, and demanded his dismissal from Pharaoh, and called him, and brought him out of Egypt with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; and which was a type of his calling spiritual Israel, his adopted sons, out of worse than Egyptian bondage and darkness: but his own natural and only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; for these words are expressly said to be fulfilled in him, (^{<4125>}Matthew 2:15); not by way of allusion; or by accommodation of phrases; or as the type is fulfilled in the antitype; or as a proverbial expression, adapted to any deliverance; but literally: the first and only sense of the words respects Christ, who in his infancy was had to Egypt for shelter from Herod's rage and fury, and, when he was dead, and those that sought the life of Jesus, he was by an angel of the Lord, warning Joseph of it, called out of Egypt, and brought into Judea, (^{<4129>}Matthew 2:19-23); and this as a proof of the love of God to Israel; which as it was expressed to him in his infancy, it continued and appeared in various instances, more or less unto the coming of Christ; who, though obliged for a while to go into Egypt, must not continue there, but must be called from thence, to be brought up in the land of Judea; to do his miracles, preach his doctrines, and do good to the bodies and souls of men there, being sent particularly to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and, above all, in order to work out the salvation and redemption of his special people among them, and of the whole Israel of God everywhere else; which is the greatest instance of love to them, and to the world of the Gentiles, that ever was known, (^{<4136>}John 3:16) (^{<4112>}1 John 2:2 4:9,10).

Ver. 2. [*As they called them, so they went from them*, etc.] That is, the prophets of the Lord, the true prophets, called Israel to the worship and service of God; but they turned a deaf ear to them, and their backs upon them; and the more they called to them, the further they went from them, and from the way of their duty; (see ^{<4107>}Hosea 11:7). So the Targum,

“I sent the prophets to teach them, but they wandered from them;”

Moses and Aaron were sent unto them, and called them out of Egypt, but they hearkened not unto them; (see ^{<4109>}Exodus 6:9,12); in later times the prophets were sent unto them, to exhort them to their duty, and to reclaim them from their evil ways, but they despised and refused to attend to their advice and instructions; and this was continued to the times of Israel, or the ten tribes, departing from the house of David, and setting up idolatrous worship; and during their revolt and apostasy: but all in vain. So after

Christ was called out of Egypt, he and his apostles, and John the Baptist before them, called them to hearken to him, but they turned away from them. Aben Ezra interprets it of the false prophets, who called them to idolatry, and they went after them. Schmidt understands it of the Israelites calling one another to it, and going after it, for their own sakes, and because it pleased them, and was agreeable to them;

they sacrificed to Baalim, and burnt incense to graven images: they joined themselves to Baalpeor, and worshipped the golden calf, fashioned with a graving tool, in the wilderness; they sacrificed to Baalim, one or another of them, in the times of the judges, and of Ahab, and committed idolatry with other graven images, of which burning incense is a part. And the Jews in Christ's time, instead of hearkening to him and his apostles, followed the traditions of the elders, and the dictates of the Scribes and Pharisees, who were their Baals, their lords and masters and they sought for life and righteousness by their own works, which was sacrificing to their net, and burning incense to their drag; all this was great ingratitude. Next follows a narrative of other benefits done to this people.

Ver. 3. *I taught Ephraim also to go,* etc.] All the tribes of Israel and Ephraim, or the ten tribes with the rest; these the Lord instructed in the way of his commandments, and taught them to walk therein; he his angel before them, to conduct them through the wilderness; yea, he himself went before them in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night, to which history this seems to refer. So the Targum,

“I, by an angel sent by me, led Israel in the right way.”

The allusion seems to be to a mother or nurse accommodating herself to her child, beginning to go; she stoops down, sets it on its feet, and one foot before another, forms its steps, teaches it how to go, and walks its pace with it. And in like manner the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel, his regenerated ones, who become like little children, and are used as such; as in regeneration they are quickened, and have some degree of spiritual strength given them, they are taught to go; they are taught what a Saviour Christ is, and their need of him; they are instructed to go to him by faith for everything they want, and to walk by faith on him, as they have received him; and having heard and learned of the Father, they go to Christ, (~~John~~ John 6:45); and are taught also to go to the throne of grace for all supplies of grace; and to the house of God, to attend the word and

ordinances, for the benefit of their souls; and to walk in the ways of the Lord, for his glory, and their good;

taking them by their arms; or “on his own arms”^{f217}; bearing and carrying them in his arms, as a father his son; (see ^{<R03>}Deuteronomy 1:31 32:10-12) (^{<H12>}Numbers 11:12); so the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel, either holding them by their arms while walking, as nurses their children, to help and ease them in walking, and that they may not stumble and fall; so the Lord holds up the goings of his people in his ways, that their footsteps slip not, and upholds them with the right hand of his righteousness: or taking them up in his own arms when weary, he carries them in his bosom; or, when they are failing or fallen, lays hold on them, and takes them up again; and so they are not utterly cast down, whether the fall is into sin, or into some calamity and affliction; when he puts underneath his everlasting arms, and bears them and keeps them from sinking, as well as from a final and total falling away. Abarbinel, and others after him, interpret this of Ephraim taking up and carrying in his arms Baalim, the graven images and golden calves; which is mentioned as an instance of ingratitude; but very wrongly;

but they knew not that I healed them; of the diseases of Egypt, or preserved them from them: this includes the whole of their salvation and deliverance from Egypt, and all the benefits and favours accompanying it, which they imputed to their idols, and not to the Lord; (see ^{<P13>}Exodus 15:26 32:4). “Healing”, in a spiritual sense, generally signifies the forgiveness of sin, which the Lord’s people may have, and not know it; and, through want of better light and knowledge, may also ascribe it to their repentance, humiliation, and tears, when it is alone owing to the grace of God, and blood of Christ.

Ver. 4. *I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love*, etc.] As Ephraim is compared to a heifer in the preceding chapter, here he is said to be drawn; but not with such cords and bands as cattle are, but with such as men are; in a rational and gentle way, in a kind, loving, tender, humane, friendly, and fatherly way and manner; so the Lord drew Israel on in the wilderness, till he was brought to Canaan’s land, by bestowing kind favours upon them, and by making precious promises to them. So the Lord deals with his spiritual Israel; he draws them out of the present state and circumstances, in which they are by nature, to himself, and to his Son, and to follow after him, and run in the ways of his commandments; and which he does not by force and compulsion against their wills, nor by mere moral

persuasion, but by the invincible power of his grace, sweetly working upon them, and attracting them; he does it by revealing Christ in them, in the glories of his person and in the riches of his grace, and by letting in his love into their hearts; and by kind invitations, precious promises, and divine teachings, attended with his powerful and efficacious grace; (see ~~2403~~ Jeremiah 31:3 ~~4054~~ John 6:44 ~~2004~~ Song of Solomon 1:4);

and I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws; as one that is merciful to his beast; as a kind and humane husbandman, when his cattle have been hard at work, takes off their bridles or muzzles, or the yokes on them, fastened with a halter about their jaws, that they may have liberty to feed on food set before them, as the next clause shows. So the Targum,

“my word was to them as a good husbandman, who lightens the shoulder of oxen, and looses “the bridles” on their jaws.”

This may refer to Israel’s deliverance from their bondage in Egypt; and be spiritually applied to Christ, the essential Word of God, breaking and taking the yoke of sin, Satan, and the law from off his people, and bringing them into the liberty of the children of God. Schmidt reads and interprets the words quite otherwise, “and I was to them as they that lift up the yoke upon their jaws”; not remove it from them but put it on them; expressing their ignorance and ingratitude, who, when the Lord drew them in the kind and loving manner he did, reckoned it as if he put a yoke upon them, and treated them rather as beasts than men; but this seems not to agree with what follows:

and I laid meat unto them: or declined, or brought it down to them, to their very mouths; referring to the manna and quails he rained about their tents. So the Targum,

“and, even when they were in the wilderness, I multiplied to them good things to eat.”

And thus in a spiritual sense the Lord gives meat to them that fear him, while in the wilderness of this world; he brings it near, and sets it before them, in the ministry of the word and ordinances; even that meat which endures to everlasting life, the flesh of Christ, which is meat indeed; and the doctrines of the Gospel, which are milk for babes, and strong meat for more experienced saints.

Ver. 5. *He shall not return into the land of Egypt*, etc.] Ephraim or Israel, the ten tribes: and the Septuagint and Arabic versions express them by name, though they give a wrong sense of the words, rendering them, “and Ephraim dwelt in Egypt”; he did so indeed with the other tribes formerly; but here it is said he shall not go thither again to be a captive there, but shall go into bondage more severe than that in Egypt, even into captivity in Assyria: rather the sense is, they should not go thither for shelter, at least not as a body, though some few of them might, as in (~~2008~~ Hosea 9:3); the far greater part of them should he carried captive by the Assyrians: or they should not return to Egypt to seek for help and assistance, as they had done; either they ought not to do it, nor would there be any need of it, did they but return to the Lord, as Kimchi observes; or rather they should now be so straitly shut up in Samaria, besieged so closely by the enemy, or else carried into distant lands, that, if they would, they could not apply to Egypt for relief;

but the Assyrian shall be his king; the king of Assyria shall be king over the ten tribes, whether they want him or not; they shall be forced to acknowledge him as their king, and be subject to him, being taken and carried captive into his land:

because they refused to return: to the Lord, from whom they had backslidden, and to his pure worship, word, and ordinances, they had departed from, setting up the calves at Daniel and Bethel; they refused to relinquish worshipping idols instead of the true God; thus ungratefully behaving to him for all the above favours bestowed upon them; wherefore they are righteously threatened with captivity and bondage in Assyria.

Ver. 6. *And the sword shall abide on the cities*, etc.] Or “shall fall”^{f218}, and continue; meaning the sword of the Assyrians, whereby Ephraim should be brought into subjection to them, and the king of Assyria become king over them; his sword should be drawn, and rest upon them, not only on their chief city Samaria, besieged three years by him, but upon all their other cities, which would fall into his hands, with the inhabitants of them:

and shall consume his branches, and devour [them]; that is, the towns and villages adjoining to the cities; which were to them as branches are to a tree, sprung from them, and were supported by them; and, being near them, prospered or suffered as they did: some render it, “his bars”^{f219}, as the word is sometimes used, and interpret it of the great men and nobles of the land. So the Targum,

“and it shall slay his mighty men, and destroy his princes;”

with which Jarchi agrees;

because of their own counsels; which they took and pursued, contrary to the counsel of God, the revelation of his mind and will; particularly in setting up idolatrous worship, and continuing in it, notwithstanding all the admonitions, exhortations, counsels, and threatenings of God by his prophets; or else because of their counsels with the Egyptians, and their covenants with them, for help against the Assyrian, whose yoke they were for casting off, and refused to pay tribute to; which provoked him to draw his sword upon them, which made the havoc it did in their cities, and the inhabitants of them.

Ver. 7. *And my people are bent to backsliding from me*, etc.] There is a propensity in thorn to it, through prevailing corruption in them; they are inclined unto it, the bias of their minds is that way; they are bent upon it, and pertinaciously abide in it; nor will they be reclaimed from it, by all the means and methods made use of, even though they had been, and professed themselves to be the people of God. Some understand this, not of their backsliding and aversion from God; but either of his return to them, or of their return to him, rendering the words, “and my people are in suspense”^{f220}; like a man that hangs in the air, as Aben Ezra, neither ascends nor descends; that is, they are in doubt of what should be done to thorn, or they themselves should do: either “about my return”^{f221}; that is, to them; whether after all they may expect that God would be kind and merciful to them, so Abarbinel: or “about return to me”^{f222}; whether they should or not, inclining rather not to return. So the Targum,

“my people divide (or hesitate) to return to my law;”

with which Jarchi agrees, paraphrasing it,

“when the prophets instruct them to return unto me, they are in suspense whether to return or not;”

but Aben Ezra and Kimchi observe the word is always used in a bad sense, of aversion or backsliding, and that the word is in another form when used for repentance or returning;

though they called them to the most High; that is, the prophets of the Lord called them to turn from their idols, and return to the most high God, the

true and the living God, from whom they had backslidden, and to his true worship, they had neglected and forsaken:

none at all would exalt [him]; the most high God, and give him the praise and glory due to his name; but, on the other hand, extolled their idols, and ascribed all their good things to them: or “none would exalt them”,^{f223} the prophets of the Lord that called them; would not give that honour to them that was due to their office, or pay any regard to them, or to their admonitions and advice, but depreciated them, and reproached and persecuted them: or “none at all would lift up”: that is, their head, as Aben Ezra, toward the heaven, and to God in it, to whom they were called; but kept looking on the earth, and to earthly things, particularly to their idols; and did not lift up or erect their ears, to hearken to what was said to them, but were deaf to all counsel and reproof. The Targum is,

“they walked not in an erect stature.”

Agreeably to which the former clause may be rendered, as by some, “and they called them to things above”; but none would look upwards; (see Gill on “²³⁷⁶Hosea 7:16”).

Ver. 8. *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? [how] shall I deliver thee, Israel?* etc.] That is, as usually interpreted, into the hand of the enemy, or unto wrath, ruin, and destruction; for, notwithstanding all the sins of this people before observed, and the punishment threatened to be inflicted on them, the Lord is pleased here, and in the following verses, to give some intimations of his goodness, grace, and mercy to them; not to the whole body of them, for they as such were given and delivered up to the enemy, and carried captive, and dispersed among the nations, and were never recovered to this day; but to a remnant among them, according to the election of grace, that should spring from them, for the sake of which they were not all cut off by the sword; but were reserved as a seed for later times, the times of the Messiah; which the prophecy in this and the following words has respect unto; not only the first times of the Gospel, when some of the dispersed of Israel were met with by it, and converted under it; but the last times of it; times yet to come, when all Israel shall be saved; and may be applied to the elect of God, in all ages, and of all nations, The words are generally understood as a debate in the divine mind, struggling within itself between justice and mercy; justice requiring the delivery of these persons unto it, and mercy being reluctant thereunto, pleading on their behalf; and which at last gets the victory, and rejoices

against judgment. There is a truth in all this; justice seems to demand that sinners, as such, who have injured and affronted him, be given up to, him, and suffer the curse of the law, according to their deserts, and be delivered unto death, even eternal death, as well as to temporal punishments; and which might be expected would be the case, by the instances and examples of the angels that sinned, and of the men of the old world, and of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah; but mercy cannot bear it, pleads against; it, and asks how can it be done, since these are my children, my dear child, on, pleasant ones, as Ephraim was, my chosen and my covenant ones, and, besides, for whom provision is made in Christ for the satisfactions of justice? But the sense is rather this, “how might” or “could I give thee up; Ephraim? how might” or “could I deliver thee, Israel”^{f224?} that is, with what severity might I deal with thee? and how justly and righteously could I do it? since thy sins are so many, and so great;

how shall I make thee as Admah? [how] shall I set thee as Zeboim? two cities that were utterly destroyed by fire from heaven, along with Sodom and Gomorrah, (^{f1523}Deuteronomy 29:23); how justly could I have made thee, and put thee in, the same condition and circumstances, as those two cities, and the inhabitants of them, who were so severely punished for their sins, and were never restored again? signifying, that inasmuch as they were guilty of the same or like heinous sins, was he utterly to destroy them, and cut them off from the face of the earth, he should not exceed the due bounds of justice. To this sense Schmidt interprets the words. The design of which is to show the greatness of Ephraim’s sins, as deserving the uttermost wrath and vengeance of God, and to magnify the riches of God’s grace in their salvation, as next expressed; and it is true of all God’s elect, who, considered as sinners in Adam, and by their own transgressions, both before and after conversion, deserved to be treated according to the rigour of justice; but God is merciful to them, according to his choice of them, covenant with them, and provision he has made in Christ, and upon the foot of his satisfaction;

mine heart is turned within me; not changed; for there is no shadow of turning with the Lord, neither in his mind and purposes, which he never turns from, nor can be turned back; nor in his affections for them; as his heart is never turned from love to hatred, so neither from hatred to love; or his love would not be from everlasting, as it is, and he rest in it as he does; but this expresses the strong motion of mercy in him towards his people, springing from his sovereign will and pleasure, and what is elsewhere

signified by the troubling, soundings, and yearnings of his bowels towards them; (see ^{<2610>}Jeremiah 31:20 ^{<2615>}Isaiah 63:15); with which compare (^{<2010>}Lamentations 1:20);

my repentings are kindled together; not that repentance properly belongs to God, who is neither man, nor the Son of Man, that he should repent of anything, (^{<0239>}Numbers 23:19 ^{<0152>}1 Samuel 15:29); he repents not of his love to his people, nor of his choice of them, nor of his covenant with them, nor of his special gifts and grace bestowed on them; but he sometimes does what men do when they repent, he changes his outward conduct and behaviour in the dispensations of his providence, and acts the reverse of what he had done, or seemed to be about to do; as, with respect to the old world, the making of Saul king, and the case of the Ninevites, (^{<0016>}Genesis 6:6 ^{<0151>}1 Samuel 15:11 Jon 3:4,10); so here, though he could, and seemed as if he would, go forth in a way of strict justice, yet changes his course, and steers another way, without any change of his will. The phrase expresses the warmth and ardour of his affections to his people; how his heart burned with love to them, his bowels and inward parts were inflamed with it; from whence proceeded what is called repentance among men, as in the case of Jeremiah, (^{<2010>}Jeremiah 20:9). The Targum is,

“the word of my covenant met me; my mercies (or bowels of mercies) were rolled together.”

Ver. 9. *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger*, etc.] That is, his wrath and fury to the uttermost; his people are deserving of his wrath as others, being by nature children of wrath as the rest; which they are sensible of under spiritual conviction, and therefore flee from it, where they may be safe: and though the Lord often chastises and afflicts them, yet not in wrath; or however but in a little wrath, as it seems to them; he does not stir up all his wrath, nor any in reality; all being poured upon his Son, their surety, who saves and delivers them from wrath to come;

I will not return to destroy Ephraim; or “again”, or “any more, destroy”^{f225} him; not twice; he might be destroyed when carried captive into Assyria; but the remnant that shall spring from him in the latter day shall not be destroyed, but saved. The Targum is,

“my word shall not return to destroy the house of Israel;”

or I will not return from my love and affections to them, I will never be wroth with them any more; nor from my mercy to them, which is from

everlasting to everlasting; or from my covenant, promise, and resolution to save them, they shall not be punished with everlasting destruction:

for I [am] God, and not man; a God gracious and merciful, longsuffering, slow to anger, and pardoning sin, and not man, cruel, revengeful, implacable, who shows no mercy when it is in the power of his hands to avenge himself; or God that changes not in his purposes and counsels, in his love and affections, and therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed, and not man that repents, is fickle, inconstant, and mutable; or God that is faithful to his covenant and promises, and not man that lies and deceives, promises and never performs. The Targum is,

“seeing I am God, my word remains for ever, and my works are not as the works of the flesh (or of men) who dwell upon the earth;”

the Holy One in the midst of thee; being in the midst of his people, he protects and defends them, and so they are safe; and being the Holy One there, he sanctifies them, and saves them, in a way consistent with his own holiness and justice: or there is “a Holy One”, or Holy Ones, the singular put for the plural, “in the midst of thee”^{f226}; and therefore thou shalt not be destroyed for their sakes, as Sodom would not, had there been ten righteous persons in it, to which some think the allusion is:

and I will not enter into the city; in a hostile way to destroy or plunder it; but this is not to be understood either of Samaria or Jerusalem, which were entered into in this manner. The Targum is,

“I have decreed by my word that my holy Shechinah shall be among you, and I will not change Jerusalem again for another city;”

which sense the Jewish commentators follow; but, as this respects Gospel times, the meaning seems to be, that God would dwell among his people everywhere, and would not be confined to any city or temple as heretofore; but wherever his church and people were, there would be his temple, and there he would dwell.

Ver. 10. *They shall walk after the Lord*, etc.] That is, after the Messiah, who is Jehovah our righteousness; that Jehovah the Jews pierced, and now shall mourn at the sight of, being converted to him; for these are the chosen of God among that people, who in the latter day shall partake of the grace and favour before expressed, in consequence of which they shall be set a seeking the Lord their God, and David their King; and, finding him, shall

follow after him, as sheep go after their shepherd, being led by him into green pastures; as subjects follow their prince, obeying his commands and orders; as soldiers march after their leader and commander, so these after Christ, the great Captain of their salvation, part of whose armies they will make: they will walk under the influence of his grace, having life, strength, guidance, and direction, from him, which walking implies; they will walk not after the flesh, as they now do, but after the Spirit of Christ, taking him for their guide, by whom they will be led into all truth, as it is in Jesus; they will walk in his ways, in all the paths of faith and holiness, truth and righteousness; in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, according to his word. The Targum is,

“they shall go after the worship of the Lord;”

he shall roar like a lion: the Lord Christ they walk after; who is the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Israelites shall now follow after; receiving, embracing, and confessing him the true Messiah. So the Targum,

“and his Word shall be as a lion that roars;”

Christ, the essential Word of God: and so Jarchi, according to Lyra, interprets it of the Messiah to come; who is compared to a lion for his strength and courage, and for the fierceness of his wrath against his enemies; and his voice, in his word, is like the roaring of a lion, exceeding loud, and reaching far, even the uttermost parts of the earth; as it did in the first times of the Gospel, and will in the last; and which the Jews particularly, in each of the parts of the world, will hear, and Gentiles also, and be affected with it; for it will be also very strong, powerful, and efficacious; which is another reason of its being compared to a lion roaring; (see ²¹⁶ Joel 3:16 ⁶⁰⁰ Revelation 10:2);

when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west; the children of Israel, the children of God, his adopted ones, whom he has predestinated to the adoption of children; these, through the first impressions of Christ’s voice or word upon them, shall startle, and be set a trembling, and be astonished, as Saul was, when called and converted; as it is reported of the lion, that, when it roars, other beasts are so terrified that they are quite stunned and amazed, and are not able to stir; but though the first sound of the voice of Christ may have some effect upon the Jews, yet this will not cause them to tremble at him so as to flee from him, but to cause them to flee to him: for the phrase is expressive of motion towards

him, and to their own land, as appears from (^{f211b}Hosea 11:11); when filled with a sense of his majesty and grace, they shall approach him with a holy awe of him, with fear and trembling: or “come with honour”^{f227}; agreeably to (^{f211a}1 Samuel 16:4); having high, honourable, and grand sentiments and apprehensions of him; so that this trembling, at least, issues in a godly and filial fear and reverence of him, suitable to their character as children. The phrase, “from the west”, or “from the sea”^{f228}, meaning the Mediterranean sea, which lay west of Judea, and is often used for the west, may signify the western or European part of the world, where the Jews for the most part are, and from whence they will be gathered. The Targum is,

“for he shall roar, and the captives shall be gathered from the west.”

Ver. 11. *They shall tremble as a bird out of Egypt*, etc.] They shall come from thence with fear and trembling; which may allude to the trembling of birds at the roaring of a lion, or to the trembling motion of their wings in flying; and denotes the swiftness of the motion of the Israelites and Jews to Christ, and to his church and people, and to their own land, under divine influence and direction: or “shall come with honour”^{f229}; with all readiness and cheerfulness, in the obedience of faith:

and as a dove out of the land of Assyria; which is expressive of the same things, the dove being both a timorous and swift creature. Birds in common are very timorous, and tremble at any noise, and fearful of everything that disturbs them, and therefore make all the haste and speed they can to get out of the way, and to do which they are naturally provided; and more especially the dove is always represented as very fearful and trembling, especially when pursued by the hawk, as the poet^{f230} observes. Though, it may be, these figures may only signify, as the weak and impotent state of the Jews, considered in themselves at this time, so the quick speed and haste they shall make to their own land. And perhaps there may be something alluded to in the text, that may refer to the dove as peculiar to Assyria, as it should seem to be. Now it is said of Semiramis, an ancient queen of Assyria, that being exposed when an infant, was nourished by doves, and at her death was turned into one; and from hence it is not only said she had her name, which signifies a dove, in the Syriac tongue, but doves by the Syrians were worshipped as deities^{f231}. And Derceto, a Syrian goddess, supposed to be her mother, having a temple at Askelon, perhaps the above story may be the reason why the inhabitants of that

place reckoned doves so sacred that they did not kill them; for Philo^{f232}, who lived there some time, having observed great numbers of them in the highways, and in every house, asked the reason of it; and he was answered, that the citizens were of old forbid the use of them: and it may be further observed, that, in honour of Semiramis, the kings of Assyria bore a dove in their coat of arms^{f233}; but whether there is any thing peculiar or no in this reference is not certain: and, besides what has been observed of the fearfulness of this creature, and its swiftness and haste it makes in flying, it may also denote the characters of meekness, humility, and harmlessness, which the Jews, now converted, will have by the grace of God, as well as their mournful disposition. Egypt and Assyria are particularly mentioned, as they generally are where the return of Israel and Judah into their own land is prophesied of, (~~2311~~ Isaiah 11:11 ~~2300~~ Zechariah 10:10); and may signify the Turks, in whose possession these countries are, and among whom many Jews live: and the one lying to the south, and the other to the north of Judea, and the west being observed before, this shows that these people should be gathered from all parts of the world, where they are dispersed; the east is not mentioned, because their land they will be returned unto lies there;

and I will place them in their houses, saith the Lord; it is not said in towns and cities, and fortified places, but in houses, signifying that they should dwell in their own land, in a civil sense, securely, and in their habitations, under their vines and fig trees, being in no fear and danger of enemies, and live in the utmost safety, under the government and protection of the King Messiah; or, in a spiritual sense, they will be placed in the congregations of the saints in the churches of Christ, which will be as dove houses to them, and whither they shall fly as doves to their windows, (~~2308~~ Isaiah 60:8); and it is observed of doves, that they fly the swiftest when they make to their own houses: and at last, as all the people of God will, they will be placed in the mansions of glory, in Christ's Father's house, those everlasting habitations. These words, "saith the Lord", are added, for the certain and sure accomplishment of all this. The Targum of the whole is,

"as a bird which comes openly, so shall they come who are carried captive into the land of Egypt; and as a dove that returns to its dove house, so shall they return who are carried into the land of Assyria; and I will return them in peace to their houses, and my word shall be their protection, saith the Lord."

Ver. 12. *Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit,* etc.] Here properly we should begin a new chapter, as many interpreters and commentators do; for the prophet, or the Lord by him, in (~~2811~~ Hosea 11:11), having finished his predictions concerning the call and conversion of the Israelites, and their return to their land, here begins a new discourse, by comparing the characters of Ephraim and Judah, and thence descends to the sins and punishment of both. The former, namely, Ephraim or Israel, that is, the ten tribes, surrounded either the prophet, to hear him prophesy, and professed a great regard to what he said; though it was all deceit and flattery: or rather the Lord himself, whom they pretended to serve and worship when they worshipped the calves at Daniel and Bethel; and would have it thought they did not worship them, but the Lord in them, and by them, as the Papists now say of their images and image worship; but let them not deceive themselves, God will not be mocked: or when they did at any time seem to approach unto him in any branch of religious worship, either to pray unto him, or to praise him, it was not done with sincerity; it was only with their mouths, not with their hearts; these agreed not together, but, like their ancestors of old, “they did flatter, him with their mouth, and lied unto him with their tongues”, (~~2836~~ Psalm 78:36); and so all such professors of religion, who are not sincere in their service and worship of God; or meet together to speak and hear false doctrines, which are lies in hypocrisy; or attend to superstition and will worship, and set up ordinances and institutions of their own, neglecting those which are of God, do as Ephraim did, encompass the Lord with lies and deceit;

but Judah yet ruleth with God; a theocracy was as yet acknowledged and supported among them; God ruled in the midst of them, and; they ruled with him; their kings ruled in the fear of God, and according to his laws, statutes, and appointment, and not their own; particularly in the days of Hezekiah, which may be here respected, the people retained and practised the true worship and service of God: which, as it is the truest liberty, so is the highest honour and dignity: such are rulers with God, as all the Lord’s people, all that believe in Christ, are; they are made by his grace kings and princes; and they appear to be so by their new birth; they are clothed, fed, and guarded as princes, as the sons of a king, as kings themselves; they have the riches and power of kings; they are possessed of a kingdom of grace now, which is within them, and where grace reigns, through righteousness, over their lusts and corruptions; and great power, like

princes, have they in prayer with God, and are heirs of the kingdom of glory, as well as shall reign with Christ on earth. Gussetius renders it, “Judah yet weeps with God”: as his father Jacob did, imitating him, as in (~~311~~Hosea 12:4);

and is faithful with the saints; which Kimchi’s father interprets of God himself; and so Lyra, and according to him Jarchi: and then the sense is, “and he”, that is, God, “is faithful with the saints”; in fulfilling all his counsels, purposes, and designs of grace concerning them; in making good his covenant with them, and his promises unto them; and by bringing them to the enjoyment of all that grace and glory he calls them to: but this is rather an epithet of Judah, who kept to the word and worship of the true God, as the saints of old, their ancestors, had done; walked in the good old way, in the way of good men, and kept the paths of the righteous; abode by the true priests of the Lord, who were set apart and sanctified for that office; and hearkened to the prophets, the holy men of God, who spake to them, being moved by the Holy Spirit: and adhered firmly “to the holy things”^{f234}, as it may be rendered; to the holy temple, and the worship in it; to the holy sacrifices, altars, etc. when the ten tribes departed from them: and so this may be applied to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that believe in him truly, and continue in the faith of him in all ages; and who are “faithful with the Holy Ones”^{f235}; the same with God in the former clause; so Kimchi interprets it, and so the word is used in (~~310~~Proverbs 9:10 30:3); (see ~~319~~Joshua 24:19); that is, with Father, Son, and Spirit; with the Father, when they worship him in spirit and truth; with the Son, when they cleave to him with full purpose of heart; with the Spirit, when they walk after him, and give to each the glory due unto them: or rather, “faithful with holy men”^{f236}; sanctified by the Spirit and grace of God; as they are, when they hold fast the faith delivered to the saints without mixture or wavering, with courage and manliness; though the greater number is against them, and they are reproached and persecuted for so doing; when they abide by the ordinances of Christ, as they were delivered, and keep them in faith and love, without sinister views; when they continue steadfastly in the communion of the saints, attending with them on the word and ordinances, and do not forsake their assembling together; and when they constantly exhort and stir up one another to the duties of religion, and faithfully admonish and reprove each other as there is occasion for it.

CHAPTER 12

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 12

This chapter contains complaints and charges both against Israel and Judah, and threatens them with punishment in case they repent not, which they are exhorted to: and first Ephraim is charged with idolatry, vain confidence in, and alliances with, foreign nations, (~~2810~~Hosea 12:1); and then the Lord declares he has a controversy with Judah, and will punish the inhabitants of it for their sins, (~~2811~~Hosea 12:2); which are aggravated by their being the descendants of so great a man as Jacob, who got the advantage of his elder brother, had much power with God, and received favours from him, and they also, (~~2813~~Hosea 12:3-5); and therefore are exhorted to turn to God, wait on him, and do that which is right and good, (~~2816~~Hosea 12:6). Ephraim is again in his turn charged with fraudulent dealing in trade, and with oppression, and the love of it; and yet pretended he got riches by his own labour, without wronging any, (~~2817~~Hosea 12:7,8); nevertheless, the Lord promises them public ordinances of worship, and joy in them, and the ministry of his prophets, (~~2819~~Hosea 12:9,10); though for the present they were guilty of gross idolatry, (~~2821~~Hosea 12:11); which is aggravated by the raising of Jacob their progenitor from a low estate, and the wonderful preservation of him, and the bringing of them out of Egypt, (~~2822~~Hosea 12:12,13); and the chapter is closed with observing Ephraim's bitter provocation of God, for which his reproach should return unto him, and his blood be left upon him, (~~2824~~Hosea 12:14).

Ver. 1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind*, etc.] Which will be no more profitable and beneficial to him than wind is to a man that opens his mouth, and fills himself with it: the phrase is expressive of labour in vain, and of a man's getting nothing by all the pains he takes; the same with sowing the wind, and reaping the whirlwind, (~~2817~~Hosea 8:7); and so the Targum has it here,

“the house of Israel are like to one that sows the wind, and reaps the whirlwind all the day;”

and this refers either to the worship of idols, and the calves in particular, and the vain hope of good things promised to themselves from thence; or

to their vain confidence in the alliances and confederacies they entered into with neighbouring nations; from which they expected much, but found little:

and followed after the east wind; a wind strong and vehement, burning and blasting, very noxious and harmful; so that, instead of receiving any profit and advantage either by their idolatry or their covenants with other nations, they were only in these things pursuing what would be greatly to their detriment: or they would be no more able to attain by such methods what they sought for, than they would be able to overtake the east wind, which is a very swift and fleeting one; so that this clause exposes their folly, in expecting good things from their idols, or help from their neighbours;

he daily increaseth lies and desolation; while they multiplied idols, which are lies fallacious and deceitful, and idolatrous rites and acts of worship, they do but increase their desolation and ruin, which such things are the cause of, and will certainly bring them unto; or, not content with the daily increase of their idolatries among themselves, they continually persecute, spoil, and plunder those who do not give into their false worship: so the Targum,

“lies and spoil they multiply;”

idolaters are generally persecutors:

and they do make a covenant with the Assyrians: and gave tribute and presents to their kings, as Menahem did to Pul, and Hoshea to Shalmaneser, not to hurt them, and to help and assist them against their enemies, and to strengthen their kingdom; (see ^{<4259>}2 Kings 15:19,20 17:3,4);

and oil is carried into Egypt: one while they sent presents to the Assyrians, to obtain their favour and friendship: and at another time to the Egyptians; nay, they sent to So king of Egypt, at the same time they were tributary to Assyria, and, conspiring against him, brought on their ruin; and oil was a principal part of the present sent; for this was carried not by way of traffic, but as a present: so the Targum,

“and they carried gifts to Egypt;”

(see ^{<250>}Isaiah 57:9). The land of Israel, being a land of oil olive, was famous for the best oil, of which there was a scarcity in Egypt, and

therefore a welcome present there, as balsam also was; (see ^{<01375>}Genesis 37:25 43:11 ^{<3271>}Ezekiel 27:17).

Ver. 2. *The Lord hath also a controversy with Judah*, etc.] The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, as well as the ten tribes; for though they had ruled with God, and had been faithful with the saints in the first times of the apostasy of Israel; yet afterwards they sadly degenerated, and fell into idolatry likewise, particularly in the time of Ahaz, in which Hosea prophesied; and therefore the Lord had somewhat against them; nor would he spare them, but reprove them by the prophets, and rebuke them in his providences; bring them to his bar, and lay before them their evils, and threaten them with punishment in case of impenitence, as follows:

and will punish Jacob according to his ways; all the posterity of Jacob, whether Ephraim or Judah; those of the ten tribes, or of the two, who all descended from Jacob: or, “will visit according to his ways”,^{f237}; if right, and agreeably to the mind and word of God, in a way of grace and mercy; but if wrong, crooked, and perverse, then in a way of punishment; for visiting is used both ways:

according to his doings will he recompense him; as they were good or bad; if good, will reward them with a reward of grace; if bad, with vengeance. The Targum paraphrases it,

“according to his right works.”

Ver. 3. *He took his brother by the heel in the womb*, etc.] That is, Jacob took his brother Esau by the heel, as he came forth from his mother’s womb; the history of it is in (^{<01225>}Genesis 25:25,26). It is here observed, upon mentioning the name of Jacob in (^{<3810>}Hosea 12:2), meaning the posterity, of the patriarch; but here he himself is intended, and occasionally taken notice of, to show how very different his posterity were from him, and how sadly degenerated; as well as to upbraid them with ingratitude, whose ancestors, and they also, had received such and so many favours from the Lord; Jacob the patriarch was a hero from the womb, but they transgressors from it; this action of his observed was a presage and pledge of his having the superiority of his brother, and of his getting the birthright and blessing from him. So the Targum,

“prophet, say unto them, was it not said of Jacob, before he was born, that he would be greater than his brother?”

(see ^{<4911>}Romans 9:11,12). In this action there was something divine, miraculous, and preternatural; it was not the effort of nature merely, but contrary to it, or at least above it; and not done by chance, but ordered by the providence of God, as a prediction and testification of his future greatness, and even of his posterity's, in times yet to come, as Kimchi observes, who refers to (Obidiah 1:18);

and by his strength he had power with God; the Targum is, with the angel, as in (^{<2814>}Hosea 12:4); he is called a man in the history of this event in (^{<0324>}Genesis 32:24); not that he was a mere man, since he is here expressly called God, and afterwards the Lord God of hosts; and there it is evident, from the context, he was a divine Person, and no other than the Son of God; who, though not as yet incarnate, appeared in a human form, as a presage of his future incarnation; though this was not a mere apparition, spectre, or phantasm, as Josephus^{f238} calls it; for it was not in a dream, or in a visionary way, that this wrestling and striving was between this divine Person in this form and Jacob, but in reality; it was a real substance which the Son of God formed, animated, actuated, and assumed, for that time and purpose, and then laid it aside; which touched Jacob, and he touched that, laid hold on it, and held it fast, and strove with it, and had power over it, and over God in it; even over him that is God over all, the true God and eternal life, the Lord Jesus Christ; not a created God, or God by office, but by nature; as the perfections that are in him, and the works and worship ascribed to him, declare: now Jacob had power over him “by his strength”; not by his natural strength; either of his body, which could not have been equal to the strength of this human body assumed for the time, as it was used and managed by a divine Person, unless he had been extraordinarily assisted and strengthened; or of his mind and soul, not by any spiritual strength he had of himself; but by what he had from this divine Person, with whom he wrestled; who put strength into him, and supported and increased the power and strength of faith in prayer; so that he prevailed over him, and got the blessing, for which reason his name was called Israel, (^{<0328>}Genesis 32:28).

Ver. 4. *Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed*, etc.] This is repeated in different words, not only for the confirmation of it, it being a very extraordinary thing, and difficult of belief; but to direct to the history here referred to, where the person Jacob prevailed over is called a man, and here the angel; and so Josephus^{f239} calls him a divine Person; not a created angel, not Michael, as the Rabbins say, unless the Messiah is meant

by him; nor Jacob's guardian angel, as Kimchi, every man being thought by some to have one; and much less Esau's evil angel, that was against Jacob, as Jarchi and Abarbanel; for of him he would never have sought nor expected a blessing; but an uncreated Angel, the Son of God, the same that went before the Israelites in the wilderness, and that redeemed Jacob from all evil, (^{<0486>}Genesis 48:16 ^{<0230>}Exodus 23:20-23); called an Angel, being so not by nature, for he is superior to angels in both his natures, divine and human; but by office, being sent to reveal the will of God, and to do the work of God in the redemption and salvation of men; the same that is called the Angel of the great council in the Greek version of (^{<2306>}Isaiah 9:6); and the Angel of God's presence, (^{<2609>}Isaiah 63:9); and the Angel or messenger of the covenant, (^{<3801>}Malachi 3:1); the phrases used denote, as before, the power and prevalence Jacob had with this divine Person in prayer; whereby he obtained the blessing of him, even deliverance from his brother Esau, as well as others respecting him and his posterity;

he wept, and made supplication unto him; not the angel, entreating Jacob to let him go, as Jarchi and Kimchi, and so some Christian interpreters; who think that an angel in human form may be said to weep, as well as to eat and drink; and the rather, since this angel was not the conqueror, but the conquered; and since Christ, in the days of his flesh, both prayed and wept, and shed tears; but the case here is different; and though he was prevailed over, it was through his own condescension and goodness: but rather Jacob is meant, as Abarbanel and others; who wept not on account of the angel's touching his thigh, and the pain that might put him to; for he was of a more heroic spirit than to weep for that, who had endured so much hardship in Laban's service, in heat and cold; and besides, notwithstanding this, he kept wrestling with him, and afterwards walked, though haltingly: but he wept either because he could not get out the name of the person he wrestled with; or rather the tears he shed were for the blessing he sought of him; for it is joined with his making supplication, and is expressive of the humble, yet ardent, affectionate, fervent, and importunate request he made to obtain it; and here we have another proof of the deity of Christ, in that supplication was made to him, and he is here represented as the object of that part of religious worship, prayer, as he often is in the New Testament. This circumstance is not expressed in (^{<0330>}Genesis 32:1-31), though it may be gathered from what is there said; however, the prophet had it by divine inspiration; and the truth of it is not

to be doubted of, being not at all inconsistent with, but quite agreeable to, that history;

he found him [at] Bethel; either the angel found Jacob in Bethel, as he did more than once, both before and after this time, (^{OLD}Genesis 28:12-19 35:6,7,9); it is good to be in Bethel, in the house of God; happy are those that dwell there, and are found there living and dying, doing the will and work of God there: or rather Jacob found God or the angel in Bethel; God is to be found in his own house, there he comes and blesses with his gracious presence; here Christ the Angel of his presence is; here he meets with his people, and manifests himself unto them. There is in the words a tacit reflection on Israel, or the ten tribes, that bore the name of Jacob; the patriarch found God in Bethel, Christ the Angel of the Lord; but now, instead of him, there was a calf set up in this place, Israel worshipped; and therefore it was called Bethaven, the house of an idol, or iniquity, instead of Bethel, the house of God;

and there he spake with us; not with Esau and his angel, concerning Isaac's blessing of Jacob, as Jarchi; nor with Jacob and his angel, as the father of Kimchi; nor with the prophet, and with Amos, to reprove Israel there for the worship of the calves, as Kimchi himself; but with all the Israelites, of whom the prophet was one; who were then in the loins of Jacob, when he conversed with God, and God with him, at Bethel: or, as Saadiah interprets it, "for us" for our sakes, on our account; or "concerning us"; concerning the multiplication of Jacob's posterity, and the giving the land of Canaan to them, as the Lord did at both times he appeared to Jacob in Bethel; (see ^{OLD}Genesis 28:14,15 35:11,12); and it is in the house of God, where Christ is as a son, that he speaks with and to his people, even in his word and ordinances there.

Ver. 5. *Even the Lord God of hosts*, etc.] The God Jacob had power over, the Angel he prevailed with, to whom he made supplication with weeping, and who spake with him and his in Bethel, is he whose name is Jehovah; who is the true and living God, the Lord of hosts and armies both in heaven and in earth; of all the angels in heaven, and the legions of them; and of the church militant, and all the saints, who are the good soldiers of Christ, his spiritual militia; and he is the Captain of the Lord's host, and of their salvation, and to whom all the numerous hosts of creatures, be they what they will, are subject: this is observed, to set off the greatness of the

person Jacob wrestled with, and his wondrous grace, in condescending to be overpowered by him:

the Lord [is] his memorial: or his name, Jehovah, which belongs to this angel, the Son of God, as to his divine Father; and which is expressive of his divine existence, of his eternity and immutability; this is his memorial, or the remembrancer of him; which puts his people in all ages in remembrance of him, what he is, what an infinite, almighty, and all sufficient Being he is; and he is always to be believed in, and trusted to, and to be served, adored, and worshipped. The Targum adds, to every generation and generation.

Ver. 6. *Therefore turn thou to thy God,* etc.] Judah, with whom the Lord had a controversy, is here addressed and exhorted to return to the Lord, from whom they had backslidden; and this is urged, from the consideration of their being the descendants of so great a man as Jacob; whose example they should follow, and make supplication to the Lord as he did; and from this instance of their progenitor might encourage themselves, that God, who was his God, and their God, would be gracious and merciful to them, and that they should prevail with him likewise, and obtain the blessing, and especially since he is the everlasting and unchangeable Jehovah. Turning to the Lord, as it supposes a going astray from him, so it signifies a turning from idols, and all vain confidences; and is done by renewed acts of faith and trust in the Lord, and repentance towards him; and cannot be performed aright without grace and strength from him, of which Ephraim was sensible, (²³¹⁸Jeremiah 31:18); as well as the encouragement to it is from a view of God as a covenant God, and as gracious and merciful, So Aben Ezra interprets it of divine help, of turning by thy God, that is, by the help and assistance of thy God; and, indeed, conversion to God, whether at first, or after, is through his powerful and efficacious grace. Kimchi explains it, “thou shalt rest in thy God”^{f240}; when want follows is performed, comparing it with (²³¹⁵Isaiah 30:15). The Targum is,

“and thou shall be strong in the worship of thy God;”

keep mercy and judgment; or, “observe”^{f241} them to do them; to show mercy to persons in misery, to the poor and indigent, which is what the Lord desires and delights in, more than in ceremonial sacrifices; and is a principal part of the moral law, as “judgment” is another; the exercise of justice, both public and private; passing a righteous sentence in courts of judicature, and doing that which is right between man and man; owing no

man anything, but giving to all their due; doing no injury to any man's person, property, or character; which are fruits meet for true repentance; and when they spring from faith and love, and are done with a view to the glory of God, and good of men, are acceptable to the Lord; these are the weightier matters of the law, (^{<4233>}Matthew 23:23);

and wait on thy God continually; both in private prayer, and for an answer to it, and in public worship and ordinances, in hope of meeting with him, and enjoying his presence; for this takes in the whole of religious worship, private and public, and all religious exercises, as invocation of God, trust in him, and expectation of seed things from him; and may have a respect to the Messiah, and salvation by him, and a waiting for him and that; as Jacob did, and his posterity should, and many of them were in this posture, before and at his coming; (see ^{<4498>}Genesis 49:18 ^{<2379>}Isaiah 25:9 ^{<4125>}Luke 2:25,38); Agreeable to this the Targum is,

“and wait for the redemption or salvation of thy God continually.”

Ver. 7. [*He is*] *a merchant*, etc.] Here is a change of person from “thou” to “he”, from Judah to Ephraim, who is said to be a “merchant”; and if that was all, there is nothing worthy of dispraise in it; but he was a cheating merchant, a fraudulent dealer, as appears by what follows: or he is Canaan, or a Canaanite^{f242}; more like a descendant of Canaan, by his manners, than a descendant of Jacob. But the Canaanites dealing much in merchandise, their name became a common name for a merchant, as a Chaldean for an astrologer; and as the children of Israel possessed their land, so they followed the same business and employment of life; which, had they performed honestly, would not have been to their discredit; but they were too much like the Canaanites, of whom Philostratus^{f243} says, they were covetous and fraudulent; and this was Ephraim's character. The Targum is,

“be you not as merchants;”

the balances of deceit [are] in his hand; he used false weights and measures; made the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsified the balances by deceit; had wicked balances, and deceitful weights, and the scant measure, which is abominable, (^{<3085>}Amos 8:5 ^{<3160>}Micah 6:10,11); they pretended to weigh everything exactly they bought or sold; but cheated either by sleight or hand, holding the balances as they should not; or had one pair of scales and weights to buy with, and another to sell by, contrary to the law of God, (^{<4895>}Leviticus 19:35,36);

he loveth to oppress; instead of keeping and doing mercy and justice, they oppressed the poor, ground their faces, defrauded them of their due, and by secret and private methods cheated them in their dealings with them, and brought them to poverty and distress; and this they took delight and pleasure in, which showed a want of a principle of honesty in them, and that they were habituated to such a course of life, and were hardened in it, and had no remorse of conscience for it, but rather gloried in it.

Ver. 8. *And Ephraim said, yet I am become rich*, etc.] Notwithstanding they took such unjust methods, as to use deceitful balances, they prospered in the world, got abundance of riches; and therefore concluded from thence that their manner of dealing was not criminal, at least not so bad as the prophets represented to them; and so promised themselves impunity, and that what they were threatened with would not come upon them; and, as long as they got riches, they cared not in what manner; and inasmuch as they prospered and succeeded in their course of trading, they were encouraged to go on, and not fear any evil coming upon them for it. According to Aben Ezra and Kimchi, the sense is, that they became rich of themselves, by their own industry and labour, and did not acknowledge that their riches, and power to get them, were of God. They gloried in them as their own attainments; and which they had little reason to do, since they were treasures of wickedness, and mammon of unrighteousness, which in a day of wrath would be of no service to them;

I have found me out substance; they found ways and means of acquiring great riches, and large estates, by their own wisdom and cunning, and all for themselves, for their own use, to be enjoyed by them for years to come; and they were reckoned by them solid and substantial things, when a mere shadow, emptiness, and vanity; and were not to be employed for their own use and advantage only, but should have been for the good of others; nor were they to be attributed to their own sagacity, prudence, and management, but to the providence of God, admitting they had been got in ever so honourable and just a manner;

[in] all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me that [were] sin: here again Ephraim, or the people of Israel, vainly ascribe all their wealth and riches to their own labour, diligence, and industry, and take no notice of God and his providence, or of his blessing upon them; and pretend to be very upright and honest in their dealings, and that what they got were very honestly got, and would bear the strictest scrutiny; and that if their course

of trade was ever so narrowly looked into, there would be nothing found that was very bad or criminal, that they could be justly reproached the; only some little trifling things, that would not bear the name of “sin”, or deserve any correction or punishment; so pure were they in their own eyes, so blinded and hardened in sin, and fearless of the divine displeasure; like the adulterous woman, wiped their mouths when they had eaten the sweet morsels of sin, and said they had done no wickedness, (^{<R18D>}Proverbs 30:20); or which was involuntary, and not done knowingly, as Kimchi and Abendana: or rather, as Ben Melech renders it, “no iniquity and sin”; and so others: or, best of all, “no iniquity or sin”, as Noldius^{f244}; no iniquity, or any kind of sin at all. Thus, as Ephraim was charged before with idolatry and lies in religion, so here with fraudulent dealings, and getting riches in an illicit way in civil things; and of whose repentance and reformation there was no hope.

Ver. 9. *And I [that am] the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt,* etc.] Ephraim being so very corrupt in things, both religious and civil, and so very impenitent and impudent, is let alone to suffer the just punishment of his sins; but Judah being called to repentance, and brought unto it, gracious promises are here made unto him, to be fulfilled in the times of the Messiah, either at the first or latter part of them; especially the last is to be understood, when indeed all Israel shall return to the Lord, and be saved; and then it will appear, that the Lord, who was their God, as was evident from his bringing them out of Egyptian bondage, and continued to be so from that time to the Babylonish captivity, and even to the times of the Messiah, will now be their God most clearly and manifestly, having redeemed them from worse than Egyptian bondage; from the bondage of sin, Satan, the law, the world, and death; even the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, they will now seek and embrace, who is God over all, and equal to such a work of redemption and salvation; Immanuel, God with us, God in our nature, our Lord and our God, the God of the Jews now converted, as will be acknowledged, as well as of the Gentiles: and he

will yet make thee to dwell in tabernacles, as in the days of the solemn feast; alluding to the feast of tabernacles, kept in commemoration of the Israelites dwelling in tents in the wilderness, (^{<R23D>}Leviticus 23:42,43); typical of Christ’s incarnation, expressed by his tabernacling among men in human nature, (^{<R114>}John 1:14); and which feast, though abolished by Christ with the rest, yet it is said will be kept by converted Jews and Gentiles in the latter day; which can be understood no otherwise than of their

embracing and professing the incarnate Saviour, partaking of the blessings of grace that come by him, and attending on those ordinances of public worship instituted by him; (see ^{<3446>}Zechariah 14:16-19); and which booths, tents, or tabernacles, the Israelites dwelt in at that feast, were also typical of the churches of Christ under the Gospel dispensation, and which are here meant; and in which it is here promised the converted Jews shall dwell, as they had been used to do in their booths at the solemn feast of tabernacles. These Christian churches resembling them in the matter of them; believers in Christ, the materials of such churches, being compared to goodly trees, to willows of the brook, to palm trees, olive trees, and myrtle trees, with others, the branches of which were used at the above feast, to make their tabernacles with; (see ^{<0830>}Leviticus 23:40 ^{<4085>}Nehemiah 8:15); and in the use of them, which was to dwell in during the time of the said feast; as the churches of Christ are the tabernacles of the most High, the dwelling places of Father, Son, and Spirit; and the habitation of the saints, where they dwell and enjoy great plenty and prosperity, tranquillity and security; and here it particularly denotes that joy, peace, and the converted Jews shall partake of in the churches of Christ in the latter day; of which the feast of tabernacles was but a shadow, and which was attended with much rejoicing, plenty of provisions, and great safety.

Ver. 10. *I have also spoken to the prophets*, etc.] Or, “I will speak”^{f245}; for this respects not the Lord’s speaking by the prophets of the Old Testament who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; though all they said were for the use of, and profitable unto, Christian churches; but his speaking by the apostles, prophets, and teachers, under the Gospel dispensation; by whom the doctrines of grace have been more clearly dispensed, and which are no other than the voice of Christ speaking in them; and which it is both a privilege to hear, and a duty to attend unto; (see ^{<4041>}Ephesians 4:11);

and I have multiplied visions: or, “will multiply visions”^{f246}; more than under the former dispensation, as was foretold by Joel, (^{<3028>}Joel 2:28); (see ^{<4016>}Acts 2:16,17); witness the visions of the Apostles Peter, Paul, John, and others: or this may respect the more clear sight and knowledge of Gospel truths in the times of the Messiah, then under the Mosaic economy; (see ^{<4013>}2 Corinthians 3:13-18);

and used similitudes by the ministry of the prophets: or, “will use similitudes”^{f247}; for this is to be understood, not of the types and figures

used by the Lord under the legal dispensation, to represent spiritual things, as the brasen serpent, passover lamb, manna, and the sacrifices of the law; nor of the similitudes used by the prophet Hosea, taking a wife and children of whoredoms, to set forth the case and condition of Israel, and of the comparisons he makes of God, to a lion, leopard, bear, etc. or by any other of the former prophets; but of parables and similitudes used in Gospel times; not only such as Christ used himself, who seldom spoke without a parable; (see ^{<4031>}Matthew 13:11); but which he used by the ministry of his apostles and prophets, and which are to be met with in their discourses and writings; (see ^{<4016>}1 Corinthians 3:6-12); and especially such seem to be meant that respect the conversion of the Jews, and the glory of the church in the latter day, (^{<4116>}Romans 11:16-26) (^{<6212>}Revelation 21:12-23).

Ver. 11. [*Is there iniquity [in] Gilead?*] etc.] Idolatry there? strange that there should be, seeing it was a city of the priests; a city of refuge; or there is none there, say the priests, who pretended they did not worship idols, but the true Jehovah in them: or, “is [there] not iniquity”, or idolatry, “in Gilead”^{f248}? verily there is, let them pretend to what they will: or, “is [there only] iniquity in it”^{f249}? that the men of it should be carried captive, as they were by TiglathPileser, before the rest of the tribes; (see ^{<1259>}2 Kings 15:29); no, there is iniquity and idolatry committed in other places, as well as there, who must expect to share the same fate in time: or, “is Gilead Aven?”^{f250} that is, Bethaven, the same with Bethel; it is as that, as guilty of idolatry as Bethel, where one of the calves was set up:

surely they are vanity: the inhabitants of Gilead, as well as of Bethel, worshipping idols, which are most vain things, vanity itself, and deceive those that serve them, and trust in them:

they sacrifice bullocks in Gilgal: to idols, as the Targum adds; and so Jarchi and Kimchi; according to Aben Ezra, they sacrificed them to Baal; this shows that Gilead was not the only place for idolatry, which was on the other side Jordan, but Gilgal, which was on this side Jordan, was also polluted with it. The Vulgate Latin version is,

“in Gilgal they were sacrificing to bullocks;”

to the calves there, the same as were at Daniel and Bethel; so, in the Septuagint version of (^{<1129>}1 Kings 12:29); it was formerly read: and so Cyril^{f251} quotes it, “[he] (Jeroboam) set the one (calf) in Gilgal, and the

other [in] Dan”; hence the fable that Epiphanius^{f252} makes mention of, that, when Elisha was born, the golden ox or heifer at Gilgal bellowed very loudly, and so loud as to be heard at Jerusalem. The Targum makes mention of an idol temple here; and as it was near to Bethel, as appears from (~~Q10B~~ 1 Samuel 10:3,8); and from Josephus^{f253}; and so Jerom says^{f254}, hard by Bethel; some suspect another Gilgal; hence it might be put for it; however, it was a place of like idolatrous worship; it is mentioned as such along with Bethaven or Bethel, in (~~Q10H~~ Hosea 4:15); see also (~~Q10I~~ Hosea 9:15);

yea, their altars [are] as heaps in, the furrows of the fields; not only in the city of Gilgal, and in the temple there, as the Targum; but even without the city, in the fields they set up altars, which looked like heaps of stones; or they had a multitude of altars that stood as thick as they. So the Targum,

“they have multiplied their altars, like heaps upon the borders of the fields;”

and the Jewish commentators in general understand this as expressive of the number of their altars, and of the increase of idolatrous worship; but some interpret it of the destruction of their altars, which should become heaps of stones and rubbish, like such as are in fields. These words respect Ephraim or the ten tribes, in which these places were, whose idolatry is again taken notice of, after gracious promises were made to Judah. Some begin here a new sermon or discourse delivered to Israel.

Ver. 12. *And Jacob fled into the country of Syria*, etc.] Or, “field of Syria”^{f255}; the same with Padanaram; for “Padan”, in the Arabic language, as Bochart has shown, signifies a field; and “Aram” is Syria, and is the word here used. This is to be understood of Jacob’s fleeing thither for fear of his brother Esau, the history of which is had in (~~Q10J~~ Genesis 28:1-29:35); though some interpret this of his fleeing from Laban out of the field of Syria into Gilead, (~~Q10K~~ Genesis 31:21,23); and so make it to be introduced as an aggravation of the sin of the inhabitants of Gilead, that that place, which had been a refuge and sanctuary to their ancestor in his distress, should be defiled with idolatry; but the words will not bear such a construction, and the following seem to militate against it:

and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept [sheep]; and so the last clause is supplied by the Targum, Jarchi, and Kimchi: this was after his flight into Syria, and before he fled from Laban, whom he served seven

years for Rachel; and then served him by keeping his sheep seven years more for the same: though it may be understood of his two wives, thus; he served seven years for a wife, for Rachel intentionally, but eventually it was for Leah; and then he kept sheep seven years more for his other wife Rachel; the history of this is in (~~(120)~~Genesis 29:1-35). This is mentioned to show the meanness of Jacob the ancestor of the Israelites, from whom they had their original and name; he was a fugitive in the land of Syria; there he was a Syrian ready to perish, a very poor man, obliged to serve and keep sheep for a wife, having no dowry to give; and this is observed here to bring down the pride of Israel, who boasted of their descent, which is weak and foolish for any to do; and to show the goodness of God to Jacob, and to them, in raising him and them from so low an estate and condition to such eminency and greatness as they were; and to upbraid their ingratitude to the God of their fathers, and of their mercies, whom they had revolted from, and turned to idols.

Ver. 13. *And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt*, etc.] Or, “by the prophet”; the famous and most excellent prophet Moses, who, by way of eminency, is so called; him the Lord sent, and employed, and made use of him as an instrument to bring his people out of their bondage in Egypt; in which he was a type of Christ the great Prophet of the church, raised up like unto him, and the Redeemer of his people from sin, Satan, and the world, law, hell, and death, and all enemies:

and by a prophet he was preserved; by the same prophet Moses was Israel preserved at the Red sea, and in the wilderness; where they were kept as a flock of sheep from their powerful enemies, and brought to the borders of Canaan’s land. Some understand this last clause of Joshua, by whom the Israelites were safely conducted through Jordan into the land of Canaan, and settled there; and particularly were brought by him to Gilgal, where the covenant of circumcision was renewed, and the first passover in the land kept, but now a place of idolatry, as before mentioned; and which sin was aggravated by this circumstance: but the design of this observation seems to be to put the Israelites in remembrance of their low estate in Egypt, and of the goodness of God to them in delivering them from thence, which they had sadly requited by their degeneracy and apostasy from him; and to him unto them how much they ought to have valued the prophets of the Lord, though they had despised them, since they had received such benefits and blessings by the means of a prophet.

Ver. 14. *Ephraim provoked [him] to anger most bitterly*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version supplies it, me; that is, God, as Kimchi; or his Lord, as it may be supplied from the last clause of the verse; the sense is the same either way: it was God that Ephraim or the ten tribes provoked to stir up his wrath and vengeance against them; notwithstanding all the favours that they and their ancestors had received from him, they provoked him in a most bitter manner, to bitter anger, vehement wrath and fury: or, “with bitteresses”^{f256}; with their sins, which are in their own nature bitter, displeasing to God; and in their effects bring bitterness and death on those that commit them; meaning particularly their idolatry, and all belonging to it; their idols, high places, altars, etc. The word here used is rendered “high heaps”^{f257}, (²⁸¹²Jeremiah 31:21); and is here by Kimchi interpreted of altars, with which, and their sacrifices on them, they provoked the Lord to anger:

therefore shall he leave his blood upon him; the blood of innocent persons, prophets, and other good men shed by him; the sin of it shall be charged upon him, and he shall bear the punishment of it. So the Targum,

“the fault of innocent blood which he shed shall return upon him:”

or “his own blood shall be poured out upon him”^{f258}; in just retaliation for the blood of others shed by him, and for all the blood sired by him in idolatrous sacrifices, and other bloody sins; or his own blood being shed by the enemy shall remain upon him unrevenged; God will not punish those that shed it:

and his reproach shall his Lord return unto him: that is, as he has reproached the prophets of the Lord for reproving him for his idolatry, and reproached fire Lord himself, by revolting from him, and neglecting his worship, and preferring the worship of idols to him; so, as a just recompence, he shall be delivered up into the hands of the enemy, and become a reproach, a taunt, and a proverb, in all places into which he shall be brought. God is called “his Lord”, though he had rebelled against him, and shook off his yoke, and would not obey him; yet, whether he will or not, he is his Lord, and will show himself to be so by his sovereignty and authority over him, and by the judgments exercised on him. Some understand this of the Assyrian king, become his lord, by taking and carrying him captive, the instrument in God’s hand of bringing him to reproach; but the former sense seems best.

CHAPTER 13

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 13

This chapter begins with observing the different state and condition of Ephraim before and after his idolatry, (^{<28130>}Hosea 13:1); his increase in it, (^{<28132>}Hosea 13:2); and therefore his prosperity was very short lived, which is signified by various metaphors, (^{<28133>}Hosea 13:3); and his sins are aggravated by the former goodness of God unto him his great ingratitude unto God, and forgetfulness him, (^{<28134>}Hosea 13:4-6); hence he is threatened with his wrath and vengeance in a very severe manner, (^{<28137>}Hosea 13:7,8); for which he had none to blame but himself; yea, such was the grace and goodness of God to him, that though he had destroyed himself, yet there were help and salvation for him in him, (^{<28139>}Hosea 13:9); though not in his king he had desired, and was given, and was took away in wrath, (^{<28130>}Hosea 13:10,11); but his sin being bound up and hid, and he foolish and unwise, sharp corrections would be given him, (^{<28132>}Hosea 13:12,13); and yet a gracious promise is made of redemption from death and the grave by the Messiah, (^{<28134>}Hosea 13:14); but, notwithstanding this, and all his present prosperity, he would be blasted in his wealth and riches; and Samaria the metropolis of his country would he desolate; and the inhabitants of it be used in the most cruel manner, because of their rebellion against God, (^{<28135>}Hosea 13:15,16).

Ver. 1. *When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel*, etc.] Or, with trembling, as Jarchi: so Jeroboam, who was of the tribe of Ephraim, spake before Solomon, a great king, as he observes. R. Moses the priest interprets it of Jeroboam; but it may be understood of the tribe in general, and especially of the heads of it, at anytime before it fell into idolatry; when they spake with submission and humility, they were attended to by the other tribes in all consultations and debates, and great deference was paid unto them; and they were find in great esteem, and highly honoured, agreeably to that common saying of our Lord, “he that humbleth himself shall be exalted”, (^{<28141>}Luke 14:11); or, “when [he] spake [there was] trembling”^{f259}; either the neighbouring nations, when he threatened them with war: or among the other tribes of Israel, when he spake in

counsel, and with authority, they rose up and heard him with great reverence and respect; (see ^{<1338>}Job 29:8-10). So the Targum,

“when anyone of the house of Ephraim spake, trembling laid hold on the people; they became princes in Israel.”

Some refer this to the times of Joshua, who was of that tribe, and whom the Israelites feared as they had feared Moses, (^{<1044>}Joshua 4:14); others to the times of Gideon and Jephthah, with whom the tribe of Ephraim expostulated, (^{<1000>}Judges 8:1 12:1); but others interpret it of Jeroboam’s idolatry, of his setting up the worship of the calves, which he did upon his exalting himself, and setting himself up as king of the ten tribes; and, in some agreement with this, Schmidt understands, by “trembling”, a terrible and horrible thing, idolatry, which he commanded and appointed; and which he “bore” or “carried”, as the word ^{f260} is interpreted by him, and may be; that is, his sin, and the punishment of it, which Jeroboam and his posterity did bear; and so it agrees with what follows:

but, or “and”,

when he offended in Baal, he died; or when he sinned, and became guilty of more idolatry still, by worshipping Baal, as well as the calves, which was done in the times of Ahab, (^{<1163>}1 Kings 16:31); when Ephraim or the kingdom or Israel fell into distresses and calamities, sunk in their grandeur and authority, declined in their wealth and riches, and were insulted by their enemies, particularly by Benhadad king of Syria, who sent to Ahab, and challenged his silver and gold, his wives and children, as his own, (^{<1203>}1 Kings 20:3,4); and so they gradually decreased in credit and reputation, in power and authority, in wealth and substance, and at last were delivered to the sword of the enemy, and to captivity, which was their civil death.

Ver. 2. *And now they sin more and more*, etc.] Since the times of Jeroboam, and also of Ahab, adding other deities to the calves, and to Baal, as follows; increasing the number of their idols, and their idolatrous sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies: this they did in the times the prophet, who prophesied after the times of as it is common with evil men and seducers to wax worse and worse, and to proceed to more ungodliness, and from evil to evil; such is the way of idolaters, they stop not, but run into greater absurdities and grosser idolatries:

and have made them molten images of their silver: which is to be understood, not of the calves, or of Baal, made of gold, which they

purchased with their silver; but of other images they had in their houses, or carried about with them, made of their silver, of their plate, which they melted and cast images of it, of whatsoever shape or form they pleased:

[and] idols according to their own understanding; which were entirely of man's device, and had nothing divine in them, either as to matter or form, but wholly the invention of the human brain; or, "according to their own likeness", as the Targum, and so other Jewish interpreters; after the form of a man, and yet were so weak and stupid as to account them gods:

all of it the work of the craftsmen; of silversmiths and founders, and such like artificers; the same, or of the same sort, with the craftsmen that made shrines for Diana, (~~41924~~ Acts 19:24,38); and therefore such a work, wrought by such hands, could never be a deity, or have anything divine in it; they must be as stupid and senseless as the work itself to imagine there should: and yet

they say of them; the false prophets, or the idolatrous priests, say of such idols:

let the men that sacrifice kiss the calves: let those that bring their sacrifices, or those that offer them, pay religious worship and adoration to the calves; which they signified by kissing the idols they sacrificed to, either their mouths, or their hands; or, if out of their reach, they kissed their own hands in token of honour to them; which rites were commonly used among the Heathens. Cicero^{f261} says at Agrigentum, where was a temple or Hercules, where the people not only used to show a veneration to his image by prayers and thanksgivings, but they used to kiss it. So Apuleius^{f262} speaks of a beautiful virgin, the report of whose beauty brought together a vast number of citizens and strangers; who, amazed at the sight of her, put their right hand to their mouths, the first finger resting upon the thumb erect, and gave her reverence with religious adoration, as if she had been the goddess Venus herself; and Minutius Felix^{f263} says of Caecilius, that, observing the image of Serapis (probably much like one of these calves), putting his hand to his mouth, according to the superstitious custom of the common people, with his lips smacked a kiss; and so Pliny^{f264} observes, in worshipping, the right hand is used for a kiss, turning about the whole body, which to do to the left was reckoned the more religious; hence it is observed^{f265} of Aemilius, a derider of and scoffer at things divine, that he would never make supplication to any god, nor frequent any temple; and if he passed by any place of worship, he reckoned it a crime to

put his hand to his lips by way of adoration, or on account of that; and it seems to have obtained as early as the times of Job among idolatrous people, that, upon the sight of the sun or moon, they immediately with their mouth kissed their hands; (see ^{<1812>}Job 31:26,27); hence Lucian ^{f266}, speaking of the Indians, says, rising early in the morning, they worship the sun, not as we, who think the prayers are finished when the hand is kissed; and Tertullian ^{f267}, addressing the Heathens in his time, thus bespeaks them, most of you, out of an affectation of worshipping the celestial bodies at the rising of the sun, move and quaver your lips; hence kissing is used for the worship of the Son of God, (^{<1912>}Psalm 2:12). Some read the words, “let those that sacrifice a man ^{f268} kiss the calves”; as if it respected the abominable practice of sacrificing men to Moloch; or intimated that men were sacrificed to the calves at Bethel.

Ver. 3. *Therefore they shall be as the morning cloud*, etc.] Which, however promising it is, soon disappears when the sun is risen; signifying that the idolatrous Israelites, king, priests, and people, should be no more; their kingdom would cease, all their riches and wealth would depart from them, and they and their children be carried captive into a strange land:

and as the early dew it passeth away; as soon as the heat of the sun is felt, when the earth is left dry; so these people, though they seemed to be in great prosperity, and to be very fruitful in children, and in substance, and promised themselves much more; yet in a little time their land would become desolate, and they stripped of all that was dear and valuable to them these metaphors are used in (^{<2004>}Hosea 6:4);

as the chaff [that] is driven with a whirlwind out of the floor; signifying that these idolatrous people were like chaff, light and empty, useless and unprofitable, fit for nothing but burning; and that they would be driven out of their own land through the Assyrian, that should come like a whirlwind with great force and power, as easily and as quickly as chaff is drove out of a threshing floor of corn with a strong blast of wind; (see ^{<1905>}Psalm 1:5 ^{<2001>}Jeremiah 4:11-13 ^{<2105>}Daniel 2:35);

and as the smoke out of the chimney; which rises up in a pillar, and is so on dissipated by the wind, or dissolved into air; and is no sooner seen but it disappears; (see ^{<1902>}Psalm 68:2). All these similes show how easily, suddenly, and quickly, the destruction of this idolatrous nation would be brought about.

Ver. 4. *Yet I [am] the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt*, etc.] Which brought thee out from thence, as the Targum; and ever since, from that time to this, had shown a regard unto them, as the Lord their God, both in the wilderness, as later mentioned, and in the land of Canaan, where they had been continued, and followed with instances of goodness to that day, and yet find sinned in so gross a manner; which argued great ingratitude in them, and forgetfulness of the Lord, and his mercies:

and thou shalt know no God but me; they ought to have known, acknowledged, and worshipped no other god, as was enjoined them in the law: or, “thou knowest not”^{f269}; they did not know any other, which they in their own consciences were obliged to confess, if appealed to; however, they should know no other; by sad experience they would find that there was no other that could be of any service to them; their images and idols being unable to help them:

for [there is] no saviour besides me; that could save them out of their troubles, and deliver them out of their distresses; no other that is, or can be, the author, either of temporal or of spiritual and eternal salvation.

Ver. 5. *I did know thee in the wilderness*, etc.] Where there were no food nor drink, where were scorpions, serpents, and beasts of prey; there the Lord knew them, owned them, and showed a fatherly affection for them, and care of them; and fed them with manna and quails, and guided and directed them in the way, and protected and preserved them from their enemies, and from all hurt and danger. So the Targum explains it,

“I sufficiently supplied their necessities in the wilderness:”

in the land of great drought; or, “of droughts”^{f270}; the word is only used in this place; and is by Aben Ezra interpreted a dry and thirsty land; and so he says it signifies in the Arabic language and the same is observed by the father of Kimchi, and by R. Jonah^{f271}; but is by some rendered “torrid”^{f272}, or “inflamed”, as if it had the signification of a Hebrew word which signifies a flame: and the Targum takes it to be akin to another, which signifies to “desire”, rendering it,

“in a land in which thou desirest everything;”

that is, wants everything. The first seems best, and is a fit a description of the wilderness, which was a place of drought, wherein was no water, (^(-R85)Deuteronomy 8:15).

Ver. 6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled*, etc.] When they came into the land of Canaan, which was a land flowing with milk and honey, they were like a flock of sheep brought from short commons to a good pasture; and there they tilled themselves to the fail, and indulged to luxury and excess, pampered themselves, and made provision for the flesh to fulfil its lusts, and became carnal and sensual:

they were filled, and their hearts were exalted: they were elated with their plenty, and grew proud and haughty, and attributed their fulness not to the goodness of God, but to their own excellency and merit; and put their trust and confidence in their affluence, and not in the Lord; and thought themselves safe and secure, and out of all danger, and concluded it would never be otherwise with them:

therefore have they forgotten me; the Author of their beings, the Father of their mercies, and God of all their comforts; they forgot to give him praise and glory for their abundance; to place their trust and have their dependence on him, and to serve and worship him; this was the consequence of their luxury and pride. The Targum is,

“therefore they left my worship;”

they waxed fat, and kicked, and lightly esteemed and forsook the God and Rock of their salvation, (¹⁸²⁵Deuteronomy 32:15).

Ver. 7. *Therefore I will be unto them as a lion*, Because of their idolatry, ingratitude, luxury, and especially their forgetfulness of God, which is last mentioned, and with which the words are connected. By this and the following metaphors are set forth the severity of God’s judgments upon them for their sins, and their utter destruction by them. Some observe the word¹²⁷³ here used signifies an old lion, which, though slower in the pursuit of its prey, is more cruel when it has got it; (see ³⁸¹⁴Hosea 5:14);

as a leopard by the way will I observe [them]; which is a quick sighted, vigilant, crafty, and insidious creature, which lurks in trees, and watches for men and beasts that pass by the way, and seizes on them. The lion makes his onset more openly, this more secretly; and both express the various ways God would take in his providence to chastise these people for their sins, and that he would watch over them to do them hurt, as he had to do them good, and take the proper opportunity of doing it, and execute his purpose with great wrath and fury, to their utter ruin; (see ²⁴¹⁶Jeremiah 5:6 44:27). The Septuagint, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, render

it, “as a leopard by the way of Assyria”^{f274}, or “the Assyrians”; and so some interpreters take the sense to be, that God would watch them in their way to Assyria for help, and blast their designs, disappoint them of their expected assistance, and surprise them with his judgments; (see ^{<3153>}Hosea 5:13 7:11 8:9 ^{<3428>}Jeremiah 2:18,19); and there was a mountain in Syria, called the mountain of the leopards, where they used to haunt, and from whence they came out to take their prey, to which there is a reference in (^{<2448>}Song of Solomon 4:8); which was two miles from Tripoli (a city of Syria) northward, three from the city Arces southward, and one from Mount Lebanon^{f275}; and such is the vigilance and agility of leopards, that they will sometimes, as Pliny^{f276} says, mount thick trees, and hide themselves in the branches, and leap at once, and unawares, upon those that pass by, whether men or beasts, as before observed; wherefore, with great propriety, is this simile used. The Targum is, “my word shall be”, etc.

Ver. 8. *I will meet them as a bear [that is] bereaved of her whelps*, etc.] Which is a fierce cruel creature at any time, but especially when this is its case, being very fond of its whelps; and having taken a great deal of pains to lick them into form, as Kimchi and Ben Melech observe, it is the more enraged at the loss of them, and therefore falls upon man or beast it meets with the utmost fury: the phrase is expressive of the fiercest rage; (see ^{<3072>}Proverbs 17:12);

and will rend the caul of their hearts: the pericardium, which is a membrane or skin that encloses the heart, and which when pierced is immediate death: perhaps some respect is had to the closing of their hearts to God, the hardness of them against him and his ways, and their inattention to his word; and now he will open them, not in a way of grace and mercy, but of wrath and fury; as a bear, when it seizes a man, sticks his claws in his breast, tears it open, and makes his way at once to the heart, fetches it out, and sucks his blood:

and there will I devour them like a lion; either in their cities and houses, when taken by the enemy; or in the way, in which they would be observed; or in their captivity: or there may be put for then, and so denotes the time when he would be all this to them before mentioned, and then he would utterly destroy them:

the wild beast shall tear them: which literally is one of God’s sore judgments, but here figuratively designs the Assyrian, and who is meant as the instrument of God’s vengeance in all the other expressions; and is

sometimes compared to a lion, and that as concerned with Israel; (see ²⁸¹⁷Jeremiah 50:17); which is much better than by these four sorts of creatures to understand the four monarchies which Israel suffered by. The Targum is,

“my word shall meet them as a bear bereaved, and I will break the wickedness of their hearts, etc.”

Ver. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself*, etc.] Though the Lord was a lion, a leopard, and a bear to them, yet their destruction was not owing to him, but to themselves; he was not chargeable with it, but they only; the fault and blame was theirs; their own sins brought it on them, and provoked him to such righteous wrath and vengeance before expressed: this is said to clear the Lord from any imputation of this kind, and to lay it where it should be. It may be rendered, “it hath destroyed thee”^{f277}; either the calf, as Kimchi, and the worshipping of that, their idolatry; or their king, as others, taking it from the following verse by way of anticipation; or rather it may refer to all their sins before observed, their idolatry, luxury, and ingratitude. Gussetius^{f278} thinks the word **yb** has the signification of “burning”, as in (²¹⁹⁴Isaiah 3:24); and renders it, “burning in me hath destroyed thee, [even] in him who is thy help”; that is, by their sins they had made God their enemy, who is a consuming fire, and whose burning wrath destroyed them, in whom otherwise they would have had help. Now though this may primarily regard the destruction of the civil state and kingdom of Israel for their sins, yet it may be applied to the spiritual and eternal state of men. Man is a lost, ruined, and undone creature; he is depraved and corrupted in his whole nature, soul and body; the image of God in him is marred and spoiled; there is no holiness in him, nor any righteousness upon him; no will nor power to that which is good; though he has not lost the natural liberty of his will, he has lost the moral liberty of it, and is a slave to his lusts, and a vassal to Satan; he has no true knowledge of that which is good, no inclination to it, nor strength to perform it he is dead in sin, and dead in law; he is under the curse of it, and in the open way to everlasting ruin and destruction; and is in himself both helpless and lifeless; and he is a self-destroyed creature; his destruction is not owing to Satan only, though he was an instrument of the ruin of mankind; nor to the first parents of human nature only, in whom all men naturally and federally were, in whom they sinned, and with whom they fell; but to their own actual sins and transgressions. However, their destruction is not to be charged upon God, or ascribed to any decree of

his, which is no cause of man's damnation, but sin only; nor to any sentence of condemnation passed by him, or the execution of it, which both belong to him as a righteous Judge; but to themselves and their sins, as is owned both by good men, who under true and saving convictions acknowledge their damnation would be just, if God should execute it on them; and by bad men, even the damned in hell; this will be the never dying worm, the remorse of a guilty conscience, that they have brought all this ruin on themselves;

but in me [is] thine help; not in themselves, not in any creature, but in the Lord alone; the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; the essential Word, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, on whom his divine Father has laid the help of his people; and who has helped them, and saved them from their sins, the cause of their destruction, and from wrath, which they deserved by reason of them; and has brought them out of a wretched state, a pit wherein is no water, into a comfortable, glorious, and happy one, and delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies; and helps them to what they want, to holiness, righteousness, and strength; to all supplies of grace here, and glory hereafter. Some render the particle as causal, "for in me", etc.^{f279} and so make it to be a reason either proving that God could not be the cause of their destruction, because in him was their help, and in him only; or that their destruction was owing to themselves; "for in" or "against me, against thine help"; thou hast transgressed and rebelled; so Jarchi.

Ver. 10. *I will be thy King, where [is any other] that may save thee in all thy cities?* etc.] Governor, Protector, and Defender; and so confirming what is before said, that their help was in him: or, as the Targum, Abarbinel, and others^{f280}, "where is thy king now, that he may serve thee in all thy cities?" whom they had asked, rejecting the Lord, and in whom they had put their trust and confidence for help; and now either having no king, he being taken away from them by death, or by the enemy; or if they had, he being unable to help them in their distress; they are ironically asked where he was, that he might exert himself and save them, if he could, in all the cities of the land, where the enemy were come, a, a had besieged and took them:

and thy judges, of whom thou saidst give me a king and princes? that is; where are thy king and his nobles, his courtiers and his counsellors, and all judges, magistrates, and governors subordinate to him? let them arise for

thy help, if they can, by their policy or power, by their counsel, or by their arms; for judges and princes design such as were of the king's court and council, or acted in government under his direction and influence; for though these are not expressly mentioned, when they asked for a king, yet are implied; since there is no king without a court and nobles to attend him, to advise with, and to act under him. This refers to the story in (^{<OR6>}1 Samuel 8:6), etc. and seems to be the leading step to Israel's ruin and destruction as a state.

Ver. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger*, etc.] Not the king of Assyria, sent to waste and destroy them, and carry them captive, as some, for of him the next clause cannot be said; nor Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, as others, who was not given in anger to Israel, but to Solomon; rather Saul, as Kimchi and Aben Ezra, the first king of all Israel; and who was given at the request of the people, though in anger and resentment, they rejecting God their King; or it may design the kingly office and power in general, in a succession of kings from him the first of them:

and took [him] away in my wrath; not Jeroboam, who does not appear to be taken away by death in wrath; rather Saul, who died in battle with the Philistines, and fell on the mountains of Gilboa: but it may be rendered better, "I will take him away"^{f281}; and refers not to Zedekiah the last king of Judith, as some in Kimchi; but to Hoshea, the last king of the ten tribes; for it is of there more especially the words, both in the text and context, are spoken; and so it respects the entire removal of kingly power from them, which ceased in Hoshea; (see ^{<OR6>}Hosea 3:4 10:15).

Ver. 12. *The iniquity of Ephraim [is] bound up; his sin [is] hid.*] Which Kimchi restrains to the sin of the calves, and worshipping them; and others to the request of a king, the context speaks of: but it seems best to understand it in a more general sense of these, with all other sins, which were bound up, and not loosed, or were not remitted and forgiven, they being impenitent, and persisting in their sins; and which were bound up as in a bag or purse, in order to be opened and brought forth in proper time in open court, and be took cognizance of in a judiciary way; with which agrees an expression in (^{<SR47>}Job 14:17); or which were laid up among the treasures of divine omniscience, in the mind of God, and not forgotten by him, as they might be thought to be, and would in due time be brought to light, and vengeance took on them. So the Targum,

“the sins of the house of Ephraim are treasured up; they are reserved to punish all their offences;”

(see ^{<15234>}Deuteronomy 32:34).

Ver. 13. *The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him*, etc.]

Upon Ephraim, or the ten tribes; that is, afflictions, distresses, and calamities, which are often in Scripture compared to the pains and sorrows of a woman in childbirth; and may denote the suddenness and inevitableness of them; (see ^{<23178>}Isaiah 13:8 ^{<3406>}Jeremiah 30:6,7). So the Targum,

“distress and trouble shall come upon them, as pains on a woman with child;”

which may respect the invasion of their land, the siege of Samaria, and their captivity;

he [is] an unwise son; taking no warning by his ancestors, by their sins, and what befell them on account of them, but persisting in his sins, and in impenitence and hardness of heart: so the Targum,

“he is not wise to know my fear:”

for he should not stay long in [the place of] the breaking forth of children: that is, in the womb, as Kimchi and Ben Melech interpret it; though the Targum and Jarchi understand it of the stool or seat of women in travail. The sense is, either that he is foolish and unwise, that he does not endeavour to extricate himself from these troubles; or rather to prevent them by repentance, by leaving his idols, and returning to the Lord; or that, should he do so, he would soon be delivered from all his sorrows, and not stay a moment longer in them. Though the words may be better rendered, “for he stays not”, or “would not stay, the time for the breaking forth of children”^{Ě}; now this time is the time of the Gospel dispensation, the time of the Messiah’s birth, the fulness of time appointed for his coming, and the time of the church’s ringing forth many children in a spiritual sense; (see ^{<2541>}Isaiah 54:1 ^{<4045>}Galatians 4:26,27); for which Ephraim or the ten tribes should have waited, but did not, which was their folly and their ruin; they did not “stand”, or continue, in the belief and expectation of the Messiah, and in the true worship of God, but left that, and served idols; and so continued not to the times of the Messiah, when the blessings mentioned in the following verse would be obtained and enjoyed; so Schmidt.

Ver. 14. *I will ransom them from the power of the grave*, etc.] That is, “when” or “at which time” before spoken of, and here understood, as the above interpreter rightly connects the words, “I will” do this and what follows:

I will redeem them from death; these are the words, not of Jehovah the Father, as in (²⁰⁰⁷Hosea 1:7); but of the Son, who redeemed Israel out of Egypt, which was a typical redemption, (²⁸³⁴Hosea 13:4); in whom is the help of his people laid and found, (²⁸³⁵Hosea 13:9); the Word of the Lord, as the Targum; who is the true God, the mighty God, and so equal to this work of redemption and who is also the near kinsman of the redeemed as one of the words here used implies, and so to him belonged the right of redemption: the persons redeemed are not Israel after the flesh, but spiritual Israel, whether Jews or Gentiles; a special and peculiar people, chosen of God, and precious, out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; and who, in their nature state, are under sin, in bondage to it, and liable to the curse of the law, the wrath of God, hell and damnation; which are meant by the “grave” and “death”, and so needed a Redeemer to ransom them: for the word for “grace” should be rendered “hell”^{f283}, as it often is; and “death” intends not corporeal one only, but eternal death, or the second death; and both signify the wrath of God due to sin, and which God’s elect are deserving of, and Christ has bore, and delivered them from; and the curse of the law, which he has redeemed them from, being made a curse for them; and eternal death, the equivalent to which he has suffered, and so has saved them from it, and all this by redeeming them from their sins, the cause of it; and which he has done by giving a redemption or ransom price, which is his blood, his life, yea, himself, and which the first of the words here used imports. It is indeed true, that, in consequence of all this, there will be a redemption by him from a corporeal death, and from the grave; not as yet, for the ransomed of the Lord die as others, and are laid in the grave, the house appointed for all living; but in the resurrection morn there will be a redemption, a deliverance of the bodies of the saints from the grave, from mortality and corruption; yea, of them from the moral corruption of sin, and all the defilements of it, as well as from all afflictions and diseases, and from death itself, which shall have no more dominion over them; to which purpose the words are applied by the apostle; (see Gill on “⁴⁶⁵⁵1 Corinthians 15:55”); and so by some ancient Jews^{f284} to the Messiah, and his times;

O death, I will be thy plagues; O grace, I will be thy destruction; that is, the utter destruction of them for the plague or pestilence is a wasting destruction, (^{<3906>}Psalm 91:6); it is the same which in New Testament language is the abolishing of death, (^{<5010>}2 Timothy 1:10); which is true of eternal death with respect to the redeemed, which Christ's death is the death of, he having by his death reconciled them to God, and opened the way to eternal life for them, which he has in his hands to give unto them; and of corporeal death and the grave, which Christ has utterly destroyed with respect to himself having loosed the binds of death, and set himself free, and on whom that shall have no more dominion; and, with respect to his pie, he has destroyed him that had the power of it, which is the devil; he has put away and abolished sin, the cause of it; he has took away that which is its sting; so that it may be truly said, as the apostle quotes these words, "O death, where is thy sting?" he has removed the curse from it, and made it a blessing; he has abolished it as a penal evil, so that it is not inflicted as a punishment on his people; and in the last day will entirely deliver them from the power of that, and of the grave; and then that which has slain its millions and millions, a number not to be numbered, will never slay one more: and that grave, which devoured as many, will never be opened more, or one more put into it; and then it may be said, "O grave, where is thy victory?" thou shall conquer no more, but be at an end; (see ^{<6155>}1 Corinthians 15:55);

repentance shall be hid from mine eyes; that is, the Lord will never repent of his decree of redemption from hell, death, and the grave; nor of the work of it by Christ; nor of the entire destruction of these things; which being once done, will never be repented of nor recalled, but remain so for ever.

Ver. 15. *Though he be fruitful among [his] brethren*, etc.] This is not spoken of Christ, as some think, who take the words to be a continuation of the prophecy concerning the Redeemer, who should increase his brethren, and bring many to him; and be as noxious to hell and death as the east wind is to persons and things, and dry up the fountains and springs of hell and death; the sins of men he should abolish, and be victorious over all his enemies, and divide their spoils: but they are rather the words of Christ himself concerning Ephraim, in connection with (^{<2813>}Hosea 13:13); expressing his character and state, and explaining the sorrows and calamities that should come upon him for his folly, in not staying the time of the breaking forth children; and to be understood either of his spiritual

fruitfulness in the last days; when Israel shall return to the Lord by repentance, and believe in the true Messiah, and bring forth the fruit of good works, as an evidence of it, along with their brethren, those of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, and so all Israel should be saved; which yet should not hinder the distresses and destruction that should come upon the ten tribes by the Assyrians, afterwards declared: or rather of his political fruitfulness, in allusion to his name; increasing in numbers, abounding in power and authority, in wealth and riches; either before the sin of the calves, as Kimchi, before he fell into idolatry; or afterwards, particularly in the times of Jeroboam the second, who enlarged the border of Israel; and in later times, when the kings of Israel entered into alliance with the Assyrians, and enjoyed peace and prosperity, and thought themselves secure of the continuance of it. Some render it, “because he is fierce”^{f285}; or “like a wild ass’s colt”; not only foolish and unwise, but fierce and unruly among his brethren, and would not stay the time of the breaking forth of children: therefore

an east wind shall come: which is very vehement, cold, blasting, and exceeding noxious and pernicious to fruit; meaning Shalmaneser king of Assyria, who came from the east; his kingdom, the land of Assyria, lying, as Kimchi observes, eastward to the land of Israel. So the Targum,

“now will I bring against him a king strong as a burning wind;”

so the king of Babylon and his army are compared to a strong and violent wind, (^{<2011>}Jeremiah 4:11-13);

the wind of the Lord shall come up from the wilderness; the same is called the “wind of the Lord”, partly to denote the strength and vehemency of it, as mountains of the Lord, and cedars of the Lord, signify great and mighty ones; and partly to show that this enemy would come at the call of the Lord, by his direction and appointment. So the Targum,

“by the word of the Lord, through the way of the wilderness shall he come up;”

this circumstance, “from the wilderness”, is mentioned, not only because winds from thence usually blow more strongly and violently, but because the way from Assyria to the land of Israel lay through a wilderness;

and his spring shall become dry, and his fountain shall be dried up; his land wasted and destroyed; his fields, vineyards, and oliveyards, trodden

down and ruined, which yielded a large increase; trade and commerce stopped, and so all the springs and fountains of wealth and riches dried up; as well as their wives and children destroyed, as often mentioned, which were the source and spring of their continuance as a people in ages to come;

he shall spoil the treasure of all pleasant vessels; not Christ, nor Ephraim, but the Assyrian; who, entering into their cities, would plunder them of all their “vessels of desire”^{f286}, or desirable ones; their vessels of gold and silver; all their rich household goods and furniture of value; all their wealth and riches treasured up by them, their gold, silver, precious stones, rich garments, etc. So the Targum,

“he shall destroy the house of his treasures, and shall lay waste the city of his kingdom; he shall spoil the treasures, all vessels of desire.”

Ver. 16. *Samaria shall become desolate*, etc.] With this verse the fourteenth chapter begins in the Hebrew copies, and in the Targum, and in many versions; but seems better to conclude the present chapter; since it is in close connection with (^{<2815>}Hosea 13:15), and explains the figurative expressions there used. Samaria was the head of Ephraim, (^{<2809>}Isaiah 7:9); or the metropolis of the ten tribes of Israel; whose desolation is here prophesied of, and was accomplished by Shalmaneser king of Assyria, signified by the east wind; by whom it was not only besieged and taken, but very probably its houses were demolished, its walls broken down, and razed to the very foundation; (see ^{<2715>}2 Kings 17:5,6); and, as this was the head city, it may be put for all the rest, and even for the whole land, which was at the same time laid waste. The Targum is,

“Samaria shall be guilty;”

that is, shall be found guilty of many sins; her transgression shall be revealed, as Jarchi, become manifest by the just punishment inflicted on her;

for she hath rebelled against her God; and bitterly provoked him to wrath and anger, as the word^{f287} signifies; by relinquishing him and his worship, and by serving idols, the calves at Daniel and Bethel, Baal and other idols; when the Lord was their God, not only by creation, as of all men, but by the choice he made of them, and the covenant he made with them; by a national adoption of them, attended with various blessings and privileges,

and by their profession of him; all which were an aggravation of their rebellion against him;

they shall fall by the sword: the inhabitants of Samaria, and of the land, particularly the men thereof; and especially their armed men, their men of war, that fought for them, and defended them; these should fall by the sword of the Assyrian;

their children shall be dashed to pieces; against stones, walls, and pavements; who should have perpetuated their name to future ages, and inherited their possessions:

and their women with child shall be ripped up; things which are often done by cruel enemies, when cities are sacked and plundered; and which Shalmaneser might be provoked unto by the perfidy of the king of Israel, and by the city of Samaria holding out a three years' siege. This, though we have no account of as done at that time, yet no doubt was; even as the same things are predicted of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, and which were to be done to them, in retaliation for them, though there is no narrative of them; (see ^{<19708>}Psalm 137:8,9 ^{<23316>}Isaiah 13:16,18).

CHAPTER 14

INTRODUCTION TO HOSEA 14

This chapter concludes the book, with gracious promises to repenting sinners, to returning backsliders. It begins with an exhortation to Israel to return to the Lord, seeing he was their God, and they had fallen by sin from prosperity into adversity, temporal and spiritual, (^{2840E}Hosea 14:1); and they are directed what to say to the Lord, upon their return to him, both by way of petition, and of promise and of resolution how to behave for the future, encouraged by his grace and mercy, (^{2840D}Hosea 14:2,3); and they are told what the Lord, by way of answer, would say to them, (^{2840B}Hosea 14:4); and what he would be to them; and what blessings of grace he would bestow on them; and in what flourishing and fruitful circumstances they should be, (^{2840F}Hosea 14:5-8); and the chapter ends with a character of such that attend to and understand those things; and with a recommendation of the ways of the Lord, which are differently regarded by men, (^{2840D}Hosea 14:9).

Ver. 1. *O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God*, etc.] From whom they had revolted and backslidden; whose worship and service they had forsaken, and whose word and ordinances they had slighted and neglected, and had served idols, and had given into idolatry, superstition, and will worship; and are here exhorted to turn again to the Lord by repentance and reformation, to abandon their idols, and every false way, and cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart; and the rather, since he was their God; not only their Creator, Preserver, and kind Benefactor, but their God, by his special choice of them above all people; by his covenant with them; by his redemption of them; and by their profession of him; and who was still their God, and ready to receive them, upon their return to him: and a thorough return is here meant, a returning “even unto”,^{f288} or quite up to the Lord thy God; it is not a going to him halfway, but a going quite up to his seat; falling down before him, acknowledging sin and backslidings, and having hold upon him by faith as their God, Redeemer, and Saviour: hence, from the way of speaking here used, the Jews^{f289} have a saying, as Kimchi observes,

“great is repentance, for it brings a man to the throne of glory;”

the imperative may be here used for the future, as some take it; and then it is a prediction of the conversion of Israel, “thou shalt return, O Israel”,^{f290}; and which was in part fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel, which met with many of the Israelites dispersed among the Gentiles, and was the means of their conversion; and will have a greater accomplishment when all Israel shall be converted and saved:

for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity; or “though thou art fallen”^{f291}; into sin, and by it into ruin, temporal and spiritual; from a state of great prosperity and happiness, both in things civil and religious, into great adversity, and calamities of every sort; yet return, repent, consider from whence thou art fallen, and by what; or thou shalt return, be recovered and restored, notwithstanding thy fall, and the low estate in which thou art. The Targum is,

“return to the fear of the Lord.”

Ver. 2. *Take with you words, and turn to the Lord*, etc.] Not mere words without the heart, but such as come from it, and express the true sense of it; words of confession, as the Targum; by which sin is acknowledged, and repentance declared, and forgiveness asked. Kimchi’s note is a very good one;

“he (that is, God) does not require of you, upon return, neither gold nor silver, nor burnt offerings, but good works; therewith confessing your sins with your whole hearts, and not with your lips only;”

and which best agrees with evangelical repentance and Gospel times, in which ceremonial sacrifices are no more; and not any words neither; not tautologies and multiplicity of words, or words of man’s prescribing, but of the Lord’s directing to and dictating; the taught words of the Holy Ghost, which he suggests and helps men to, who otherwise know not how to pray, or what to pray for; and these expressed under a sense of sin, and sorrow for it, and in the strength of faith, and are as follow:

say unto him, take away all iniquity; which is to be understood, not of the taking away of the being of sin; which, though very desirable, is not to be expected in this life: nor of the expiation of sin by the sacrifice of Christ, which is done already; he has taken the sins of his people from them to

himself, and has bore them, and carried them away, and removed them out of the sight of divine justice, which is satisfied for them: nor of the taking away of the power and dominion of sin; which is done by the Spirit of God, and the efficacy of his grace on the hearts of converted persons: nor of an extinguishing all sense of sin in men; for none have a quicker sense of it than pardoned sinners, or are more humble on the account of it, or more loath it; but of the taking of it away from the conscience of a sensible truly penitent sinner or backslider, by a fresh application of pardoning grace and mercy: sin is a burden, a heavy one, when the guilt of it is charged and lies upon the conscience; pardon of sin applied is a lifting up, as the word here used signifies, a taking off of this burden from it, a causing it to pass away; which is done by the fresh sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, which purges the conscience from sin, and clears it from the guilt of it, and speaks peace and comfort; and which is the blessing here prayed for, and every backslider, sensible of his case, sees he stands in need of, and even to have “all” taken away; for, if but one sin remains, and the guilt of it continues, he can have no peace, nor stand up under it; but, when God forgives sin, he forgives “all” sin;

and receive [us] graciously; receive into grace and favour, that is, openly and manifestly; the free love and favour of God is always the same, but the manifestations of it are different; sometimes more or less, and sometimes scarce any, if any at all, and is the ease here; and therefore a petition is made for the remembrance of it, for a renewed discovery and application of it: or accept us in a gracious manner; acceptance with God is not on account of the merits of men, but his own grace and mercy; not through any works of righteousness done by them, which are impure and imperfect; but through Christ the Beloved, in whom God is well pleased with the persons, and services, and sacrifices of his people, and receives all for his sake, and which is here asked for; as well as that he would take them into his protection, and open affection. It is, in the original text, only, “receive good”^{f292}; meaning either their good hearts, made so by the grace of God; their broken hearts and contrite spirits, which are sacrifices not despised by him, but acceptable to him through Christ: or their good words they were bid to take, and did take, and use; their good prayers offered up through Christ, in his name, and in the exercise of faith, which are the Lord’s delight: or their good works, done from a principle of love, in faith, to the glory of God, and with which sacrifices he is well pleased: or rather, as the same word signifies, to give as well as receive; (see ~~1988~~ Psalm 68:18

^{<4008>}Ephesians 4:8). It may be rendered, “give good”^{f293}; take good, and give it to us, even all good things, temporal and spiritual, especially all spiritual blessings in Christ; all which good things come from God, and are his gifts; particularly the good Spirit of God, and his grace, which the Lord gives to them that ask; and all supplies of grace from Christ; and more especially, as some interpreters of note explain it, the righteousness of Christ imputed and applied; which goes along with pardoning grace, or the taking away of sin, (^{<3804>}Zechariah 3:4); and is the good, the better, the best robe; a gift, the gift of grace; a blessing received from the Lord, and to be asked for of him:

so will we render the calves of our lips; not calves, bullocks, and oxen, for sacrifice, as under the law; but the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving for pardoning grace, for a justifying righteousness, and for all good things: these are the fruit of the lips, as the apostle interprets it, (^{<3815>}Hebrews 13:15); and which are sacrifices more acceptable to God than calves of a year old, or an ox or bullock that has horns and hoofs, (^{<4631>}Psalm 69:30,31). This shows that the text and context refer to Gospel times, to the times of the Messiah; in which the Jews themselves say all sacrifices will cease but the sacrifice of praise. The Targum is,

“turn to the worship of the Lord, and say, let it be with thee to forgive sins, and may we be received as good, and the words of our lips be accepted with thee as bullocks for good pleasure upon the altar.”

Ver. 3. *Ashur shall not save us*, etc.] This is still a continuation of the words repenting and returning Israel are directed to make use of before the Lord, declaring they would not do any more as they had done; to Assyria, or the kings of Assyria, as the Targum, for help, and desire assistance, and expect deliverance and salvation from thence; (see ^{<3813>}Hosea 5:13 7:11 8:9);

we will not ride upon horses; to seek for help elsewhere; or go to Egypt for them, as they had done; or put their trust in them for safety, in a time of war; or think to make their escape by them when in danger; (see ^{<4908>}Psalm 20:8 ^{<2301>}Isaiah 31:1,3);

neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, [ye are] our gods; that is, say so to, or concerning, their idols, which were made by their hands, or by their orders, as they had formerly done to the golden calf in

the wilderness, and to the calves at Daniel and Bethel; (see ^{<1230>}Exodus 32:4 ^{<1128>}1 Kings 12:28); now, by all these expressions is meant, that they would determine not to put any confidence in any creature, or in any creature performance; that they would not trust in their own merits, but in the mercy of God through Christ for the of their sins; nor in any works of righteousness for their justification before God, and acceptance with him; nor expect salvation in any other way than by the free grace of God, and his abundant mercy in Christ:

for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy; and in thee only; hereby declaring that the Lord was the only Saviour; that there was salvation in Christ, and in no other; and that they would have no other saviour but him; that they would look to the mercy of God proclaimed in him, and communicated from and through him, the mercy seat, and to his mercy alone for eternal life; in whom the most destitute persons, as the fatherless, who are destitute of friends, of help and assistance, of counsel and advice, find favour, kindness, and mercy, even such as are most hopeless and helpless; which is a great encouragement to look to the Lord, to trust in him, and hope in his mercy.

Ver. 4. *I will heal their backslidings*, etc.] This and what follows is the Lord's answer to the above prayer; and this clause particularly is an answer to that petition, "take away all iniquity", (^{<284D>}Hosea 14:2); sins are diseases, natural and hereditary, nauseous and loathsome, mortal, and incurable but by the grace of God, and blood of Christ; backslidings are relapses, which are dangerous things; Christ is the only Physician, who heals all the diseases of sin, and these relapses also; he will do it, he has promised it, and never turns away any that apply to him for it; and which he does by a fresh application of his blood, whereby he takes away sin, heals the conscience wounded with it, and restores peace and comfort; which is a great encouragement to take words, and return unto him; (see ^{<280E>}Hosea 6:1 ^{<34E2>}Jeremiah 3:22 ^{<257I>}Isaiah 57:17, 18);

I will love them freely; this is in answer to that petition, "receive us, graciously"; or "receive good", or rather "give good", (^{<284D>}Hosea 14:2); not that the love of God or Christ begins when sinners repent and turn to him, or he applies his pardoning grace, since his love is from everlasting; but that in so doing he manifests his love, and will continue in it, nor shall anything separate from it: and this love, as it is freely set upon the objects of it, without any merits of theirs, or any motives in them, but flows from

the free sovereign will and pleasure of God in Christ; so it is as freely manifested, and continues upon the same bottom, and is displayed in a most liberal and profuse donation of blessings of grace to them: this love is free in its original, and is liberal and bountiful in the effects of it; and makes the objects of it a free, willing, and bountiful people too:

for mine anger is turned away from him: from Israel, which, under former dispensations of Providence, seemed to be towards him, at least when under his frowns, resentment, and displeasure, as is the case of that people at this day; but when they shall return to the Lord, and he shall manifest and apply his pardoning grace to them, his anger will appear no more, and they shall be in a very happy and comfortable condition, as Israel or the church declares, (^{<3121>}Isaiah 12:1); which refers to the same times as these words do; (see ^{<6126>}Romans 11:26,27); and compare (^{<4882>}Psalm 85:2,3); where a manifestation of pardoning grace is called the Lord's turning himself from the fierceness of his anger; and especially this suits with Gospel times, satisfaction being made for sin by the sacrifice of Christ.

Ver. 5. *I will be as the dew unto Israel,* etc.] To spiritual Israel, to those that return to the Lord, take with them words, and pray unto him, whose backslidings are healed, and they are freely loved; otherwise it is said of apostate Israel or Ephraim, that they were “smitten, [and] their root dried up, [and bore] no fruit”, (^{<3196>}Hosea 9:16). These words, and the whole, context, respect future times, as Kimchi observes; even the conversion of Israel in the latter day, when they shall partake of all the blessings of grace, signified by the metaphors used in this and the following verses. These words are a continuation of the answer to the petitions put into the mouths of converted ones, promising them many favours, expressed in figurative terms; and first by “the dew”, which comes from heaven, is a great blessing of God, and is quickening, very refreshing and fruitful to the earth: and the Lord is that unto his people as the dew is to herbs, plants, and trees of the earth; he is like unto it in his free love and layout, and the discoveries of it to them; which, like the dew, is of and from himself alone; is an invaluable blessing; better than life itself; and is not only the cause of quickening dead sinners, but of reviving, cheering, and refreshing the drooping spirits of his people; and is abundance, never fails, but always continues, (^{<2192>}Proverbs 19:12); and so he is in the blessings of his grace, and the application of them; which are in heavenly places, in Christ, and come down from thence, and in great abundance, like the drops of dew; and fall silently, insensibly, and unawares, particularly regenerating grace; and are very cheering and

exhilarating, as forgiveness of sin, a justifying righteousness, adoption, etc. (^{453B}Deuteronomy 33:13); and also in the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which distil as dew; these are of God, and come down from heaven; seem little in themselves, but of great importance to the conversion of sinners, and comfort of saints; bring many blessings in them, and cause great joy and fruitfulness wherever they come with power, (^{453D}Deuteronomy 32:2). The Targum is,

“my Word shall be as dew to Israel;”

the essential Word of God, the Messiah; of whose incarnation of a virgin some interpret this; having, like the dew, no father but God, either in his divine or human nature; but rather it is to be understood of the blessings of grace he is to his people as Mediator; being to them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, and every other, even their all it, all:

he shall grow as the lily; to which the church and people of God are sometimes compared, especially for their beauty and comeliness in Christ, Solomon in all his glory not being arrayed like one of these; particularly for their unspotted purity, being clothed with fine linen, clean and white, the white raiment of Christ’s righteousness, and having their garments washed and made white in his blood; (see ^{200B}Song of Solomon 2:1,2,16); and here for its growth. The root of the lily lies buried in the earth a long time, when it seems as if it was dead; but on a sudden it springs out of the earth, and runs up to a great height, and becomes very flourishing; which is not owing to itself, it “toils not”; but to the dew of heaven: so God’s elect in a state of nature are dead, but, being quickened by the grace of God, spring up on a sudden, and grow very fast; which is not owing to themselves, but to the dews of divine grace, the bright shining of the sun of righteousness upon them, and to the influences of the blessed Spirit; and so they grow up on high, into their Head Christ Jesus, and rise up in their affections, desires, faith and hope to heavenly things, to the high calling of God in Christ, and become fruitful in grace, and in good works. The Targum is,

“they shall shine as the lily;”

(see ^{416D}Matthew 6:29);

and cast forth his roots as Lebanon; as the tree, or trees, of Lebanon, as the Targum; and so Kimchi, who adds, which are large, and their roots many; or as the roots of the trees of Lebanon, so Jarchi; like the cedars

there, which, as the word here used signifies, “struck”^{f294} their roots firm in that mountain, and stood strong and stable, let what winds and tempests soever blow: thus, as in the following, what one metaphor is deficient in, another makes up. The lily has but a weak root, and is easily up; but the cedars in Lebanon had roots firm and strong, to which the saints are sometimes compared, as here; (see ^{<4922>}Psalm 92:12); and this denotes their permanency and final perseverance; who are rooted in the love of God, which is like a root underground from all eternity, and sprouts forth in regeneration, and is the source of all grace; is itself immovable, and in it the people of God are secured, and can never be rooted out; and they may be said to “strike” their roots in it, as the phrase here, when they exercise: a strong faith in it, and are firmly persuaded of their interest in it; (see ^{<4817>}Ephesians 3:17,18 ^{<4838>}Romans 8:38,39); they are also rooted in Christ, who is the root of Jesse, of David, and of all the saints; from whom they have their life, their nourishment and fruitfulness, and where they remain unmoved, and strike their roots in him, by renewed acts of faith on him, claiming their interest in him; and are herein so strongly rooted and grounded, that all the winds and storms of sin, Satan, and the world, cannot eradicate them; nay, as trees are more firmly rooted by being shaken, so are they; (see ^{<5017>}Colossians 2:7 ^{<2373>}Isaiah 37:31). The Targum is,

“they shall dwell in the strength of their land, as a tree of Lebanon, which sends forth its branch.”

Ver. 6. *His branches shall spread*, etc.] As the well rooted cedars in Lebanon; (see ^{<4246>}Numbers 24:6). This respects the propagation of the church of God, and the interest of Christ in the world, as in the first times of the Gospel, and will be in the latter day; when the Gospel shall be spread everywhere; churches set up in all places; the Jews converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; and these like spreading branches, and fruitful boughs, abounding in grace and good works. The Targum is,

“they shall multiply or increase with sons and daughters:”

and his beauty shall be as the olive tree; which lies in its being laden with excellent fruit, and being always green; for which reasons particular believers, and the whole church of God, are sometimes compared to it; having that fatness in them, with which God and men are honoured; and that true grace, which is signified by oil in the vessels of the heart, and is called the unction and anointing of the Holy One; and they persevering in

this grace to the end, which is evergreen and durable, immortal, and dies not; (see ^{<4518>}Psalm 52:8 ^{<24116>}Jeremiah 11:16). Here again it may be observed, that the trees of Lebanon, though they had strong roots, and spreading branches, yet were not fruitful; and the deficiency of that metaphor is supplied by this of the olive:

and his smell as Lebanon; as the trees of Lebanon, the cedars, trees of frankincense, and other odoriferous trees and plants, which grew upon it; here what is wanting in the olive tree, whose smell is not so grateful, is made up by this simile of the trees of Lebanon, and the smell of them; which may denote the sweet and grateful smell the Lord smells in his people, or his gracious acceptance of them in Christ; whose garments of righteousness and salvation on them are as the smell of Lebanon; and whose graces in them exceed the smell of all spices; and whose prayers are odours, and their praises a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour to God; (see ^{<22410>}Song of Solomon 4:10,11 ^{<4618>}Revelation 5:8 8:3,4 ^{<4015>}1 Peter 2:5). Some render it, “as incense”,^{f295} called “lebonah” in Hebrew, from whence the mountain is thought to have its name, frankincense growing upon it. So the Targum,

“and their smell as the smell of the incense of spices.”

Jarchi says, as the sanctuary, which was made of the cedars of Lebanon.

Ver. 7. *They that dwell under his shadow shall return*, etc.] Either under the shadow of Lebanon, as Japhet and Jarchi; the shadow of that mountain, or of the trees that grew upon it; or under the shadow of Israel, the church, to which young converts have recourse, and under which they sit with pleasure; or rather under the shadow of the Lord Israel was called to return unto, and now return, (^{<2840>}Hosea 14:1,2); as the Israelites will in the latter day. So the Targum,

“and they shall be gathered out of the midst of their captivity, they shall dwell under the shadow of their Messiah;”

thus truly gracious persons sit under the shadow of Christ, who come to themselves, and return unto the Lord; even under the shadow of his word and ordinances, where they desire to sit, and do sit with delight and pleasure, as well as in the greatest safety; and find it a very refreshing and comfortable shadow to them; even a shadow from the heat of avenging justice, a fiery law, the fiery darts of Satan, and the fury of the world; and, like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land, exceeding pleasing and

cheering to weary travellers; (see ^{f2118}Song of Solomon 2:3) (^{f2304}Isaiah 25:4,5 32:2);

they shall revive [as] the corn: which first dies, and then is quickened; or which, after a cold nipping winter, at spring revives again: thus do believers under the dews of divine grace, under the shadow of Christ, and the influences of his Spirit: or, “shall revive [with] corn”,^{f296}; by means of it; by which may be signified the corn of heaven, angels’ food, the hidden manna, the Gospel of Christ, and Christ himself, the bread of life; by which the spirits of his people are revived, their souls upheld in life, and their graces quickened; which they find and eat, and it is the joy and rejoicing of their hearts:

and grow as the vine: which, though weak, and needs support, and its wood unprofitable; yet grows and spreads very much, and brings forth rich fruit in clusters: so the saints, though they are weak in themselves, and need divine supports, and when they have done all they can are unprofitable servants; yet through the power of divine grace, which is like the dew, they grow in every grace, and are filled with the blessings of it, and bring forth much fruit to the glory of God:

and the scent thereof [shall be] as the wine of Lebanon; like the wine of those vines which grow on Mount Lebanon, and judged to be the best. On Mount Lebanon, about the midway between the top and the bottom of it, there is now a convent called Canobine, situated in a very pleasant place; and Leviticus Bruyn in his travels relates, that it is preferable to all other places on account of its wines, which are the richest and finest in the world; they are very sweet, of a red colour, and so oily that they stick to the glass. At Lebanon was a city called by the Greeks Ampeloessa, from the excellency of its wine, as Grotius from Pliny^{f297} observes. Gabriel Sionita^{f298} assures us, that even to this day the wines of Libanus are in good reputation. Kimchi relates from Asaph, a physician, that the wines of Lebanon, Hermon, and Carmel, and of the mountains of Israel and Jerusalem, and of the mountains of Samaria, and of the mountains of Capthor Mizraim, were the best of wines, and exceeded all others for scent, taste, and medicine. Japhet interprets it, the smell of their vine afar off was as the wine of Lebanon; and so Kimchi, the smell of the wine of the vine, to which Israel is compared, is like the smell of the wine of Lebanon. This may denote the savouriness of truly converted gracious souls, of their graces, doctrines, life, and conversation. Some choose to render it, “their

memory^{f299} [shall be] as the wine of Lebanon”; so the Targum interprets it of

“the memory of their goodness;”

the saints obtain a good report through faith, and have a good name, better than precious ointment; their memory is blessed; they, are had in everlasting remembrance; the memory of them is not only dear to the people of God in after ages; but the memory of their persons, and of their works, is exceeding grateful to God and Christ.

Ver. 8. *Ephraim [shall say], what have I to do any more with idols?* etc.]

This is to be understood, not of apostate Ephraim, as in the times of the prophet, who was so wedded and glued to the idols, that there was no hope of getting him from them; and therefore is bid to let him alone, (^{<2847>}Hosea 4:17); but of Ephraim Israel returning to God at his call, under the influence of his grace, in the latter day, (^{<2848>}Hosea 14:1,2). Idols are the same with the works of their hands, (^{<2849>}Hosea 14:3); and to be interpreted, not of graven or molten images, to the worship of which the Jews have not been addicted since their captivity to this day; (see ^{<2850>}Hosea 3:4); but of the idols of their hearts, their impiety, their unbelief, their rejection of the Messiah, which, at the time of their conversion, they will loath, abhor, and mourn over; likewise the traditions of their elders, they are now zealous and tenacious of, and prefer even to the written word; but will now relinquish them, and embrace the Gospel of Christ; as well as the idol of their own righteousness they have always endeavoured to establish; but shall now renounce, and receive Christ as the Lord their righteousness. The like to this is to be found in common in all truly penitent and converted sinners; who, being made sensible of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, detest and abhor it, and declare they will have nothing to do with it; not but that it continues in them, and has to do with them, and they with that; yet not so as to live and walk in it; to yield their members as instruments of it; to serve and obey it as their master; to make provision for it, and to have the course of their lives under the direction and power of it; and so likewise, being convinced of the imperfection and insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them, they will have nothing to do with that in the business of justification before God, and acceptance with him: now these are the words of the Lord, affirming what Ephraim should say, as Kimchi rightly observes; he promises for him, as he well might, since it is he that gives repentance to Israel, and works in his people principles of grace, and

enables them both to will and to do, to make such holy resolutions, and perform them. Some render the words, “O Ephraim, what have I to do”^{f300}? etc. and take them to be words of God concerning himself, declaring he would have nothing to do with idols, nor suffer them in his service, nor should they; for “what concord hath Christ with Belial?” or “what agreement hath the temple of God with idols?” (⁴⁰⁶⁵2 Corinthians 6:15,16); but the former sense is much best; rather what Schmidt suggests is more agreeable, who, rendering the words in the same way, makes them to be the words of a believing Gentile returning and dwelling under the shadow of Israel; so he interprets (²⁸⁴⁷Hosea 14:7), and takes this to be the language of such an one throughout. The Targum is,

“they of the house of Israel shall say, what [is it] to us to serve idols any more?”

I have heard [him]; says the Lord; Ephraim bemoaning himself, repenting of his sins, and confessing them; his prayers for pardon and acceptance, and the resolutions made by him in the strength of divine grace, (²⁸⁴²Hosea 14:2,3,8); (see ²⁸¹⁸Jeremiah 31:18-20); and this is what his idols he once served could not do, who had ears, but heard not; but the Lord not only heard, but answered, and granted his request. So the Targum,

“I by my Word will receive the prayer of Israel, and will have mercy on him:”

and observed [him]; looked at him, and on him; with an eye of pity and compassion; with a favourable and propitious look, as the Lord does towards those that are poor, and of a contrite spirit; observed the ways and steps he took in returning to him; marked his tears and humiliations, groans and moans, and took notice of his wants in order to supply them;

I [am] like a green fir tree: these are the words of the Lord continued; though some take them to be the words of Ephraim; or, as Schmidt, of the Gentile believer, like those of David, (²⁸³⁸Psalms 52:8); but they best agree with Christ, who may be compared to such a tree, as he is to many others in Scripture; because a choice one, as he is to his Father, and to all believers, chosen and precious, lovely and beloved; a tall tree, so Christ is highly exalted as Mediator, higher than the kings of the earth, above the angels in heaven, yea, higher than the heavens. The boughs of this tree, as Jarchi and Kimchi observe, bend downward so low as to be laid hold on; Christ, though the high and lofty One, dwells with humble souls, and

suffers himself to be laid hold upon by the faith of everyone that comes to him. Pliny says^{f301}, that this tree is of a cheerful aspect, smooth, and scarce any knots upon it; and its leaves so thick that a shower of rain will not pass through it: Christ is most amiable, and altogether lovely to look at in his person and fulness; and he looks in a loving smiling manner upon his people; he is without any knot of sin or corruption in him, as to principle or practice; and is a delightful shade from the wrath of God, or rage of man, from the heat of a fiery law, and the darts of Satan: and as this tree, as here, is ever green, so he is always the same; he ever lives, and his people in him, and by him; his fulness always continues to supply them. Once more, the fir tree is the habitation of the stork, an unclean creature by the law of God; so Christ is the dwelling place of sinners, he receives them, and converses with them, (<39417>Psalm 104:17). The Septuagint version renders it, “as a thick juniper tree”: which naturalists say^{f302} has such a virtue in it, as by the smell to drive away serpents. So the old serpent the devil was drove away by Christ in the wilderness, in the garden, and on the cross; and resisting by faith, holding out his blood and righteousness, causes him to flee from the saints, The Arabic version is, “as the fruitful cypress tree”; which is of a good smell, and its wood very durable; and so may be expressive of the savour of Christ, his righteousness and sacrifice, the graces of his Spirit, and of his duration. Some take this to be a promise that Ephraim should be as a green fir tree, so Aben Ezra; with which agrees the Targum,

“I by my word will make him as the beautiful fir tree;”

and to which sometimes the saints are compared; (see <38419>Isaiah 41:19 55:13 60:13); and this being a tree that bears no fruit, it follows, to make up that defect in the metaphor,

from me is thy fruit found; from Christ are all the spiritual blessings of grace, peace, pardon, righteousness, adoption, a right and meetness for eternal life, and that itself; all the fruits and graces of the Spirit, as faith, hope, love, etc. and all good works, which spring from union with him, are done in his strength, and influenced by his grace and example; (see <30111>Philippians 1:11).

Ver. 9. *Who [is] wise, and he shall understand these [things]? prudent, and he shall know them?* etc.] Contained in this book, and particularly in this chapter; which expresses so much of the goodness of God and grace of Christ to Israel; though it may be applied to the whole Scripture, and to all

the mysteries and doctrines of the Gospel, respecting Christ and his grace; and be a recommendation of these to the consideration of every wise and prudent man; where he will find enough to exercise his wisdom and understanding; though he need not be discouraged in his search and inquiry into them. It suggests as if there were but few such wise persons, and that they are the only wise men that do know and understand these things; and all others are but fools, let them be thought as wise as they will:

for the ways of the Lord [are] right; straight, plain, even, according to the rules of, justice and equity; there is no unrighteousness in them; none in the ways in which he himself walks; either in his ways and methods of grace, his decrees and purposes, his counsels and covenant; or in his providential dispensations; nor in those he directs others to walk in, the paths of faith and doctrine; or the ways of his commandments:

and the just shall walk in them; such as are, justified by the righteousness of Christ, and have ill's grace wrought in them, and live righteously; these walk, and continue to walk, in the ways of God; which shows that the doctrine of justification by Christ's implored righteousness is no licentious doctrine:

but the transgressors shall fall therein; the transgressors of the law of God, not being used to his ways, as Kimchi's father observes, stumble in them and fall; or rather, as Jarchi and the Targum, they fall into hell, into ruin and destruction, because they walk not in them; though the sense seems to be, that as Christ himself, so his ways and his word, his doctrines and his ordinances, are stumbling blocks to wicked men, at which they stumble, and fall, and perish; (see ^{<123>}Luke 2:34) (^{<103>}Romans 9:33 ^{<108>}1 Peter 2:8).

FOOTNOTES

- ft1 -- Contr. Apion. l. 1. c. 8.
- ft2 -- Acts vii. 42.
- ft3 -- Tzemach David, fol. 12. 2.
- ft4 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 7.
- ft5 -- Scripture Chronology, B. 6. ch. 2. p. 645.
- ft6 -- Deuteronomy Prophet. Vit. etc. c. 11.
- ft7 -- Deuteronomy Vita & Mort. Sanct. c. 41.
- ft8 -- Shalsheth Hakabala, fol. 12. 1.
- ft9 -- [çwhb εν ωσηε, Sept.; in Hosea, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Tarnovius.
- ft10 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 2. 46. Aben Ezra & Kimchi in loc.
- ft11 -- A rad. rmg “perfecit, desiit”, Gussetius.
- ft12 -- Vox μyl bd “significat massas ficuum compressarum et siccatarum”, Rivetus, Tarnovius.
- ft13 -- A rad. [rz “seminavit, disseminavit”, Schmidt.
- ft14 -- Theatrum Terrae Sanctae, p. 35, 37.
- ft15 -- Dr. Shaw’s Travels, tom. 2. c. 1. p. 275. Ed. 2.
- ft16 -- Maundrell’s Journey from Aleppo, etc. p. 57. Ed. 7.
- ft17 -- Deuteronomy locis Hebraicis, fol. 92. I.
- ft18 -- Antiqu. l. 8. c. 13. sect. 6, 8.
- ft19 -- Tyr. Hist. l. 22. c. 26.
- ft20 -- I a[rzy qm[b “propter vallem Jisreelis”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator,
- ft21 -- μhl açā açī “adducendo adducam contra eos”, Munster; “importando importabo eis”, Drusius; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft22 -- “Obliviscendo obliviscar eorum”, V. L. Pagninus.

- ft23 -- “Quamvis omnino condonaverim eis”, Piscator; “quamvis haetenus condonando condonaverim eis”, so some in Drusius.
- ft24 -- **μkl hyha al** “non ero vester”, Pagninus; “nec ego sum futurus vester”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft25 -- Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 53. 3.
- ft26 -- **ḅah ʿm** “e terra”.
- ft27 -- **yk** “quamvis”; so some in Drusius, Rivet.
- ft28 -- **hynpm** “a facie sua”, Calvin, Pagninus, Piscator, Cocceius; “a faciebus suis”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft29 -- **hçybwh** “pudfecit”, Junius apud Rivet.
- ft30 -- “Confusa, [vel] pudefacta”, Pagninus, Montanus; “pudore suffusa est”, Gussetius.
- ft31 -- Joseph. Antiqu. l. 17. c. 13, sect. 2.
- ft32 -- **yywqç** “potationes meas”, Montanus, “potiones meas”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “potus meos”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft33 -- **ytj ql w bwça** “iterum capiam”, Drusius; “recipiam”, Liveus.
- ft34 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 6. c. 1. sect. 1.
- ft35 -- **ʿkl** “atqui, [vel] attamen”, Glassius.
- ft36 -- Hist. Eccles. l. 3. c. 5.
- ft37 -- **hytpm** “persuadendo inducam eam”, Munster; “persuadebo illi”, Calvin; “persuadens, [vel] persuadebo illi”, Schmidt.
- ft38 -- **rbdmh hytkl hw** “postquam duxero eam in desertum”, Calvin, Drusius, “quum deduxero”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft39 -- **hbl l [** “ad cor ejus”, Pagniaius, Cocceius; “super cor ejus”, Munster, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft40 -- Shirhashhirim Rabba, fol. 11. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2.
- ft41 -- Antiqu. l. 5. c. 1. sect. 10, 14.
- ft42 -- Comment. in loc.
- ft43 -- Deuteronomy locis Hebr. fol. 88. B. tom. 3.

- ft44 -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 1.
- ft45 -- **yçya** “maritus meus”, Vatablus, Pagninus, Montanus, “marite mi”, Schmidt.
- ft46 -- “Vir meus”, V. L. “mi vir”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Liveleus.
- ft47 -- **hnwmab** “in fide”, V. L. etc.
- ft48 -- **hn[a** “respondebo”, Calvin, Drusius, Tarnovius, Cocceius.
- ft49 -- **µymç ta hn[a** “respondebo coelo, et illud respondebit terrae”, Cocceius, Drusius.
- ft50 -- **µynp µhw** “quamvis respiciant”, Piscator.
- ft51 -- **µybn[yçyça** “dolia uvarum”, Pagninus, Montanus, Zanchius; “soa”, some in Drusius.
- ft52 -- Laertius in Vit. Diogenis, p. 382.
- ft53 -- Travels, part 2. B. 1. ch. 3. p. 11.
- ft54 -- Pirke Eliezer, c. 36. fol. 40. 1.
- ft55 -- Zohar in Exod. fol. 93. 3.
- ft56 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 5. 1.
- ft57 -- T. Bab Megillah, fol. 18. 1.
- ft58 -- Mashmiah Jeshuah, fol. 55. 4.
- ft59 -- R. Isaac Chizzuk Emunah, par. 1. p. 44.
- ft60 -- **wbwj l aw hwby l a wdj pw** “pavebunt ad Dominum”, Montanus; “providi accedent ad Jehovam, et ad bonitatem ejus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius; “et cum timore venient ad Jehovam, et ad bonum ejus”, Schmidt; so Ben Melech interprets it, “they shall fear, and be afraid of him, flow to him, and to his goodness”; and which, he says, Saadiah explains of his glory, agreeably to Exod. xxxiii. 19.
- ft61 -- **wxrp** “latrocinantur, [vel] latrones agunt”, Schmidt
- ft62 -- **wpsay** “congregabuntur”, V. L.; “colligentur”, Montanus, Vatablus, Drusius, Schmidt.
- ft63 -- **çya hkwy l aw** “et ne reprehendito quisquam, [scil.] nos”, Schmidt.

- ft64 -- **μwyh** “hodie”, Munster, Montanus, Drusius, Tarnovius, Rivet; “hoc tempore”, Pagninus. So Kimchi and Ben Melech.
- ft65 -- **Æasamaw**; the last **a** is superfluous; the reason of the word being so written. Ben Melech confesses his ignorance of.
- ft66 -- **yna μg** “etiam ego”, Pagninus, Montanus, Zanchius, Cocceius, Rivet, Schmidt.
- ft67 -- **wçpn waçy μnw [l aw** “et ad iniquitatem eorum levaverunt animam suam”, Montanus, Pagninus, Tigurine version; “attollunt”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “et ad iniquitatem eorum tollunt anumam suam”, Schmidt.
- ft68 -- **wykrd wyl [ytdqpw** “et visitabo super eum vias ejus”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft69 -- **wl byça wyl l [mw** “et opera ejus redire faciam”, Zanchius.
- ft70 -- **rmçl wbz [hwhy ta** “Jehovam desierunt observare”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Rivetus, Liveleus; “ad observandum”, Schmidt; “reliquerunt observare”, Cocceius; “deseruerunt observare”, so some in Vatablus.
- ft71 -- **bl j qy** “occupant cor”, so some in Calvin and Rivet; “occupavit cor”, Schmidt.
- ft72 -- **wx [b** “in ligno suo”, V. L. Montanus, Calvin; “liguum suum”, Pagninus, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft73 -- Horat. Sermon. l. 1. Satyr. 8.
- ft74 -- Alexand. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 26.
- ft75 -- Arnobius adv. Gentes, l. 6. p. 232.
- ft76 -- Moses Kotsensis praecept. neg. 52.
- ft77 -- Deuteronomy Moribus German. c. 10.
- ft78 -- Apud Drusium in Deut. xviii. 10.
- ft79 -- “Lucus in urbe fuit media, laetissimus umbra: Hic templum Junoni ingens Sidonia Dido Condebat.” Virgil. Aeneid. l. 1.
- ft80 -- Vid. Chartarii Imagines Deorum, p. 5.

- ft81 -- “Sicubi magna Jovis antiquo robore quercus, Ingenteis tendat ramos-----”, Georgic. l. 3. “Altissima quercus erat Jovis signum”, Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 4. c. 12.
- ft82 -- Vid. Pausan. Attica, sive l. 1. p. 30. Achaica, sive l. 7. p. 438. Arcadica, sive l. 8. p. 490. & Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. l. 6. c. 2.
- ft83 -- Nat. Hist. l. 16. c. 44.
- ft84 -- “Qua pinus ingens albaque populus, Umbram hospitem consociare amant Ramis-----” Horat.
- ft85 -- “Populus Alcidae gratissima”, Virgil. Bucolic. Eclog. 7. Vid. Aeneid. l. 1. “Herculi populus”, Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 12. c. 1.
- ft86 -- Pausan. Eliac. l. sive l. 5. p. 313.
- ft87 -- Aeneid. l. 6.
- ft88 -- **μkytwl k** “nurus vestrae”, Montanus, Vatablus, Piscator, Liveleus, Cocceius, Schmidt, Gussetius.
- ft89 -- So Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft90 -- Vid. R. Sol. Urbin, Ohel Moed, fol. 43. 2.
- ft91 -- T. Hieros Avoda Zara, fol. 43. 1.
- ft92 -- **hrrs** “refractaria”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Schmidt; “indomita”, Calvin, Drusius.
- ft93 -- **ht[w** “quare, ideo, nunc itaque”, Schmidt; “igitur nunc”, Cocceius.
- ft94 -- **μabs rs** “recessit potus eorum”, Montanus, Drusius; “recessit vinum eorum”, Schmidt.
- ft95 -- “Recedere fecit inerum eorum”, Tarnovius; “refractarium est merum eorum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft96 -- **hyngm** “clypei ejus”, Montanus, Vatablus; “scuta ejus”, Drusius, Tarnovius; “cujus clypei”, Cocceius.
- ft97 -- **hypnkb htwa j wr rrx** “ligavit illa ventum in alis suis”, Munster, Calvin, Tigurine version.
- ft98 -- **μynhkh** “significat sacerdotes et principes”, vid. 2 Sam. viii. 18. “Sacerdotes ac domum regis”, i.e. “regem cum principibus et aulicis”, Liveleus.

- ft99 -- Hist. Heb. l. 4. c. 25. p. 635.
- ft100 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 4. c. 1. sect. 9.
- ft101 -- Jarchi ex Tanehuma, Abendana ex Midrash.
- ft102 -- So R. Sol. Urbin. fol. 68. 2.
- ft103 -- **wynpb hn** [“respondebit”, Montanus, Zanchius, Tarnovius, Rivet, Schmidt; “respondit”, Cocceius.
- ft104 -- Deuteronomy Bello Jud. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 1.
- ft105 -- Antiqu. l. 5. c. 2. sect. 8.
- ft106 -- Apud Reland Palestina Illustrata, l. 3. tom. 2. p. 963.
- ft107 -- Apud Reland. ib. p. 637.
- ft108 -- **bry Æl m l a** “ad regem”, Jarchi, Zanchius, Liveleus, Drusius; so Luther in Tarnovius.
- ft109 -- **bry** “altorem”, V. L. “qui eum vindicaret”, Tigurine version; “propugnaturum”, Junius & Tremellius; “qui litigaret”, Piscator.
- ft110 -- Onomast. Sacr. p. 219.
- ft111 -- Ebr. Comment. p. 780.
- ft112 -- Onomast. Sacr. p. 430.
- ft113 -- Comment. in Isa. viii. 20.
- ft114 -- **hwby ta t[dl hpdn h[dnw** “sciemusque, sequemur ad sciendum Dominum”, Montanus; “et cognoscemus, et persequemur ad cognoscendum Jehovam”, Zanchius; “sciemus persequemur”, Liveleus.
- ft115 -- “Cognoscamus, [sive] agnoscamus, et persequatur scientiam Dominis”, Schmidt.
- ft116 -- **wkn** “firmum certum notat”, sic quidam in Schmidt; “firmatus ac stabilitus”, Tarnovius.
- ft117 -- **Æl** “in tuum commodum”, Schmidt.
- ft118 -- **µdak** “sicut Adam”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Tigurine version, Castilio, Grotius, Cocceius.
- ft119 -- “Tanquam hominis, [sub.] pectum”, Vatablus, Junius & Tremellius, Zanchius.

- ft120 -- $\hat{w}a\ yl\ [p\ tyrq$ “civitas operantium idolum”, V. L.
- ft121 -- $\mu dm\ hbq[$ “callida et astuta sanguine”, so some in Vatablus; “callida sanguine”, Castslio.
- ft122 -- “Calcata a sanguine”, Piscator.
- ft123 -- “Vestigiata a sanguine”, Capellus, Tarnovius; “vestigis sanguinolentis”, Juuius & Tremellius.
- ft124 -- $hmk\zeta$ “Sichemam versus”, Gussetius, Schmidt; approved by Reinbeck. Deuteronomy Accent. Heb. p. 442. “qua itur Sichem”, Tigurine version; “qua via ad Shechemum [factum] occidunt”, Junius & Tremellius; “quae ducit ad Sichermum”, Piscator. So Abendana.
- ft125 -- “Sicemice”, so some in Drusius.
- ft126 -- $hyrwr\ [\zeta\ a\ r\ [\zeta$ “pilus”.
- ft127 -- μg “sed”, V. L. Munster, Grotius.
- ft128 -- $ybw\zeta b$ “cum ego reduco”, Calvin.
- ft129 -- $yapr\ k$ “dum curo”, Junius & Tremellius; “dum medeor”, Piscator, Zanchius, Calvin; “quando sanavi, vel sano”, Schmidt.
- ft130 -- $\mu j\ b\ dwdg\ j\ \zeta p\ awby\ bngw$ “ideo fur ingreditur”, Munster. So some in Drusius.
- ft131 -- $\mu bbl\ l\ wrmay\ l\ bw$ “et non dicebant ad cor suum”, Cocceius; “et non dicunt cordi suo”, Schmidt.
- ft132 -- $\mu hyl\ l\ [m\ \mu wbs\ ht[$ “quod circumdent ipsos opera eorum”, Schmidt.
- ft133 -- $wnkl\ m\ \mu wy$ “dies regis nostri”, V. L. Calvin, Tigurine version, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft134 -- $\hat{y}ym\ tmj\ \mu yr\zeta\ wl\ j\ h$ “argotarunt principes a calore vini”, Liveleus; “morbo afficiunt se calore ex vino”, Tarnovius.
- ft135 -- “Quem infirmant principes aestu a vino”, Cocceius; “infirmum facerunt”, Munster; “infirmant”, Schmidt.
- ft136 -- $l\ l\ wby\ awh$ “miscebit sese”, Zanchius.

- ft137 -- **wb hqꝛz hbyç** “canities sparsit se in eo”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt; “cani sparsi sunt”, Tigurine version; “canities aspergit eum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; so Latin writers: “sparsit et nigras alba senecta comas”. Propert. 1. 3. Eleg. 4. “Jam mihi deterior canis aspergitur aetas”. Ovid. de Ponto, 1. 1. Eleg. 5.
- ft138 -- **μdpa yknaw** “et ego redimerem eos?” so some in Rivet.
- ft139 -- **μτ[wrz ytzj ytrsy ynaW** “castigavi”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Vatablus, Cocceius, Tarnovius.
- ft140 -- **l [al** “non supra”, Montanus; “non sursum”, Deuteronomy Dieu, Gussetius; “non erecte”, Cocceius.
- ft141 -- **μyꝛxm Ḥab μg[l wz** “haec, [seu] quae est subsannatio, [sicut olim] in terra Aegypti”, Schmidt.
- ft142 -- **rpwç Ækj l a** “adhibita palato tuo buccina”, Junius & Tremellius; “adhibe palato buccinam”, Deuteronomy Dieu; “ad palatum tuum buccinam”, Schmidt.
- ft143 -- **hwby tyb l [rçnk** “similis aquilae in domum Jehovae”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft144 -- “Super domum Domini”, Pagninus, Montanus, Cocceius, Schmidt; “contra domum Jehovae”, Liveleus.
- ft145 -- **l arçy Æwn[dy yhl a wq[zy yl** “ad me clamant, Deus mi, novimus te nos Israel”, Deuteronomy Dieu; “clamabunt ad me, O Deus meus, nos Israelitae cognoscimus te”, Tigurine version, so Tarnovius; “mihi vocant, Deus mi, cognovimus, [vel] agnoscimus te Israel”, vel “nos Israel, seu Israelitae”, Schmidt.
- ft146 -- **bwj l arçy j nz** “deseruit Israel bonum, i. e. Deum”, Vatablus, Munster, Tarnovius, Zanchius.
- ft147 -- “Abominatus est”, Calvin, Zanchius.
- ft148 -- **Æl g[j nz** “dereliquit vitulus te”, Lutherus; “descruit te vitulus tuus”, Schmidt.
- ft149 -- “Elongavit sc. hostis, vitalum tuum”, Schindler.
- ft150 -- **^wyqn** “munditiem”, Calvin, Rivet, Schmidt.
- ft151 -- **ytm d[** “quousque?” Zanchius, Pareus, Cocceius.

- ft152 -- **^wyqn wl kwy al** “non possunt innocentiam praestare”, Cocceius; “quamdiu non poterunt animum adjungere ad innocentiam”, Zanchius; “usquedum non poterunt ferre innocentiam”, Pareus.
- ft153 -- **yk** “nam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius; “quia”, Schmidt; “quoniam”, Pagninus, Montanus.
- ft154 -- **wl [hmh yk** “quamvis, etiamsi ascenderint”; so Schmidt observes it may be rendered, though he chooses to render it by “quando”, “when they should go up”, etc.
- ft155 -- **wl ddwb arp** “erunt onager, qui solitarius sibi est”, Schmidt.
- ft156 -- Hierozoic. par. 1. l. 3. c. 16. col. 870.
- ft157 -- Tishbi, p. 267.
- ft158 -- **wl j yw** “incipient”, Calvin; “ceperunt enim paululum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, Drusius, Tarnovius, so Ben Melech.
- ft159 -- **j [m wl j yw** “et remanebunt pauci”, Schmidt; a rad. **l wj** “durare, permanere”.
- ft160 -- **aj j l twj bzm wl wyh** “santo ergo illi altaria ad peccandum”, Rivet.
- ft161 -- **wl kayw rçb wj bzy ybhbh yj bz** “quod attinet ad sacrificia donariorum meorum, sacrificant illi quidem carnem, et comedunt”, Piscator, Deuteronomy Dieu; “quantum ad sacrificia”, etc. Schmidt. So Reinbeck. Deuteronomy Accent. Hebr. p. 445.
- ft162 -- **wbwçy µyr xm hmh** “illi in Aegyptum redeunt”, Cocceius; “revertuntur”, Schmidt. So Tarnovius.
- ft163 -- **l yg l a** “super similitudine, [seu] idolo” Schmidt.
- ft164 -- **l yg** signifies a likeness of age, stature, and complexion, in Dan. i. 10. an idol is the similitude or likeness of anything in heaven or is earth, Exod. xx. 4.
- ft165 -- **hb çj ky** “mentietur in ea”, Pagninus, Montanus, Zanchius; “mentietur isti”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Liveleus, Schmidt.
- ft166 -- Deuteronomy Iside & Osir. p. 359.
- ft167 -- Geograph. l. 17. p. 555.

- ft168 -- Euterpe, sive l. 2. c. 8. 126, 127.
- ft169 -- Bibliothec. l. 1. p 57.
- ft170 -- Nat. Hist. l. 36. c. 12.
- ft171 -- Animadv. Philol. in Job, p. 78.
- ft172 -- **wab hmh** “ingressi sunt”, Pagninus, Montanus, Calvin, Drusius.
- ft173 -- Annotations on Numb. xxv. 3.
- ft174 -- Racenatensis in Capito, apud Drusium in loc.
- ft175 -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 4.
- ft176 -- Perush in Numb. xxv. 3.
- ft177 -- Moreh Nevochim, par. 3. c. 45. p. 477.
- ft178 -- Origin. l. 8. c. 11. p. 70.
- ft179 -- Deuteronomy Dis Syris, Syntagma 1. c. 5. p. 162, 163. See Cumberland’s Sanchoniatho, p. 73, etc.
- ft180 -- **µdam** “ab homine”, Montanus, Tigurine version, Schmidt; “ut non sint homines”, Pagninus.
- ft181 -- **rwxl ytyar rçak** “quando vidi usque ad Tyrum”, Schmidt.
- ft182 -- **ˆtt hm µhl ˆt** “da eis quod daturus es”, Junius & Tremellius, Vatablus, Grotius; “da illis id quod dabis”, Schmidt.
- ft183 -- **yk** “ideo”, Rivet.
- ft184 -- **µyrrs µhyrç** “Sharehem Sorerim”.
- ft185 -- **qqwb ˆpg** “vitis evacuens”, Drusius, Rivetus, Schmidt; so Stockius, p. 149.
- ft186 -- So Calvin.
- ft187 -- **wl hwçy yrp** “fructum aequat sibi”, Mercerus; “fracture facit similem sibi”, Schmidt.
- ft188 -- **µbl ql j** “adblanditur cor eorum”, Schmidt.
- ft189 -- **wmçay ht [** “nunc desolabuntur”, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Drusius; so Kimchi and Ben Melech.

- ft190 -- Pr[y “decollabit”, Drusius, Piscator, Tarnovius, Deuteronomy Dieu; “decervicabit”, Cocceius.
- ft191 -- awç twl a “execrationes vanitatis”, Schmidt.
- ft192 -- twl g[l “vaccas, V. L. “ad. vitulas”, Pagninus, Montanus; “propter vitulas”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “ob vitulas, Cocceius.
- ft193 -- Seder Olam Rabba, c. 22. p. 60, 61.
- ft194 -- wyrmk “atrati ejus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft195 -- wtwā µg “etiam ipsemet”, Pagninus, Montanus; “etiam ipse”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “etiam ille”, Cocceius; “etiam ille ipse”, Schmidt.
- ft196 -- p̄rsaw “et, [vel] ut vinciam eos”, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Grotius; “colligabo eos”, Cocceius.
- ft197 -- Comment. Ebr. p. 591, 892.
- ft198 -- hr̄awx bwj l [“super bonitatem cervicis ejus”, Montanus; “super bonitatem colli ipsius”, Schmidt; “super praestantiam”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft199 -- bykra “equitare feci”, Munster, Rivet.
- ft200 -- wl ddçy “occabit ei”, Deuteronomy Dieu; “occabit illi?” Schmidt.
- ft201 -- “Equitare faciam in Ephraim”, Lyra, Tarnovius; “equitare faciam super Ephraim”, so some in Calvin.
- ft202 -- hqdxl “ad justitiam”, Pagninus, Montanus, Munster, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Drusius, Tarnovius, Cocceius.
- ft203 -- dsj ypl “ad os miserecordiae”, Montanus; “secundum misericordiam”, Pagninus; “secundum pietatem”, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft204 -- µkl qdx hr̄wyw “et doceat justitiam vos”, Pagninus, Montanus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft205 -- Antiqu. l. 12. c. 11. sect. 1. & l. 14. c. 15. sect. 4. In Vita sua, sect. 69. p. 922, 934.
- ft206 -- Juchasin, fol. 65. 1.
- ft207 -- T. Hieros. Beracot, fol. 2, 3. & Taaniot, fol. 69. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 34. 3.

- ft208 -- Deuteronomy locis Heb. fol. 87. L.
- ft209 -- Juchasin, ut supra. (fol. 65. 1.)
- ft210 -- Itinerar. p. 62.
- ft211 -- Juchasin, ib. (fol. 65. 1.) R. Joseph Kimchi in David Kimchi in loc.
- ft212 -- Chronological Tables, cent. 8.
- ft213 -- **µkt[r t[r ynpm** “propter malitiam malitiae vestrae”, Pagninus, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft214 -- **l aṭyb µkl ḥç[hkk** “sic faciet vobis, [Deus], O Bethel”, Drusius; “sic faciet vobis [Salman], O Bethel”, Schmidt.
- ft215 -- **yk** “quia”, V. L. Pagninus, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius.
- ft216 -- “Quamvis sit puer”, Tarnovius, Rivet.
- ft217 -- **wytw[wrz l [** “super brachiis suis”, Montanus; “super brachia sua”, Piscator; “in brachis sua”, Cocceius.
- ft218 -- **hl j** “cedet”, Calvin; “incidet”, Schmidt; “irruet”, Zanchius, Drusius, Liveleus.
- ft219 -- **wydb** “vectes ejus”, Schmidt. So some in Drusius.
- ft220 -- **µyawl t** “suspensi haerent”, Junius & Tremellius; “suspensi”, Montanus, Schmidt.
- ft221 -- **ytbwçml** “ad reditum meum”, V. L.
- ft222 -- “Circa redire ad me”, Castalio.
- ft223 -- **µmwry al** “eos non exaltabit”, Schmidt.
- ft224 -- **Ænta Æya** “quam juste et misere desolatum te dabo? dare jure deberem et possem?” Schmidt. So Luther and Tarnovius.
- ft225 -- **tj çl bwça al** “non perdam amplius”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator; “non iterum destruaum”, Cocceius.
- ft226 -- **çwdq Æbrqb** “[est] sanctus”, i.e. “[sancti], in medio tui”, Rivetus.
- ft227 -- **wdrj yw** “et cum honore accedent”, Schmidt.
- ft228 -- **µym** “a mari”, Montanus, Tigurine version, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Cocceius, Schmidt.

- ft229 -- **wdrj y** “cum honore advenient”, Schmidt.
- ft230 -- “Sic ego, currebam, sic me ferus ille premebat, Ut fagere accipitrem penna trepidante columba, Ut solet accipiter trepidas urgere columbas”. Ovid. Metamorph. l. 5. Fab. 10.
- ft231 -- Diodor. Sicul. Bibliothec. l. 2. p. 92, 93, 107.
- ft232 -- Apud Euseb. Evangel. Praepar. l. 8. p. 398.
- ft233 -- Vid. Gregor. Posthuma, p. 235.
- ft234 -- **μyçwdq** “[rebus] sanctis”, Rivetus.
- ft235 -- “Cum diis sanctis”, Munster, Vatablus. So Ben Melech.
- ft236 -- “Cum sanctis”, i.e. “hominibus”, Drusius.
- ft237 -- **wykrdkdqpl** “ad visitandum juxta vias ejus”, Pagninus, Montanus; “visitabit secundum vias ejus”, Piscator.
- ft238 -- Antiqu. l. 1. c. 20. sect. 2.
- ft239 -- Ut supra. (Antiqu. l. 1. c. 20. sect. 2.)
- ft240 -- **bwçt Æyhwl ab** “in Deo tuo conquiesce”, Drusius.
- ft241 -- **rmç** “observa”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft242 -- **^[nk çavav]**, Sept. “Chanaan”, V. L. Tigurine version; “Chanauaeum” refers, Munster.
- ft243 -- Apud Grotium in loc.
- ft244 -- Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 104. No. 522.
- ft245 -- **ytrbdw** “et loquar”, Piscator, Liveleus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt.
- ft246 -- **ytybrh ^wzj** “visionem multiplicabo”, Vatablus, Liveleus, Drusius, Schmidt.
- ft247 -- **hmda** “assimilabo”, Montanus, Schmidt; “similitudinibus utar”, Castalio, Liveleus.
- ft248 -- **^wa d[l g ma** “an [non in] Galaad iniquitas?” Vatablus.
- ft249 -- “En [in] Gileade [tantum] iniquitas?” Piscator.
- ft250 -- “Num Gilead Aven?” Schmidt.

- ft251 -- Apud Reland. Palestina Illustrata, tom. 2. l. 3. p. 783.
- ft252 -- Deuteronomy Vita & Interitu Prophet. c. 6. & Paschal. Chronic. p. 161. apud Reland. ib.
- ft253 -- Antiqu. l. 6. c. 4. sect. 9.
- ft254 -- Deuteronomy locis Hebr. fol. 91. M.
- ft255 -- **μρα hdç** “agrum Aram”, Montanus; “in agrum Syriae”, Vatablus, Drusius, Rivet, Schmidt.
- ft256 -- **μyrrwmt** “amaritudinibus”, Pagninus, Vatablus, Piscator, Schmidt.
- ft257 -- And is so understood by R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed, fol. 64. 1.
- ft258 -- **çwj y wyl [wymdw και το αιμα αυτου επι αυτον εκχυθησεται**, Sept. so Syr. & Ar. “ideo sanguis ejus super eum diffundetur, [sive] effundetur”, Zanchius.
- ft259 -- **ttrrbdk** “quum loqueretur--tremor erat”, Pagninus, Vatablus; “terror erat”, Zanchius, Drusius.
- ft260 -- **awh açn** “portavit ipse, [sub.] iniquitatem suam”, Schmidt.
- ft261 -- In Verrem, l. 4. Orat. 9. c. 13.
- ft262 -- Metamorphos. sive de Asino Auero, l. 4. p. 60.
- ft263 -- Octavius, p. 2.
- ft264 -- Nat. Hist. l. 28. c. 2.
- ft265 -- Apuleii Apolog. p. 226.
- ft266 -- **περι ορησεως**.
- ft267 -- Apolog. c. 16.
- ft268 -- **μδα yj bz** “immolatores hominem, [vel] immolantes homines”, Vatablus; “sacrificantes hominem”, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt; so some in Abenda. The Septuagint and Vulgate Latin render it as an imperative, “sacrifice men”; and the Syriac version, “O ye that sacrifice men”.
- ft269 -- **[dt al** “non novisti, [vel] cognovisti”, Liveleus, Drusius, Rivet.
- ft270 -- **tbwal t ðab** “an terra siccitatum”, Vatablus, Drusius, Schmidt.
- ft271 -- Apud R. Sol. Urbin. Ohel Moed. fol. 35. 1.

- ft272 -- “In terra torridonum locorum”, Montanus; “torridissima”, Junius & Tremellius, Heb. “infammationum”, Piscator.
- ft273 -- **l j ç** “vetus leo”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator.
- ft274 -- **rwça Ærd l [δατα την οδον ασσυριων** Sept. “in via Assyriormm”, V. L. “super via Assyriae”, Schmidt; “in via Assyria”, Liveleus, Cocceius.
- ft275 -- Adrichomii Thestrum Terrae Sanct. p. 186.
- ft276 -- Nat. Hist. l. 10. c. 73.
- ft277 -- **Ætj ç** “perdidit te”, Vatablus, Calvin, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, Deuteronomy Dieu, Rivet; “corruptit te”, Cocceius.
- ft278 -- Comment, Ebr. p. 367.
- ft279 -- **y b yk** “quia in me”, Montanus, Calvin, Schmidt.
- ft280 -- **Ækl m yha** “ubi Rex tuus”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Zanchius, Liveleus, Drusius, Cocceius, Schmidt, Targum. So Noldius, Concord. Ebr. Part. p. 101. No. 496.
- ft281 -- **j qaw** “et auferam”, Zanchius, Piscator, Cocceius, V. L. “recipiam”, Drusius; “accipiam”, Schmidt.
- ft282 -- **μynb rbçmb dm[y al t[yk** “nam tempus non subsistet in partitudine filiorum”, Cocceius; “quia tempus non stat in utero puerorum”, Schmidt; “quia tempore non stetissent in raptura alvi filiorum”, Montanus.
- ft283 -- **l waç** “infernii”, Schmidt.
- ft284 -- Gloss. Heb. in Lyra in loc. Vid. Galatin. Arcan. Cathol. Ver. l. 6. c. 21.
- ft285 -- **ayrpy** “ille fero modo aget”, Cocceius; “ferox eat, notat ferum, [vel] ferocem esse sicut onagrum”, Schmidt, Burkius. So R. Jonah in Ben Melech.
- ft286 -- **hdmj yl k l k** “omnium vasorum desiderii”, Montanus; “omnis vasis desiderii”, Schmidt.
- ft287 -- **t trm** “ad amaritudinem concitavit”, V. L. “significat amaricare, [vel] amaritudine replere”, Rivet.

- ft288 -- **hw̄y d[** “asque ad Dominum”, Montanus, Tigurine version, Oecolampadius, Schmidt, Burkius.
- ft289 -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 86. 1.
- ft290 -- **hbwç** “revertere”, i. e. “reverteris”, Schmidt.
- ft291 -- **tl çk yk** “etsi corruisti”, Luther apud Tarnovium.
- ft292 -- **bwj j q** “accipe bonum”, Pagninus, Montanus: Munster, Cocceius, Schmidt, Burkius.
- ft293 -- “Acceptum confer bonum”, Junius & Tremellius, Piscator, Drusius.
- ft294 -- **Æyw** “percutiet”, Montanus, Tarnovius, Rivet, Cocceius; “figet”, Calvin, Pareus; “defiget”; Zanchius; “et infiget”, Schmidt; “incurtiet”, Drusius.
- ft295 -- “Ut thuris”, Grotius.
- ft296 -- **ḡd wyj y ζῆσονται σιτω**, Sept. “vivent tritico”, V. L. “vivificabunt frumento”, Munster, Castalio; so Syr. & Ar.
- ft297 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 5. c. 18.
- ft298 -- Apud Calmet, Dictionary, on the word “Wine”.
- ft299 -- **wrkz** “memoria ejus”, Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Tarnovius, Cocceius, Castalio, Schmidt, Burkius.
- ft300 -- **dw[yl hm μυρρα** “Ephraim, [vel] O quid mihi amplius”, etc. Montanus, Junius & Tremellius, Tigurine version, Castalio, Cocceius, Schmidt, Burkius.
- ft301 -- Nat. Hist. 1. 16. c. 10.
- ft302 -- Varinus apud Rivet. in loc.